

Serving Placer County Residents Since 1957

IN THIS ISSUE

**Annual Water
Quality Report
ALTA
Water System**

PCWA UPDATE

Placer County Water Agency

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On Tap: Good Water

PCWA Water Meets, Exceeds Public Health Standards

The Board of Directors and staff of the Placer County Water Agency are proud to report once again, as we have each year since 1991, that the drinking water supplied to you meets or exceeds state and federal public health standards for quality and safety.

California water retailers are required by law to inform customers about the quality of their drinking water.

State, Federal Agencies Regulate Water Quality

Water quality is regulated by the federal government through the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974. Uniform standards for this regulation are established by the Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). In California, these standards are enforced by the State Department of Health Services.



Lab Test

PCWA Water Plant Operator Dan Mihalov conducts a jar test in the water agency's laboratory at the Foothill Water Treatment Plant in Newcastle.

This PCWA Water Quality Report, also known as a Consumer Confidence Report, has been prepared under guidelines from the USEPA and the California Department of Health Services.

Please turn to pages 2, 3 and 4 for this year's Water Quality Report.

Additional Test Results Are Also Included

To better inform its customers, PCWA has gone beyond the mandatory reporting requirements and also has included additional test results. These non-mandated test results are also reported.



Alta Surface Water

Data Collected in 2001, Reported in 2002

California MCLs and PHGs, Federal MCLGs

The Source of Your Water Supply

Water for the Alta Water System originates in the Sierra snowpack. Surface water runoff from the Yuba and Bear river watersheds flows through Lake Spaulding and into Alta Reservoir. The water is treated at the Alta Water Treatment Plant and piped to customers in the Alta area.

Measurements reported here were collected in 2001 (unless noted). In accordance with federal regulations, data is from the most recent tests taken. We are allowed to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.

| Parameters/ Constituents | Units | State MCL | MCLG or (PHG) | PCWA Levels Range (Avg.) | Year Monitored | Likely Source of Contamination |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
|-----------------------------|-------|--------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|

Microbiological Primary Drinking Water Standards

| | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|------|------|------|-----------|-------------|
| Turbidity* | NTU | TT=5 | None | 0.24 | 100% 2001 | Soil runoff |
|------------|-----|------|------|------|-----------|-------------|

* Turbidity is a measurement of clarity or the level of suspended matter in the water. In reporting turbidity, the highest single measurement and the lowest monthly percentage of samples meeting the turbidity limits are specified.

Inorganic Primary Drinking Water Standards

| | | | | | | |
|----------|-----|----|-----|----------------|------|----------------------------------|
| Chromium | ppb | 50 | 100 | ND-1.4 (ND) | 2001 | Erosion from natural deposits |
|----------|-----|----|-----|----------------|------|----------------------------------|

Radiological Primary Drinking Water Standards

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|----|---|------|------|----------------------------------|
| Alpha Activity, Gross | pCi/L | 15 | 0 | 0.17 | 2001 | Erosion from natural deposits |
|--------------------------|-------|----|---|------|------|----------------------------------|

Secondary Drinking Water Standards

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------|----------------|------|------|------|-------------------------------------|
| Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) | ppm | 1000 | None | 42 | 2001 | Naturally present in environment |
| Specific Conductance | umho/cm | 1600 | None | 54 | 2001 | Naturally present in environment |
| Chloride | ppm | 500 | None | 5.4 | 2001 | Naturally present in environment |
| Sulfate | ppm | 500 | None | 0.73 | 2001 | Naturally present in environment |
| Total Hardness | ppm | No Standard | None | 9.9 | 2001 | Naturally present in environment |
| Sodium | ppm | No Standard | None | 7.1 | 2001 | Naturally present in environment |

FOR MORE INFORMATION on water quality or questions about the results presented in this report, PCWA customers are invited to contact the PCWA Customer Service Center. Call (530) 823-4850 or toll-free 1-800-464-0030.

About Drinking 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 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

Note to At-Risk Water Users

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. USEPA/Centers for Disease Control (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).

Environmental Influences on Water

The sources of drinking water (both tap 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 salt 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 or 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.

Ensuring Safety

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, USEPA and the state Department of Health Services prescribe regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. State regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.

Understanding Your Water Quality Report: Definitions

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

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

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

PDWS: Primary Drinking Water Standard. MCL's for contaminants that affect health along with their

monitoring and reporting requirements, and water treatment requirements.

NTU: Nephelometric Turbidity Units. A measure of the clarity of water.

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

pCi/l: picocuries per liter. A measure of radiation.

ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)

ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (ug/l)

umho/cm: Micromhoes per centimeter. Measurement of water's ability to conduct electrical current.

<: Less Than

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua beber. Tradúzcalo ó hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

PCWA Supplies Safe Drinking Water

PCWA customers should feel comfortable in knowing their water is carefully treated and monitored by a team of licensed professional water treatment operators.

It is also important to note that our location near the mountain snowpack provides fresh runoff and reduces the chance for upstream contamination.

Snowpack runoff is the source for all PCWA customers except for a small number served by wells.

| PCWA WATER TREATMENT PLANTS | | PCWA WELLS |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Alta | | Lahontan (2) |
| Monte Vista | | (near Truckee) |
| Colfax | | Bianchi Estates (2) |
| Applegate | | (near Roseville) |
| Bowman | | |
| Auburn | | |
| Foothill | | |
| Sunset | | |

Non-Mandated Water Quality Information of Interest to PCWA Customers

Organic Chemicals Monitored

| Parameters/Constituents | Units | State MCL | MCLG or (PHG) | PCWA Levels Range (Avg.) | Year Monitored | Likely Source of Contamination |
|------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------|---|
| Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) | ppb | 80 | None | 12-35 (25) | 2001 | By-product of drinking water chlorination |
| Total Haloacetic Acids | ppb | 60 | None | 9-29 (16) | 2001 | By-product of drinking water chlorination |

Total trihalomethanes and total haloacetic acids were monitored and future compliance will be determined with a running annual average. Reported is the range of detected levels and the highest average. Monitoring for total trihalomethanes and total haloacetic acids is not required for the Alta system at this time but will be required as of Jan. 1, 2004.

| Parameters/Constituents | Units | EPA/State MCL | MCLG or (PHG) | PCWA Levels Range (Avg.) | Year Data Collected |
|---|-------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Organic | | | | | |
| Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (MTBE) | ppb | 13 | (13) | ND | 2001 |
| Inorganic | | | | | |
| Fluoride | ppm | 2 | (1) | <0.1 | 2001 |
| Secondary Drinking Water Standards | | | | | |
| Hydroxide Alkalinity | ppm | No Standard | None | 32 | 2001 |

Customer's Corner

The Placer County Water Agency Board of Directors meets regularly the first and third Thursdays of each month at 3 p.m. in the Placer County Board of Supervisors chambers, 175 Fulweiler Avenue in Auburn. The public is welcome.

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