



### Help Make a Difference

Austin Utilities pumps an average of 3 million gallons of water per day; however, during the summer, demand can dramatically increase to over 7 million gallons per day. This spike requires additional wells to be operated and additional water to be drawn from other supplying aquifers. Aquifers require a recharge opportunity. They cannot recharge quickly enough during the peak months to meet the demand. We ask that all residents help make a difference by conserving water by using the following tips:

- Monitor your water bill for unusually high use. Your bill and water meter are tools that can help you discover leaks.
- When buying new appliances, consider those that offer cycle and load size adjustments. They are more water and energy efficient.
- Use a water-efficient showerhead. They're inexpensive, easy to install, and can save you up to 750 gallons a month.
- Keep a gallon of water in the refrigerator rather than running the tap for cold water

When you save water, you save money on your utility bills too. Saving water is easy for everyone to do.



# Austin Utilities Water Quality Report 2013



**Austin Utilities is issuing the results of monitoring done on its drinking water for the period from January 1 to December 31, 2013.**

**The purpose of this report is to advance consumers' understanding of drinking water and heighten awareness of the need to protect precious water resources.**

**Call 433-8886 if you have questions about Austin's drinking water or would like information about opportunities for public participation in decisions that may affect the quality of the water.**

**Informacion importante. Si no la entiende, haga que alguien se la traduzca ahora.**

### Austin Utilities Source of Water

Austin Utilities provides drinking water to its residents from a groundwater source: eight wells ranging from 110 to 1075 feet deep, that draw water from the Prairie Du Chien-Jordan, Wapsipinicon/Spillville Fm, and multiple aquifers.

The water provided to customers meets current drinking water standards, but the MN Department of Health has also made a determination as to how vulnerable the source of water may be to future contamination incidents. If you wish to obtain the entire source water assessment regarding your drinking water, please call 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 (press 5) during normal business hours or view it online at [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/swa](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/swa).

### Drinking Water Information from EPA

The sources of drinking water (tap and bottled) 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. Contaminants 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 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.

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

### Health Information—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. Austin Utilities is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but can't control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. If water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for a minimum of 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>.

**Special Health Concerns** Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water. Immuno-compromised persons, such as those with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, those 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/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Environmental Protection Agency prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA 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 contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. Information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

**Results of Monitoring** - No contaminants were detected at levels that violated federal drinking water standards. However, some contaminants were detected in trace amounts that were below legal limits. The table that follows shows the contaminants that were detected in trace amounts last year.

Contaminants (units)	MCLG	MCL	Level Found		Typical Source of Contaminant
			Range /Avg Result*		
Alpha Emitters (pCi/l)	0	15.4	9.1-11	10.05	Erosion of natural deposits.
Arsenic (ppb)	0	10	nd-1.02	1.02	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes.
Barium (ppm)	2	2	.0539-.134	.13	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.
Combined Radium (pCi/l)	0	5.4	2.4-2.6	2.6	Erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	.9-1.4	1.2	State of MN requires all municipal water systems to add fluoride to drinking water to promote strong teeth; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum facto-
Haloacetic Acids	0	60	nd-11.5	4.93	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (as Nitrogen) (ppm)	10.4	10.4	nd-3	3	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits.
Selenium (ppb)	50	50	nd-7.93	7.93	Discharge from petroleum and metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from mines.
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	0	80	nd-36.2	19.15	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Xylenes (ppm)	10	10	nd-	.001	Discharge from petroleum factories; Discharge from chemical

\* This is the value used to determine compliance with federal standards. It sometimes is the highest value detected and sometimes is an average of all the detected values. If it is an average, it may contain sampling results from the previous year.

Monitoring may have been done for additional contaminants that do not have MCLs established for them and are not required to be monitored under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Results may be available by calling 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 during normal business hours.

Some contaminants do not have Maximum Contaminant Levels established. These unregulated contaminants are assessed using state standards known as health risk limits to determine if they pose a threat to human health. If unacceptable levels of an unregulated contaminant are found, the response is the same as if an MCL has been exceeded; the water system must inform its customers and take other corrective actions. In the table that follows are the unregulated contaminants that were detected:

Contaminants (units)	MRDLG	MRDL	Highest/Lowest Monthly Avg	Highest Quarterly Avg	Typical Source of Contaminant
Chlorine (ppm)	4	4	.4-1.5	1.17	Water additive used to control microbes.

Contaminants (units)	MCLG	AL	90% Level	# of sites over AL	Typical Source of Contaminant
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	.73	0 out of 30	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.
Lead (ppb)	0	15	3.9	0 out of 30	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.

### Key to Table Abbreviations

**MCLG**—Maximum Contaminant Level Goal: 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.

**MRDL**—Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level.

**MRDLG**—Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal.

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

**90th Percentile Level**—This is the value obtained after disregarding 10 percent of the samples taken that had the highest levels.

**N/A**—Not Applicable (does not apply).

**nd**—No Detection.

**pCi/l**—PicoCuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity).

**ppm**—Parts per million, which can also be expressed as milligrams per liter.

**ppb**—Parts per billion, which can also be expressed as micrograms per liter