

ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

Reporting Year 2023



Presented By

WATERTOWN FIRE DISTRICT

WATER • SEWER

Your Local Water Utility



Our Commitment

We are pleased to present to you this year's annual water quality report. This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality covering all testing performed between January 1 and December 31, 2023. Included are details about your source of water, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water and providing you with this information because informed customers are our best allies.

Where Does My Water Come From?

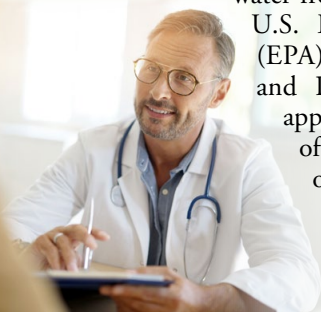
Watertown Fire District customers are fortunate because we enjoy an abundant water supply. Our water source is groundwater pumped by wells located along the Nonnewaug River in Woodbury. The district also owns and operates two surface reservoirs: Lockwood Reservoir, which is located in Bethlehem, and Judd Pond, which is located in Watertown. These reservoirs are used to augment the flow of water in the Nonnewaug River to replenish the groundwater removed by our wells.

Important Health Information

Sources of lead in drinking water include corrosion of household plumbing systems and erosion of natural deposits. Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level can experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children can show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years can develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.

Sources of copper in drinking water include corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits, and leaching from wood preservatives. Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time can experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years can suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's disease should consult their personal doctor.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised 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 may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (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 at (800) 426-4791.



Source Water Protection

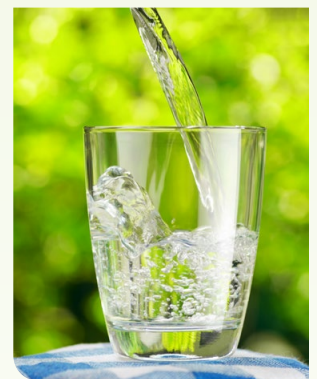
Source water is untreated water from streams, rivers, lakes, or aquifers that is used to supply public drinking water. Preventing drinking water contamination at the source makes good public health, economic, and environmental sense. You can stay aware of the challenges of keeping drinking water safe and take an active role in protecting drinking water. There are lots of ways that you can get involved in drinking water protection activities to prevent the contamination of our groundwater sources. Dispose of household chemicals properly, help clean up the watershed that is the source of your community's water, and attend public meetings to ensure that the community's need for safe drinking water is considered in making decisions about land use.

Contact the Watertown Fire District, (860) 274-6332, or the U.S. EPA, (800) 426-4791, for more information on source water protection. You can also find information on the U.S. EPA's website at www.epa.gov/sourcewaterprotection.

Level 1 Assessment Update

Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful, waterborne pathogens may be present or that a potential pathway exists through which contamination may enter the drinking water distribution system. We found coliforms, indicating the need to look for potential problems in water treatment or distribution. When this occurs, we are required to conduct an assessment to identify and correct any problems.

During the past year, we were required to conduct one Level 1 assessment. One Level 1 assessment was completed. We were not required to take any corrective actions.



QUESTIONS?

For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Michael Tanuis, Superintendent, at (860) 274-6332.

Substances That Could Be in Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA prescribes regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

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, in some cases radioactive material, and substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances that may be present in source water include:

Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, or wildlife;

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may result from urban stormwater 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 stormwater runoff, and residential uses;

Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems;

Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, call the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Think before You Flush!

Flushing unused or expired medicines can be harmful to your drinking water. Properly disposing of unused or expired medication helps protect you and the environment. Keep medications out of our waterways by disposing responsibly. To find a convenient drop-off location near you, please visit <https://bit.ly/3leRyXy>.

Lead in Home Plumbing

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. We are responsible for providing high-quality drinking water, but we cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. You share the responsibility for protecting yourself and your family from the lead in your home plumbing. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk.

