

Southwest Water Users

2024 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

We're pleased to present to you this year's Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. This report is designed to inform you about the quality water and services we deliver to you every day. Our goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water, and we want you to understand, and be involved in, the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources.

Where Does Our Drinking Water Come From?

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. We purchased surface water from Benton Utilities and Central Arkansas Water. Benton Utilities' source of water is the Saline River which supplies Chenault Reservoir. Central Arkansas Water's source is supplied from two surface water sources, Lake Winona and Lake Maumelle. Both lakes can supply Jackson Reservoir, a regulating reservoir located in Little Rock. Water is delivered by pipeline to the Jack H. Wilson and Ozark Point water treatment plants. Both treatment facilities are located in Little Rock.

How Safe Is The Source Of Our Drinking Water?

The Arkansas Department of Health has completed a Source Water Vulnerability Assessment for Benton Water Department. The assessment summarizes the potential for contamination of our source of drinking water and can be used as a basis for developing a source water protection plan. Based on the various criteria of the assessment, our water source has been determined to have a medium susceptibility to contamination. You may request a summary of the Source Water Vulnerability Assessment from our office.

What Contaminants Can Be In Our Drinking Water?

As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, 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 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 be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to assure tap water is safe to drink, EPA has regulations which limit the number 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.

Am I at Risk?

All 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 the water poses a health risk. However, 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 small amounts of contamination. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791. In addition, EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by microbiological contaminants are also available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline.

Lead and Drinking Water

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. We are 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>.

How Can I Learn More About Our Drinking Water?

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact Nikki Townsend, Office Manager, at 501-776-2212. 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 Public Water Meetings. They are held on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM at 620 Airline Drive in Benton.

TEST RESULTS

We, Central Arkansas Water, and Benton Utilities, routinely monitor for constituents in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The test results table shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2024. In the table you might find terms and abbreviations you are not familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

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

Level 1 Assessment - A level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system.

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 Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) - unenforceable public health goal; 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.

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.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG) - the level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

NA - not applicable

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU) - a unit of measurement for the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

Parts per billion (ppb) - a unit of measurement for detected levels of contaminants in drinking water. One part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000.

Parts per million (ppm) - a unit of measurement for detected levels of contaminants in drinking water. One part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.

WTP- Water Treatment Plant

TURBIDITY						
Contaminant	Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Unit	MCLG (Public Health Goal)	MCL (Allowable Level)	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Turbidity (Benton)	N	Highest yearly sample result: 0.18	NTU	NA	Any measurement in excess of 1 NTU constitutes a violation	Soil runoff
		Lowest monthly % of samples meeting the turbidity limit: 100%				
Turbidity (CAW - Ozark Point WTP)	N	Highest yearly sample result: 0.18			A value less than 95% of samples meeting the limit of 0.3 NTU, constitutes a violation	
		Lowest monthly % of samples meeting the turbidity limit: 100%				
Turbidity (CAW - Jack Wilson WTP)	N	Highest yearly sample result: 0.33				
		Lowest monthly % of samples meeting the turbidity limit: 99.5%				

- ♦ Turbidity measures water cloudiness. Benton Utilities and Central Arkansas Water monitor it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of their filtration systems.

INORGANIC CONTAMINANTS						
Contaminant	Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Unit	MCLG (Public Health Goal)	MCL (Allowable Level)	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Fluoride (Benton - Old WTP)	N	Average: 0.70 Range: 0.39 - 0.90	ppm	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth
Fluoride (Benton - New WTP)	N	Average: 0.79 Range: 0.61 - 0.94				
Fluoride (CAW- Ozark Point WTP)	N	Average: 0.80 Range: 0.74 - 0.85				
Fluoride (CAW- Jack Wilson WTP)	N	Average: 0.81 Range: 0.76 - 0.89				
Nitrate [as Nitrogen] (CAW- Ozark Point WTP)	N	0.10	ppm	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits

TOTAL ORGANIC CARBON						
♦ The percentage of Total Organic Carbon (TOC) removal was routinely monitored by our suppliers in 2024, and all TOC removal requirements set by USEPA were met. TOC has no health effects. However, Total Organic Carbon provides a medium for the formation of disinfection by-products. These by-products include trihalomethanes (THMs) and haloacetic acids (HAAs).						

LEAD AND COPPER TAP MONITORING					
Contaminants	Number of Sites over Action Level	90 th Percentile Result	Unit	Action Levels	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Lead	0 of 20	<0.001	ppm	0.015	Corrosion from household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
Copper	0 of 20	0.0852	ppm	1.3	

- ♦ We are currently on a reduced monitoring schedule and required to sample once every three years for lead and copper at the customers' taps. The results above are from our last monitoring period in 2024. Our next required monitoring period is in 2027.
- ♦ As part of our ongoing efforts to comply with federal regulations, we have developed a service line inventory to identify potential lead service lines within our system. A copy of the inventory is available from our office upon request.

REGULATED DISINFECTANTS						
Disinfectant	Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Unit	MRDLG (Public Health Goal)	MRDL (Allowable Level)	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Chlorine	N	Average: 0.85 Range: 0.2 – 1.3	ppm	4	4	Water additive used to control microbes

BY-PRODUCTS OF DRINKING WATER DISINFECTION					
Contaminant	Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Units	MCLG (Public Health Goal)	MCL (Allowable Level)
HAA5 [Haloacetic Acids]	N	Highest Locational Running Average: 31 Range: 16.7 – 40.9	ppb	0	60
TTHM [Total Trihalomethanes]	N	Highest Locational Running Average: 49 Range: 23.7 – 56.8	ppb	NA	80
Chlorite (CAW - Ozark Point WTP)	N	Highest Monthly Average: 100 Range: 0 - 164	ppb	800	1000
Chlorite (CAW - Jack Wilson WTP)	N	Highest Monthly Average: 300 Range: 53 - 428	ppb	800	1000

MICROBIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS

Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful, waterborne pathogens may be present or that a potential pathway exists through which contamination may enter the drinking water distribution system. We found coliforms indicating the need to look for potential problems in water treatment or distribution. When this occurs, we are required to conduct an assessment to identify problems and to correct any problems that were found during the assessment. During the past year, we were required to conduct a Level 1 Assessment. The assessment was completed. In addition, we were required to take one corrective action which was completed.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.