

2023 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

City of Columbus

PWSID#MT0000185

PO Box 549

Columbus, MT 59029

(406) 322-4424

We're very pleased to provide you with this year's Annual Water Quality Report. We want to keep you informed about the excellent water and services we have delivered to you over the past year. Our goal is, and always has been, to provide to you a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. Our water source is ground water from 3 separate wells. Our water sources are located on an Island of the Yellowstone River by the Old City Shops, in the Beartooth Heights Subdivision and in Heritage Park. We have completed a source water protection plan that provides more information such as potential sources of contamination to our drinking water supply. This document is available for review at the Public Works Office at 1258 E 1st Ave S.

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).

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.

Contaminants that may be present include:

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;

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.

We're pleased to report that our drinking water is safe and meets federal and state requirements.

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water, please contact **Paul Gorino**. He is a certified operator with years of experience and can be reached at **1-951-663-0951**. We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled City Council Meetings. They are held on the **first and third Mondays of every month at 7:00 pm in the court room at City Hall, see link below.**

<https://www.townofcolumbus.com/government/city-council-meetings/>

The City of Columbus chlorinates the water prior to entering the distribution system, and routinely monitors for constituents in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The following table

shows the results of any detects in our monitoring for the period of **January 1st to December 31st, 2023**. For constituents that are not monitored yearly, we have reviewed our records back to the last five years.

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of that the drinking water has or has not met health standards. We will not conduct monitoring for asbestos because we have been granted a waiver by DEQ. This waiver is based on our analytical result and is in effect from 2020 through 2028.

We have monitored for lead and copper, and all of our samples are in compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule. 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. The City of Columbus 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>.

Parameter	Date	90th % value	Units	Action level	Source of Contamination
Lead	2023	5	ppb	15	Household plumbing
Copper	2023	0.18	ppm	1.3	Household plumbing

In the tables above and below you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter (ug/l) - one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2000 years or a single penny in \$10,000,000.

Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l) - one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.

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

Treatment Technique (TT) - (mandatory language) a treatment technique is a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Maximum Contaminant Level - (mandatory language) The "Maximum Allowed" (MCL) is 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.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal - (mandatory language) The "Goal" (MCLG) is 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.

Picocuries per liter (pCi/L)-Picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

We're proud that your drinking water meets or exceeds all Federal and State requirements. We have learned through our monitoring and testing that some constituents have been detected. The EPA has determined that your water **IS SAFE** at these levels.

MCL's are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink 2 liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.

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/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the

risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

TEST RESULTS								
Contaminant	Violation Y/N	Sample Date	Highest Level Detected	Range	Unit Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Inorganic Contaminants								
Nitrate + Nitrite as N	N	2023	2.54	1.41 - 2.54	ppm	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride	N	2022	0.5	0.4 - 0.5	ppm	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits
Selenium	N	2022	5	2-5	ppb	50	50	Erosion of natural deposits
Arsenic	N	2022	7	0-7	ppb	0	10	Erosion of natural deposits
Barium	N	2022	0.08	ND-0.08	ppm	2	2	Erosion of natural deposits
Disinfection By-Products								
Chlorine	N	2023	0.58	0.2-0.58	ppm	MRDLG 4	MRDL 4	Water additive used to control microbes
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs)	N	2023	18	na	ppb	0	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	N	2023	2.6	na	ppb	0	60	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Radioactive Contaminants								
Gross alpha	N	2022	2.7	ND-2.7	pci/L	0	15	Erosion of natural deposits
Uranium	N	2022	5	5-5	ppb	0	30	Erosion of natural deposits

Our system had no violations.

While your drinking water meets EPA standards for arsenic, it does contain low levels of arsenic. EPA's standard balances the current understanding of arsenic's possible health effects against the costs of removing arsenic from drinking water. EPA continues to research the health effects of low levels of arsenic, which is a mineral known to cause cancer in humans at high concentrations and is linked to other health effects such as skin damage and circulatory problems.

Please call our office if you have any questions.

We, at the City of Columbus, work around the clock to provide top quality water to every tap. We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community, our way of life, and our children's future.

This Consumer Confidence Report will not be mailed to customers, but a copy is available upon request.