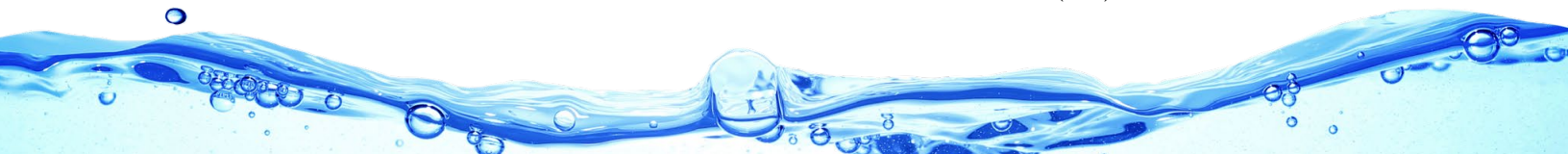
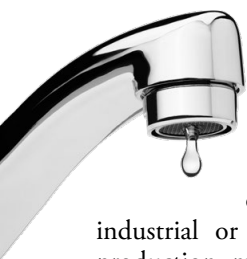
Before drinking tap water, flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap, taking a shower, or doing laundry or a load of dishes. You can also use a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute-accredited certifier to reduce lead in drinking water. If you are concerned about 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 at (800) 426-4791 or at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Source Water Assessment

The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), in cooperation with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), completed an assessment of the Hart Farm Well Field, a source of public drinking water that is maintained and operated by the Watertown Fire District Water Department. The assessment report can be found on the Department of Public Health's website at www.dir.ct.gov/dph/Water/SWAP/Community/CT1530011.pdf.

This one-time assessment is part of a nationwide effort mandated by Congress under the Safe Drinking Water Act amendments of 1996. The assessment aims to evaluate the susceptibility of all public drinking water sources in Connecticut to potential sources of contamination. The assessment is intended to provide Watertown Fire District Water Department consumers with information about where their public drinking water comes from, sources of potential contamination that could impact it, and what can be done to help protect it.

Based on a combination of current field and source water area conditions, existing potential contaminant sources, and the level of source protection measures currently in place, the source water assessment for this well field indicates that it has an overall low risk of contamination from identified potential sources of contamination. For more information on the assessment report, or to view a copy, contact the Watertown Fire District office at (860) 274-6332.



About Our Violation

Date of Violation: August 15-21, 2023

Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) Section 19-13-B102 requires that suppliers of public water must conduct specific laboratory tests to monitor the quality of their water supply to ensure that it meets the current drinking water standards. Failure to conduct timely monitoring and report results of such monitoring to the State Department of Public Health, Drinking Water Section, constitutes a violation of the RCSA. As your public water supplier, we must formally notify customers of all monitoring violations or face additional RCSA violations.

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether our drinking water meets health standards. We did not complete the monitoring and testing for the requirement listed below and therefore cannot be sure of the quality of our drinking water during that time.

We were required to monitor for E. coli in accordance with RCSA §19-13-B102(e)(12)(C) from August 15 to 21, 2023, at Hart Farm Wells 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 5A. We failed to submit these results by September 9, 2023, in accordance with RCSA §19-13-B102(h).

What should I do?

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours. There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions. However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

What is being done?

We have improved our sampling review process to ensure we meet sampling deadlines in the future.

We returned to compliance on September 5, 2023, with our routine monthly E. coli monitoring from the wells mentioned above.

What are PFAS?

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of manufactured chemicals used worldwide since the 1950s to make fluoropolymer coatings and products that resist heat, oil, stains, grease, and water. During production and use, PFAS can migrate into the soil, water, and air. Most PFAS do not break down; they remain in the environment, ultimately finding their way into drinking water. Because of their widespread use and their persistence in the environment, PFAS are found all over the world at low levels. Some PFAS can build up in people and animals with repeated exposure over time.

The most commonly studied PFAS are perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS). PFOA and PFOS have been phased out of production and use in the United States, but other countries may still manufacture and use them.

