

2002 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. 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. However, a monitoring violation did occur in 2002 when a bacteriological sample required in June 2002 was not collected. In July 2002, all bacteriological samples collected were in compliance.

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 Drinking Water 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 filtration, chlorination, pH adjustment, and fluoridation of the water prior to entering the distribution system.

Source water assessment and its availability

The Maryland Department of the Environment has developed and the EPA has approved its plan for the development of Source Water Assessments. MDE completed the final Assessment in July 2002.

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 (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Results of voluntary monitoring

The Washington County Water and Sewer Department conducts routine testing of your water system that is not included in the Water Quality Data Table. The MDE has also completed testing that is not included in the Water Quality Data Table. A list of these parameters and their results are located in the Table of Results of Customer Interest below.

TABLE OF RESULTS OF CUSTOMER INTEREST

PARAMETER	LEVEL/RANGE DETECTED	UNIT OF MEASUREMENT
pH	7.1 to 8.2	Standard Unit
Chlorine	0.4 to 2.7	ppm
Hardness	85 to 188	ppm
Alkalinity	53 to 121	ppm
Methyl-tert-butyl-ether	0.6	ppb
Dibromochloromethane	6.8	ppb

Dibromochloromethane is an unregulated contaminant for this system. This contaminant is typically produced as a result of chlorination.

Methyl-tert-butyl-ether is an unregulated contaminant for this system. This contaminant is typically a result of recreational motorized watercraft on the surface water source.

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 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.

Contaminants	MCLG	MCL	Your Water	Range Low High	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source
Disinfectants & Disinfection By-Products							
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	NA	60	51.46	25.83 51.46	----	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Inorganic Contaminants							
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	1.2	0.0 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	0.95	NA	----	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	MNR	MNR	15.7	NA	5/10/2001	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching
Microbiological Contaminants							
Turbidity (Conventional or Direct Filtration) (NTU) (in 95% of	NA	TT<=0.5	0.49	NA	----	No	Soil runoff
Radioactive Contaminants							
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	0	15	2	NA	5/9/2002	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Unregulated Contaminants							
Bromodichloromethane (ppb)	NA	NA	22.1	NA	----	No	
Chloroform (ppb)	NA	NA	74.6	NA	----	No	
Sulfate (ppm)	NA	NA	80	NA	5/12/1999	No	
Volatile Organic Contaminants							
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] ()	NA	80	71.8		----	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Contaminant(s) (units)	MCLG	A	Your Water	# of Samples > AL	Sample Date	Exceeds AL	Typical Source
Inorganic Contaminants							
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.12	0	----	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives; Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Lead (ppb)	0	15	7	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)

NTU: Nephelometric Turbidity Units. Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.

Important Drinking Water

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.

TT: Treatment Technique: A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

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

MRDLG: Maximum residual disinfection level goal. The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

MRDL: Maximum residual disinfectant level. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

For more information on the Washington County Water and Sewer Department, please visit our website at www.wc-link.org/wcwsd.

**For more information
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