

AUSTIN UTILITIES SOURCE WATER INFORMATION

The City of Austin is issuing the results of monitoring done on its drinking water for the period from January 1- December 31, 2008. The purpose of this report is to advance consumers' understanding of drinking water and heighten awareness of the need to protect precious water resources.

Austin provides drinking water to its residents from a groundwater source: seven wells ranging from 110-1075 feet deep, that draw water from the Prairie Du Chien-Jordan, Wapsipinicon/Spillville FM and Multiple aquifers. The water provided to customers may meet drinking water standards, but the Minnesota 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 (and press 5) during normal business hours. Also, you can view it online at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/swa.

DRINKING WATER INFORMATION FROM EPA

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. It also can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or humans. Substances that can be present in source water include: **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from wastewater treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can occur naturally or result from 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 can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

Radioactive contaminants, which occur naturally or result from oil and gas production and mining activities.

To ensure that tap water is safe, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that 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. More

information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Water Conservation

WHY CONSERVE?

The city is required by the state to have a water conservation program to protect the aquifer and to make sure there is enough water in the system for fire protection and everyday use. During the summer months pressures are put on the aquifer to produce the water needed. To help ease these pressures, watering wisely will help the aquifer recharge as well as save money and energy.

WATER USAGE

The City of Austin pumps an average of 3 million gallons of water per day however, during the summer months demand can dramatically increase to over 7 million gallons per day. This spike in demand requires additional wells to be operated and additional water to be drawn from our supplying aquifers. Aquifers require a recharge opportunity (or rest). They cannot recharge quickly enough during the peak months to meet the demand. Therefore, we ask that all residents be responsible in water use habits to help conserve our water resource.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Indoors

- Check your toilet for "silent" leaks by placing a little food coloring in the tank and seeing if it leaks into the bowl.
- Keep a gallon of drinking water in the refrigerator rather than running the tap for cold water. This also makes the water taste better and allows chlorine to aerate out.
- Run your washing machine with a full load of clothes in cold water when possible.

Outdoors

- Use drought-tolerant plants and grasses for landscaping and reduce grass-covered areas.
- Cut your grass at least two inches high to shade the roots, making it more drought tolerant; keep your mower sharp for the healthiest grass.
- Following the odd/even restriction policy; water only in the evening or very early morning to minimize evaporation.
- Install a rain sensor to irrigation system.

IS IT OK TO USE HOT WATER FROM THE TAP FOR COOKING OR FOR MAKING BABY FORMULA?

No. Use cold water. Hot water is more likely to contain rust, copper and lead from your household plumbing and water heater because these contaminants generally dissolve into hot water from the plumbing faster than into cold water. To avoid this, use cold water and let the water run for a couple of minutes before you use it. You can then heat this water in the microwave or on the stove. Catching the water you flush out of the tap in a container and saving it for plant watering is a good conservation measure.



AUSTIN UTILITIES WATER QUALITY REPORT JUNE 2009

Austin Utilities Water Customer:

Welcome to your annual Water Quality Report. This is your guide to the quality and safety of the tap water provided by Austin Utilities.

We encourage customers to stay informed on drinking water issues. For questions or concerns about water quality or information about opportunities for public participation in decisions that may affect the water quality, contact Austin Utilities at 433-8886.

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

Please visit our website at:
(www.austinutilities.com)

Health Information

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. City of Austin 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 the 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>.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants found 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. You can get EPA/Centers for Disease Control guidelines for lessening the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791.

ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter

ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter

pCi/L: picocuries per liter, a measure of radioactivity

nd: Not Detected

N/A: Not applicable (does not apply)

MRDL: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level

MRDLG: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal

Monitoring Your Tap Water for Safety

All public water systems in Minnesota are required by the EPA and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to monitor their water for 86 regulated contaminants. Test results for Austin's water during 2008 are listed in the table at the right. Only substances detected are listed in the table.

Definition of Terms

The **Lead Fund** is the highest amount found in the water or the average of all samples analyzed, depending on the regulation. If it is an average, it may contain sampling results from the previous year. If multiple samples were tested in 2007, the lowest and highest detected values are listed under **Range of Detections**. Regulated substances have **Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs)** set by the EPA. This is the highest level of the substance legally allowed in drinking water. Some contaminants also have **MCL Goals (MCLGs)**. This is the level of a substance where there is no known or expected health risk. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety. MCLs are set as close to MCLGs as feasible using the best available water treatment processes. The MCL for lead and copper is known as the **Action Lead (AL)**. This is the concentration which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements a water system must follow. Every three years, 30 samples from Austin homes are tested for lead and copper, and at least 90% of these samples must be below the action level for compliance. Some contaminants do not have MCLs 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 an unacceptable level of an unregulated contaminant is found, the water system must inform residents and take other corrective action. *Some contaminants are sampled less frequently than once a year; as a result, not all contaminants were sampled for in 2008. If any of these contaminants were detected the last time they were sampled for, they are included in the table along with the date the detection occurred.

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.

Results of Laboratory Testing Austin Utilities Drinking Water January 1 to December 31, 2008

Contaminants (unit)	MCLG	MCL	Range	Average/Result	Typical Source of Contaminant
Alpha Emitters (pCi/l)	0	15.4	nd-10.8	10.8	Erosion of natural deposits.
Arsenic (ppb) 2004	0	10	N/A	1.04	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes.
Barium (ppm) 2004	2	2	N/A	0.13	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.
Combined Radium (pCi/l)	0	5.4	nd-4.2	4.2	Erosion of natural deposits.
Flouride (ppm)	4	4	1.1-1.2	1.18	Additive for strong teeth; erosion of natural deposits; fertilizer and aluminum factory discharge.
Mercury (inorganic) (ppb) 2004	2	2	N/A	0.02	Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from refineries and factories; Runoff from landfills and cropland.
Nitrate (as Nitrogen) (ppm)	10	10	nd-2.8	2.8	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage.
Selenium (ppb) 2004	50	50	N/A	6.99	Discharge from petroleum and metal refineries and mines; Erosion of natural deposits.
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	0	80	N/A	0.2	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Chlorine (ppm)	4	4	0.9-1.2	1.12	Water additive used to control microbes.
Copper (ppm) 2007	N/A	AL: 1.3 (90% of samples tested must be <1.3 ppm)	90% of samples <0.92	0 out of 30 samples tested > 1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.
Lead (ppb) 2007	N/A	AL: 15 (90% of samples tested must be <15 ppb)	90% of samples <5	0 out of 30 samples tested >15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.
Sodium (ppm) 2007	No established EPA limits	No established EPA limits	N/A	10	Erosion of natural deposits.
Sulfate (ppm) 2007	No established EPA limits	No established EPA limits	N/A	57.6	Erosion of natural deposits.