

# **2013 WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR THE ELK RIDGE WATER SYSTEM PWSID # 0210006**

## **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 Department of Water Quality vigilantly safeguards its water supplies and once again we are proud to report that our water 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 Elk Ridge Water System utilizes one well as its water source. The water for this system receives iron removal, manganese removal, pH adjustment and chlorination prior to entering the distribution system.

## **Source water assessment and its availability**

The Maryland Department of the Environment's Water Supply Program (WSP) has conducted a Source Water Assessment for the Elk Ridge water system. The required components of this report as described in Maryland's Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) are 1) delineation of an area that contributes water to the source, 2) identification of potential sources of contamination, and 3) determination of susceptibility of the water supply to contamination. Recommendations for protecting the drinking water supply conclude this report.

The sources of Elk Ridge's water supply is one well in an unconfined fractured rock aquifer. The Source Water Assessment area was delineated by the WSP using EPA approved methods specifically designed for this source type. Point sources of contamination were investigated within the assessment area from field inspections, contaminant inventory databases, and previous studies. The Maryland Office of Planning's 2000 digital land use map for Washington County was used to identify non-point sources of contamination. Well information and water quality data were also reviewed. An aerial photograph and maps showing potential contaminants sources and land use within the Source Water Assessment area are included in this report.

The susceptibility analysis is based on review of the existing water quality data for the Elk Ridge Water System, the presence of potential sources of contamination in the source water assessment area, well integrity, and the inherent vulnerability of the aquifer. The Elk Ridge Water supply may be susceptible to contamination by volatile organic compounds. It was determined that Radon-222, a naturally occurring contaminant, may pose a risk to the Elk Ridge water supply. This water supply is not susceptible to contamination by inorganic compounds, synthetic organic compounds or microbiological contaminants.

## **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).

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity: microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife; inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial, or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming; pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses; organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems; and radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

## **How can I get involved?**

For more information on getting involved, please contact our main office at (240) 313-2600.

## Water Quality Data Table

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the calendar year of this report. Although many more contaminants were tested, only those substances listed below were found in your water. All sources of drinking water contain some naturally occurring contaminants. At low levels, these substances are generally not harmful in our drinking water. Removing all contaminants would be extremely expensive, and in most cases, would not provide increased protection of public health. A few naturally occurring minerals may actually improve the taste of drinking water and have nutritional value at low levels. 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 vary significantly from year to year, or the system is not considered vulnerable to this type of contamination. As such, some of our data, though representative, may be more than one year old. In this table you will find terms and abbreviations that might not be familiar to you. To help you better understand these terms, we have provided the definitions below the table.

<u>Contaminants</u>	<u>MCLG</u> or <u>MRDLG</u>	<u>MCL,</u> <u>TT, or</u> <u>MRDL</u>	<u>Your</u> <u>Water</u>	<u>Range</u>		<u>Sample</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>Violation</u>	<u>Typical Source</u>
				<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>			
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>								
Nitrate [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	10	10	5.64	NA		2012	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.124	NA		2013	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Sodium (optional) (ppm)		MPL	23.6	0	23.6	2013	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching
<b>Radioactive Contaminants</b>								
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	0	15	0.8	NA		2013	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Radium (combined 226/228) (pCi/L)	0	5	0.6	NA		2013	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Beta/photon emitters (pCi/L)	0	50	1.5	NA		2009	No	Decay of natural and man- made deposits. The EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for Beta particles.
<u>Contaminants</u>	<u>MCLG</u>	<u>AL</u>	<u>Your</u> <u>Water</u>	<u>Sample</u> <u>Date</u>	<u># Samples</u> <u>Exceeding AL</u>	<u>Exceeds</u> <u>AL</u>	<u>Typical Source</u>	
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>								
Copper - action level at consumer taps (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.18	2013	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits	
Lead - action level at consumer taps (ppb)	0	15	9	2013	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits	

### Additional Information for Lead

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Elk Ridge is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

### Additional Information for Nitrate

Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant, you should ask for advice from your health care provider.

### Additional information for Sodium

The presence of sodium in your water is attributed to the composition of the aquifer. Sodium is a contaminant which is not subject to any proposed or promulgated national primary drinking water regulation by EPA or MDE, but is analyzed and reported for individuals who are on a sodium restricted diet. Sodium is an essential nutrient which FDA reports the average person receives all that is required on a regular diet

Unit Descriptions	
Term	Definition
ppm	ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/L)
ppb	ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (µg/L)
pCi/L	pCi/L: picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)
NA	NA: not applicable
ND	ND: Not detected
NR	NR: Monitoring not required, but recommended.
Important Drinking Water Definitions	
Term	Definition
MCLG	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	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	TT: Treatment Technique: A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
AL	AL: Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
Variances and Exemptions	Variances and Exemptions: State or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.
MRDLG	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	MRDL: Maximum residual disinfectant level. The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
MNR	MNR: Monitored Not Regulated
MPL	MPL: State Assigned Maximum Permissible Level

## Results of voluntary monitoring

The Washington County Department of Water Quality conducts routine testing on your water system that is not included in the Water Quality Table. A list of parameters and their results for 2013 are located in the Table of Results of Customer Interest below.

**TABLE OF RESULTS OF CUSTOMER INTEREST**

<b>PARAMETERS</b>	<b>LEVEL/RANGE DETECTED</b>	<b>UNIT OF MEASUREMENT</b>
pH	6.5 to 7.4	Standard Unit
Chlorine	0.2 to 3.9	ppm
Turbidity	0.1 to .8	NTU
Hardness	86 to 120	ppm
Alkalinity	74 to 101	ppm
Manganese	000 to 0.026	ppm
Iron	000 to 0.310	ppm

For more information on the Washington County Department of Water Quality, please visit our website at [www.washco-md.net](http://www.washco-md.net).

For more information on the  
Elk Ridge Water System  
Please contact  
Mr. Kim Bowers  
at 240-313-2600