Some products that may contain PFAS include:

- Some grease-resistant paper, fast food containers/wrappers, microwave popcorn bags, pizza boxes
- Nonstick cookware
- Stain-resistant coatings used on carpets, upholstery, and other fabrics
- Water-resistant clothing
- Personal care products (shampoo, dental floss) and cosmetics (nail polish, eye makeup)
- Cleaning products
- Paints, varnishes, and sealants

Even though recent efforts to remove PFAS have reduced the likelihood of exposure, some products may still contain them. If you have questions or concerns about products you use in your home, contact the Consumer Product Safety Commission at (800) 638-2772. For a more detailed discussion on PFAS, please visit <http://bit.ly/3Z5AMm8>.

Water Conservation Tips

You can play a role in conserving water and save yourself money in the process by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using and looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It is not hard to conserve water. Here are a few tips:

- Automatic dishwashers use four to six gallons for every cycle, regardless of how many dishes are loaded. So get a run for your money and load it to capacity.
- Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.
- Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day. Fix it and you can save almost 6,000 gallons per year.
- Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Watch for a few minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons a day from an invisible toilet leak. Fix it and you save more than 30,000 gallons a year.
- Use your water meter to detect hidden leaks. Simply turn off all taps and water-using appliances. Then check the meter after 15 minutes. If it moved, you have a leak.

Water Treatment Processes

Water pumped from the district wells is treated with a disinfectant (chlorine) as a precaution to protect consumers from potentially harmful bacteria. We carefully monitor the amount of chlorine, adding the lowest quantity necessary to protect the safety of your water without compromising taste. The water is also treated with a small amount of sodium hydroxide to make it less corrosive. This reduces the amounts of metals such as copper and lead that may be picked up by the water from consumers' homes and businesses. Finished water is then pumped into our network of distribution pipes to reach our residential and business customers.

Test Results

Our water is monitored for many different kinds of substances on a very strict sampling schedule, and the water we deliver must meet specific health standards. Here, we only show those substances that were detected in our water (a complete list of all our analytical results is available upon request). Remember that detecting a substance does not mean the water is unsafe to drink; our goal is to keep all detects below their respective maximum allowed levels.

The state recommends monitoring for certain substances less than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data are included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

REGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Alpha Emitters (pCi/L)	2023	15	0	-0.36	NA	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Asbestos (MFL)	2021	7	7	ND	NA	No	Decay of asbestos cement water mains; Erosion of natural deposits
Barium (ppm)	2023	2	2	0.0183	NA	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Chlorine (ppm)	2023	[4]	[4]	1.01	0.80–1.25	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Combined Radium (pCi/L)	2023	5	0	0.28	0.203–0.28	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Haloacetic Acids [HAAs]–Stage 2 (ppb)	2023	60	NA	5.09	4.30–5.09	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (ppm)	2023	10	10	0.347	NA	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
TTHMs [total trihalomethanes]–Stage 2 (ppb)	2023	80	NA	12.3	10.1–12.3	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Turbidity ¹ (NTU)	2023	TT	NA	1.09	NA	No	Soil runoff
Uranium (ppb)	2023	30	0	<1.00	NA	No	Erosion of natural deposits

Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AL	MCLG	AMOUNT DETECTED (90TH %ILE)	RANGE LOW-HIGH	SITES ABOVE AL/TOTAL SITES	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Copper (ppm)	2023	1.3	1.3	1.13	0.027–1.570	2/22	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	2023	15	0	4.4	ND–13.0	0/20	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

¹Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. It is monitored because it is a good indicator of water quality and the effectiveness of disinfectants.

Public Meetings

Please remember that we are always available to assist you should you ever have any questions or concerns about your water. We want you, our valued customers, to be informed about your water utility. You can attend the district commission's regularly scheduled meetings on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the district office, 24 DeForest Street.



Definitions

90th %ile: The levels reported for lead and copper represent the 90th percentile of the total number of sites tested. The 90th percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of our lead and copper detections.

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

Level 1 Assessment: A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system.

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.

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.

MFL (million fibers per liter): A measure of the presence of asbestos fibers that are longer than 10 micrometers.

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.

MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant 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.

NA: Not applicable.

ND (Not detected): Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Units): Measurement of the clarity, or turbidity, of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

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

ppb (parts per billion): One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

ppm (parts per million): One part substance per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

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