

Serving Placer County Residents Since 1957

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*Annual Consumer
Confidence Report*
ALTA
Water System

PCWA UPDATE

Placer County Water Agency

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Fresh From the Sierra Snowpack

PCWA Water Meets and Exceeds Public Health Standards

A good, safe water supply is being provided to customers of the Placer County Water Agency.

Your elected PCWA Board of Directors and the PCWA staff 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. The results of PCWA's testing and monitoring programs of 2002 are reported in this newsletter.

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, standards are enforced by the State Department of Health Services.

This PCWA Water Quality Report, also known as a



Cool, Clear Water

Water plant operator Ken Hodkin inspects a settling basin at the Foothill Water Treatment Plant in Newcastle.

Consumer Confidence Report, has been prepared under guidelines from the USEPA and the California Department of Health Services.

Additional Test Results Are Also Included

To better inform customers, PCWA has gone beyond the mandatory reporting requirements and also has included

additional test results. Some of these non-mandated test results relate to taste and appearance.

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

If you have any questions about this report or the quality of your water, please contact the PCWA Customer Service Department.



The Source of Your Water Supply

Water for the PCWA delivery system originates in the Sierra snowpack. Surface water runoff from the Yuba and Bear river watersheds flows through Lake Spaulding into the PG&E and PCWA delivery systems. This supply is supplemented from time to time with water from the American River. Water is treated at the water treatment plants listed in this report. Customers on the Bianchi and Lahontan systems are supplied with well water.

In cooperation with the Nevada Irrigation District, PCWA has completed a Sanitary Survey and Source Water Assessment of the Yuba-Bear river watershed. Details of this report are available through the PCWA Customer Service Center.

Measurements reported here were collected in 2002 (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.

Primary Drinking Water Standards

Constituent range (average)	Units	State MCL	MCLG or PHG or [or MRDL] [MRDLG]	Alta	Applegate	Auburn/Bowman	Bianchi (well)	Colfax	Foothill/Sunset	Lahontan (well)	Monte Vista
Turbidity	NTU	TT=5	None	9 99% 1) Violation	0.25 100%	0.45 100%	NA	0.29 100%	0.28 100%	NA	0.18 100%
Lead (at the tap 90th percentile)	ug/L	AL=15	2	ND	6*	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	5.4
Total Trihalomethane	ug/L	80	None	NA	NA	31.1-56.5 (42.3)	NA	NA	26.4-64.7 (45.2)	ND	NA
Total Haloacetic Acids	ug/L	60	None	NA	NA	15.1-47.7 (31.3)	NA	NA	16.2-40.0 (30.5)	ND	NA
Chlorine	mg/L	[4]	[4]	NA	NA	0.6-0.8 (0.7)	NA	NA	0.6-0.9 (0.7)	NA	NA
Total Organic Carbon	mg/L	2	None	NA	NA	0.4-1.2 (0.8)	ND	NA	0.7-3.3 (1.1)	ND	NA
Arsenic	ug/L	50	NA	ND	ND	ND	4.1	ND	ND	3.7-8.9 (6.3)	ND
Chromium	ug/L	50	(100)***	ND	ND	ND	10	ND	ND	1.1	ND
Nitrate	mg/L	45	45	ND	ND	ND	7.1	ND	ND	ND	ND
Fluoride	mg/L	2	1	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	0.5-0.9 (0.8)	ND	ND
Arsenic	ug/L	50	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Vanadium	ug/L	AL=50	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND-5 (2.5)*	ND
Gross Alpha	pCi/L	15	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	2.5**	ND
Copper (at the tap 90th percentile)	mg/L	AL=1.3	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	0.2*	ND
Aluminum	mg/L	1	0.6	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	0.055

Turbidity is a measurement of clarity on 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. Soil runoff is a likely source of contamination.

* Sampled in 2001. ** Sampled in 1999. *** MCLG

1) Alta, CA Water System: Plant malfunction raises turbidity: Quick response limits violation to 15 minutes. Customers on the system were notified immediately following the incident.

On June 6-7, 2002, at about midnight, Alta WTP flowed treated water into the distribution system for about 15 minutes which was more cloudy than the maximum contaminant level of 5 units of turbidity. The highest recorded cloudiness level was 9 units of turbidity. The cause of the water exceeding turbidity standards was a plant malfunction which was corrected.

Turbidity has no health effects. However, high levels of turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for bacterial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms. Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea and associated headaches. A precautionary boil water alert was issued and then was lifted when the distribution system water samples, taken during the event, showed no bacterial presence.

