

## Drinking Water Quality Reports

### 2009 Drinking Water Quality Report Now Available

The City of Watsonville is proud to report that the water provided by our Utilities Department meets all Federal and State standards for drinking water for 2009. For a copy of the 2009 report [click here](#).

### PREVIOUS YEARS' DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORTS

[2008 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report English & Spanish](#)

[2007 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report English & Spanish](#)

[2006 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report English & Spanish](#)

[2005 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report English & Spanish](#)

[2004 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report English & Spanish](#)

[2003 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report English & Spanish](#)

[2002 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report English & Spanish](#)

[2001 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report English & Spanish](#)

[2000 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report English & Spanish](#)

### How We Get Our Water

When rainfall hits the ground in the Pajaro Valley, a portion of the water is absorbed into the ground and eventually reaches the groundwater table. City-owned and private wells then pump the water out for residential, agricultural, and business uses. About 80% of Watsonville's water supply is groundwater, primarily taken from the Aromas Red Sands Aquifer. The remainder is collected from Corralitos and Browns Creeks and treated at a plant in Corralitos.

The City's water meets the strict standards set by the State. However, there is a shortage of water in the Pajaro Valley: each year, more water is pumped out of the groundwater supplies than is replaced by rainfall. Over-pumping causes saltwater intrusion, the process where ocean water seeps underground into wells, rendering them useless.

While the City of Watsonville uses only 10% of the groundwater pumped in the Pajaro Valley, we must all begin to deal with the challenges created by this shortage. Let's all maintain our precious resources for future generations by continuing to practice water conservation.

### Why Do We Test Our Drinking Water?

As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and may pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water before we treat it include:

- Microbes, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage and septic systems, livestock operations and wildlife.

- Inorganic materials, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff,

industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, or farming.

- Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from agricultural and residential uses.
  - Radioactive substances, which are naturally occurring.
  - Organic chemicals, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.
  - MTBE is a fuel additive, and can get into the environment when gasoline storage tanks leak. No MTBE has been detected in the City's water supplies.
- 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).

#### Information for People with Special Health Concerns

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 microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791). Remember, the City's water met all Federal and State standards for drinking water during 1999.

About Nitrate. Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 45 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. High nitrate levels can also increase the risk of a particular kind of anemia in pregnant women. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant or you are pregnant, you should ask for advice from your health care provider. Please note that the City's water did not exceed the State limit for nitrate in 1999.

For more information about your water, call Bill Brown at 768-3194. Additional copies of this report are available at City Hall. The City Council is the governing body for the City water system. The City Council meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, located at 250 Main Street. The City welcomes your participation in these meetings.

#### Terms & abbreviations:

**Public Health Goal (PHG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHGs are set by the California Environmental Protection Agency.

**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.

**Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. Primary MCLs are set as close to the PHGs (or MCLGs) as is economically and technologically feasible. Secondary MCLs are set to protect the odor, taste, and appearance of drinking water.

**Primary Drinking Water Standard (PDWS):** MCLs for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements.

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

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

n/a: not applicable

nd: not detectable at testing limit

ppb: parts per billion or micrograms per liter

ppm: parts per million or milligrams per liter

pCi/l: picocuries per liter (a measure of radiation)