City of Bellingham 2018

Water Quality REPORT

This report is a requirement of the Safe Drinking Water Act. It provides our customers a summary of the tests performed on your drinking water in 2018 so you can assess for yourself how clean your water is.

By Mayor Kelli Linville

Since I began as Mayor of Bellingham in 2011, the City has accomplished many things to be proud of. I am especially proud of all the ways we have supported the City's Legacies and Strategic Commitments. It is said that it is hard to know when you've arrived if you don't know where you are going, and the Legacies and Strategic Commitments offer goals to let our community know where we are going.

Developed with collaboration from policy-makers to community members, the Legacies and Strategic Commitments allow us to measure progress towards indicators of a healthy, vibrant city. Legacy goals include Clean, Safe Drinking Water; Healthy Environment; Vibrant Sustainable Economy; Sense of Place; Safe and Prepared Community; Mobility and Connectivity Options; Access to Quality of Life Amenities; Quality, Responsive City Services; and Equity and Social Justice. Strategic commitments were then developed towards achieving each of these community goals. The end result are performance measures that can be tracked through time to assess how Bellingham is doing in each of its Legacy areas.

It is not surprising that two of our nine Legacy indicators focus on Lake Whatcom. Lake Whatcom has been operated as a municipal drinking water source since 1891 and will provide safe, clean water into the future with our continued care and attention. The strategic commitments will ensure we provide both. With a continued commitment to the Legacy measures, our community will not only know where it is going but it will also realize when it needs to adjust course. More information on the City's Legacies and Strategic Commitments can be found at **www.cob.org/Documents/council/legacies-commitments.pdf**

Opportunities to get involved can be found at **www.cob.org/gov/public/**

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Este informe contiene información importante acerca de su agua potable. Haga que alguien lo traduzca para usted, o hable con alguien que lo entienda.

Detected Regulated Contaminants

2018 WATER QUALITY ANALYSIS RESULTS

The drinking water the City of Bellingham supplies to customers has been tested for over 130 contaminants. In accordance with federal and state regulations, the table below only includes results from contaminants that were detected or are above the state reporting level.

		EPA Regulations		Bellingham Water Results		
Parameter (2018 or most recent)	**Units**	**Public Health Goal or MCLG**	**Maximum Allowable MCL**	**Bellingham Drinking Water Range or Other**	**Average Value or Highest Result**	**In Compliance?**
Total Coliform Bacteria	% Positive	0	5% positive per month	1% positive in September and 2% positive in October. 0% positive all other months.		Yes
Bellingham collects over 90 samples a month at locations throughout our water distribution system and analyzes these for bacteria to ensure water purity. No more than 5% of these samples can be positive for total coliform bacteria and none can be positive for Escherichia coli. No Escherichia coli was detected in 2018.						
Free Chlorine Levels	ppm	Detectible in 95% of samples	4.0 MRDL	Range: 0 to 0.93 ppm	Average 0.44 ppm free available chlorine	Yes
Bellingham monitors chlorine levels continuously at the water filtration plant. Over 90 distribution system samples are also analyzed each month to ensure a disinfectant residual remains in treated water on its way to our customer's homes. We must be able to detect chlorine in 95% of the samples we analyze in the distribution system.						
Haloacetic Acids-5 (HAA)	ppb	0	60 ppb	Range: 11.1 to 24.6 ppb	Highest site ave. 18.0 ppb	Yes
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)	ppb	0	80 ppb	Range: 12.3 to 42.5 ppb	Highest site ave. 36.6 ppb	Yes
Haloacetic acids and total trihalomethanes are formed as byproducts of the drinking water chlorination process. The HAA-5 and TTHM results are from 8 representative locations in Bellingham's treated water distribution system. Compliance is based on a site specific running average.						
Turbidity	NTU		< 1 NTU	Range: 0.01 to 0.06 NTU. At or below 0.3 NTU 100% of the time.	Highest value 0.06 NTU	Yes
Turbidity must be equal to or less than 0.3 nephelometric turbidity units (NTU) 95% of the time. Bellingham was below this limit 100% of the time.						
Lead (2017 sampling)	ppb	0	15 ppb*	< 1 to 15^ ppb	4 ppb*	Yes
Copper (2017 sampling)	ppb		1300 ppb*	< 9 to 99 ppb	48 ppb*	Yes
Lead and copper are monitored every 3 years in our customers' homes to assess the amount of corrosion occurring in home plumbing. The water sampled is the first-draw of stagnant water in homes identified as having lead solder and copper pipe. There are no lead service lines in Bellingham. Sampling will next be conducted in 2020.						

*90th percentile of samples collected
^One home was found at the action level of 15 ppb. Lead levels dropped to 2 ppb after running the faucet for 30 seconds.
Where: ppm = parts per million, ppb = parts per billion, MCL = maximum contaminant level, AL = Action Level

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. Bellingham's source water is Lake Whatcom on the eastern edge of town. 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 occur naturally or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, and 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 can be naturally occurring or the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

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 (1-800-426-4791).

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, can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health-care providers. The EPA/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 (1-800-426-4791).

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Department of Health and EPA prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Washington State Department of Agriculture regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.

Elevated levels of lead in drinking water can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. In Bellingham, fortunately, lead is not found in the treated water, but lead in drinking water can come from pipes and faucets in our customers' homes. The City of Bellingham is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in customers' plumbing. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for at least 30 seconds before using the water for drinking or cooking. You can capture this water to use on plants. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may opt to have your water analyzed by a local laboratory. To learn more about lead in water, go to: http://water.epa.gov/drink/info/lead.

Definitions

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

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): 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 Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): 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 (e.g., chlorine, chloramines, chlorine dioxide).

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

For more information about water quality contact Lab Supervisor Peg Wendling at (360) 778-7872

OUTDOOR WATER CONSERVATION

The snow has melted and bulbs are emerging from the soil. Spring is upon us and Bellingham residents are spending more time in their yards, enjoying the lengthening days and warmer temperatures. It is a great time to refamiliarize ourselves with helpful outdoor water conservation practices.

Water usage in Bellingham increases substantially in the summer months and much of this use can be eased with the adoption of a few simple outdoor water use practices.

- **Install drip irrigation, hose timers, moisture meters, and rain gauges to prevent overwatering gardens and lawns.**
- **Follow the voluntary City watering schedule in the summer months to keep the demand for water at consistent and manageable levels.**
- **One of the best options is to let your lawn get a "sun tan" and go dormant over the summer. It will green back up with the fall rain.**

Visit **www.cob.org/conserve** for more water conservation tips and resources, including free outdoor water conservation tools.

WATERING SCHEDULE

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
ODD	NO WATERING	EVEN	ODD	EVEN	ODD	EVEN

From June 1 to September 15 annually, the City of Bellingham requests residents with odd-numbered street addresses to limit outdoor watering to Sundays, Wednesdays, or Friday. Residents with even-numbered street addresses are asked to water only on Tuesdays, Thursdays or Saturdays. Mondays are non-watering days, in order to allow reservoirs to recharge after the weekend.

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