

Summit Water & Supply Company's 1998 Consumer Confidence Report

This report describes Summit Water & Supply's drinking water sources, quality, and programs that protect the quality of our water supply. This publication conforms to a new federal regulation requiring water utilities to provide this information annually. You as members and owners of Summit Water, should know that it is operated in a manner that protects you and others who rely upon potable water being available at all times. In this report we attempt to balance your "right to know" against the sheer volume of information that we could provide. If some of this information appears complex, it's because providing drinking water has become a complex business.

Safe drinking water is an essential resource. **The bottom line is this: Our water is safe to drink.**

Water quality monitoring reports are submitted to the Washington Health Department's Drinking Water Program Division (DOH), who also provides the information to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The agencies monitor to verify our compliance with the many regulatory standards and testing protocols required to assure safe drinking water.

Your Water - Where Does it Come From ?

A groundwater supply! with 9 production wells in seven different aquifers, is our primary source of water for Summit Water. The wells are in the area with the general boundaries of 64th Street to 128th Street and Vickery Ave. to Woodland Ave. The wells are our sole source of water. The wells are recharged by approximately 14 inches of rain fall that actually penetrates through the ground to the aquifers which contain the water. In 1998 we pumped nearly 600 million gallons of water from these aquifers. Groundwater is totally allocated, and additional wells are not allowed for Summit Water. We do have interties to other water purveyors for emergencies (If they have water available).

Protecting groundwater

Since "what we have is what we get" as far as a water resource, preventing pollution is a priority in protecting our groundwater supply. In 1997, Summit Water identified the aquifers and began the inventory of potential contamination sources. Summit Water and other water purveyors with the cooperation of the Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department has asked the county to prohibit high-risk activities that might threaten the ground water sources which supply wells. Further activity by the county is to regulate and monitor the use of hazardous materials; and identify ways to contain hazardous materials and prevent groundwater pollution.

State and federal agencies monitor water quality.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations which 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.

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. 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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

Important Definitions

- **Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL).** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water.
- **Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG).** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health.
- **Treatment Technique.** If a contaminant exceeds the maximum contaminant level, EPA may require the water system to use a treatment technique. A treatment technique is a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
- **Action Levels.** An Action Level is the concentration of a contaminant which triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- **Part per million; part per billion.** One part per million is the equivalent of ½ of a dissolved aspirin tablet in a full bathtub of water (approximately 50 gallons). One part per billion is equivalent to ½ of a dissolved aspirin tablet in 1,000 bathtubs of water (approximately 50,000 gallons).

Water Quality

Summit Water collects about 200 water samples each year from throughout the water system and at the sources. A certified laboratory conducts the regulated water analyses on those samples. The results are on file with the Washington Health Department's Drinking Water Program Office.

Testing of the sources of supply for the regulated contaminate substances indicated that the **contaminate levels are below** the Maximum Contaminate Level Goals as established by the EPA.

The 6 items listed below were detected in our water during 1998. All, except the copper, are below levels allowed by the federal and state agencies. Not listed are the 60 volatile organic chemicals, 61 synthetic organic chemicals, 15 herbicides or Radionuclides which were not detected in any of our tests.

Substance	Highest Level Allowed (EPA's MCL)	Highest Level Detected	Ideal Goals (EPA's MCLG)	Potential Sources of Contaminants
REGULATED AT THE GROUNDWATER SOURCES				
Nitrate	10 ppm	3.3 ppm	10 ppm	Runoff from fertilizer/Septic and Erosion of natural deposits
UNREGULATED AT THE GROUNDWATER SOURCES				
Trichlorofluoromethane	not regulated	1.0 ppm	not regulated	Vehicle Air Conditioner
REGULATED IN THE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM				
Total Coliform Bacteria	>5% of monthly samples	<2.2%	0%	Naturally present in the environment
Asbestos	7 MFL	<0.098MFL		Decay of asbestos cement water mains; Erosion of natural deposits
REGULATED AT THE CONSUMER'S TAP				
Lead	15 ppb Action Level	0.0	0.0	Household Plumbing
Copper ###	1.3 ppm Action Level	3.9	1.3	Household Plumbing

Increasing the pH of the water by chemical addition is underway, as directed by EPA and DOH.

A test report for Radionuclides indicated that there were no traces of Alpha or Beta particles in your water.

Reduce Potential Exposure to Copper

Few households have an elevated level of copper corrosion occurring. To reduce the potential exposure to copper leaching from the household piping;

- Allow the water first drawn from the tap in the morning or after returning home to flow for at least 15 to 30 seconds.
- Use only water from the cold water tap for cooking, since warm water is more corrosive than cold.

Other Things to Know

We add chlorine in a gaseous form, to the water at each source. A chlorine residual is maintained throughout the distribution system, and measurements are taken daily to ensure the water has the recommended residual. In 1998, there was 3 occurrence of failure to meet the EPA standard. An investigation determined that the contamination occurred during construction projects. The contaminant, in each case was not fecal coliform, nor was it E-coli. The conditions were corrected by proper flushing of the main, and public notifications were issued.

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 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 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 byproducts 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 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 which 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 which must provide the same protection for public health.

The Board of Directors meets twice a month and takes member comments. Summit Water will be glad to provide you additional information about water quality, and you may write us at 9701 50th Ave. East. Tacoma, WA. 98446-5444, call us at 253-537-7781, or e-mail us at summitwc@nwrain.com