Secondary Drinking Water Standards

Constituent range (average)	Units	State MCL	MCLG or PHG	Alta	Applegate	Auburn/Bowman	Bianchi (well)	Colfax	Foothill/Sunset	Lahontan (well)	Monte Vista
Total Dissolved Solids	mg/L	1000	None	28	36	42-45 (44)	200	38	33-53 (43)	130-140 (135)	30
Specific Conductance	umho/cm	600	None	48	56	43-51 (47)	210	53	56-102 (77)	170-180 (175)	63
Chloride	mg/L	500	None	4.6	4.5	4.2-4.6 (4.4)	16	4.4	3.7	1.1-1.7 (1.4)	6
Sulfate	mg/L	500	None	1.1	1	5.4-6.1 (5.8)	4.6	6.4	6.4	1.2-1.7 (1.5)	1
Manganese	mg/L	0.05	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	0.024	ND	ND
Color	units	15	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	5	ND	ND
Odor	units	3	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	3	ND	ND
Aluminum	ug/L	200	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	55

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.

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.

MRDL: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level. The level of a disinfectant added for water treatment that may not be exceeded at a consumers tap.

MRDLG: Maximum Residual Disinfectant level goal. The level of a disinfectant added for water treatment below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs are set by the USEPA.

ND: Non-Detected **NA:** Non-Applicable

PDWS: Primary Drinking Water Standard. MCL's and MRDL's for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements, and water treatment requirements.

RAL: Regulatory Action Level. The concentration of a contaminant, which if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

NTU: Nephelometric Turbidity Units. A measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity is monitored because it is a good indicator of water quality. High turbidity can hinder the effectiveness of disinfectants.

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

mg/L: milligrams per liter.

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

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

ug/L: parts per billion

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

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 most PCWA water users. Two smaller service areas are supplied by wells.

The agency's Water Quality Section is headquartered at the Auburn Water Treatment Plant in Auburn. Water testing and monitoring are conducted regularly in a laboratory at the Foothill Water Treatment Plant in Newcastle. The agency sends out to professional labs for complete water analyses.

PLACER COUNTY WATER AGENCY WATER TREATMENT PLANTS

Alta

Monte Vista
Colfax
Applegate
Bowman
Auburn
Foothill
Sunset

PCWA WELLS

Lahontan (2) (near Truckee)
Bianchi Estates (2) (near Roseville)

Monitoring of Unregulated Substances

Constituent range (average)	Units	State MCL	MCLG or PHG	Alta	Applegate	Auburn/ Bowman	Bianchi (well)	Colfax	Foothill/ Sunset	Lahontan (well)	Monte Vista
Sodium	mg/L	None	None	6.2	7.5	2.2-2.5 (2.4)	18	6.4	2.3-3.3 (2.8)	8.5-12 (10)	9.4
Hardness	mg/L	None	None	7.6	8.5	12-18 (15)	63	8.8	20-28 (24)	67-80 (74)	7.8
Total Trihalomethanes	ug/L	100	None	13.3-57.3 (36.6)	61.4	NA	1.4*	31.6-59.0 (48.8)	NA	ND	58.4
Total Haloacetic Acids	ug/L	None	None	17.0-31.3 (22.9)	29.8	NA	1.8*	6.1-34.2 (26.3)	ND	ND	44.8
Chlorine	mg/L	(4)	(4)	0.5-1.0 (0.8)	0.6-1.0 (0.8)	ND	0.8-1.5 (1.0)	0.5-0.9 (0.7)		0.2-0.7 (0.4)	0.4-1.0 (0.7)
Total Organic Carbon	mg/L	TT=RAL<2	None	0.6-2.1 (1.0)	1.1-5.2 (1.7)	NA	ND	0.6-1.4 (1.0)	NA	ND	0.8-1.8 (1)
Radon 222	pCi/L	None	None	NA	NA	NA	957-1100 (1032) **	NA	NA	930-1600 (1198)**	NA
Hexavalent Chromium	ug/L	None	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND-1.1 (ND)**	NA

* Sampled in 2000. ** Sampled in 2001

Public Meetings

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.

www.pcwa.net

This newsletter is published as a public service of the
**PLACER COUNTY
WATER AGENCY**

144 Ferguson Rd. (P.O. Box 6570)
Auburn, CA 95604
(530) 823-4850
(800) 464-0030

GENERAL MANAGER: DAVID A. BRENINGER
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: DAVE CARTER