

# 1998 WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR THE SHARPSBURG WATER SYSTEM

## Is my water safe?

Last year, as in years past, your tap water met all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state drinking water health standards. The Washington County Water and Sewer Department vigilantly safeguards its water supplies and once again we are proud to report that our system has never violated a maximum contaminant level or any other water quality standard.

## Do I need to take special precautions?

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Water Drinking Hotline (800-426-4791).

## Where does my water come from?

The Water supply for the Sharpsburg Water System comes from the Potomac River, a surface water source. This water is processed through the Sharpsburg Water Treatment Plant. The Water Treatment Plant provides for filtration, chlorination, pH adjustment, and fluoridation of the water prior to entering the distribution system.

## Source water assessment and its availability

Maryland Department of the Environment is currently working with the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a program for the development and completion of Source Water Assessments. We will continue to keep you updated on the development of this assessment in this section of the Water Quality Report.

## Why are there contaminants in my drinking water?

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

## How can I get involved?

The Washington County Water and Sewer Department has an Advisory Board that meets on a monthly basis. For information on attending one of these meetings, please contact our main office at (301)791-3083.

## Results of voluntary monitoring

The Washington County Water and Sewer Department conducts routine testing on your water system that is not included in the Water Quality Data Table. A list of these parameters and their results for 1998 are located in the Table of Test Results of Customer Interest.

## Water Quality Data Table

The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the calendar year of this report. The presence of contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done in the the calendar year of the report. The EPA or the State requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.

### Important Drinking Water Definitions:

MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level Goal: The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level: The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

AL: Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Contaminants (units)	MCLG	MCL	Your Water	Range Low	High	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>								
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.64	0	1.2	---	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	10	10	2.4	NA		---	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Nitrite [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	1	1	0.003	NA		---	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppb)	MNR	MNR	15300	NA		---	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching
<b>Radioactive Contaminants</b>								
Beta/Photon emitters (pCi/L)	NA	NA	2.1	NA		7/17/95	No	Decay of natural and man-made deposits. The EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for Beta particles.
<b>Unregulated Contaminants</b>								
Bromodichloromethane (ppb)	MNR	MNR	3.5	NA		---	No	
Chloroform (ppb)	MNR	MNR	8.6	NA		---	No	
Sulfate (ppm)	MNR	MNR	36	NA		---	No	
<b>Contaminant(s) (units)</b>	<b>MCLG</b>	<b>AL</b>	<b>Your Water</b>	<b># of Samples &gt; AL</b>		<b>Sample Date</b>	<b>Exceeds AL</b>	<b>Typical Source</b>
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>								
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.33	0		9/16/96	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives; Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Lead (ppb)	0	15	8	0			No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

### Units Description:

NA: Not applicable

ND: Not detected

NR: Not reported

MNR: Monitoring not required, but recommended.

ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)

ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (µg/l)

pCi/L: picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)

## Other Educational Information

### **Lead**

Infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general population. It is possible that lead levels at your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of materials used in your home's plumbing. If you are concerned about elevated lead levels in your home's water, you may wish to have your water tested and flush your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using tap water. Additional information is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

TABLE OF TEST RESULTS OF CUSTOMER INTEREST

PARAMETER	LEVEL / RANGE DETECTED	UNIT OF MEASUREMENT
pH	7.1 TO 8.3	Standard Unit
Chlorine	1.1 TO 2.3	ppm
Hardness	85 TO 214	ppm
Alkalinity	52 TO 168	ppm
Methyl-tert-butyl-ether *	0.7	ppb

\*Methyl-tert-butyl-ether is an unregulated contaminant that is an additive used in gasoline.