

Serving Placer County Residents Since 1957

IN THIS ISSUE

*Annual
Consumer
Confidence
Report*

PCWA UPDATE

Placer County Water Agency

Volume 18 • Number 2 • April-May, 2004

Fresh From the Mountain Snowpack, PCWA Water Meets All Health Standards

The Placer County Water Agency is very proud to supply our customers with a good, safe and healthy water supply.

We are pleased to report once again - as we have each year since 1991 - that the drinking water supplied to your tap meets or exceeds state and federal public health standards for quality and safety.

California water retailers, including PCWA, are required by law to inform customers about the quality of their drinking water. The results of PCWA's testing and monitoring programs of 2003 are reported in this newsletter.

Safe Drinking Water Act

Drinking water quality in America is regulated by the federal government through the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974. Uniform standards for this regulation are established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

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

This PCWA Water Quality Report, also known as the annu-



Close to the Source

Water to most PCWA customers originates on Sierra mountain watershed above Lake Spaulding. A location close to the source is an advantage in fresh, tasty and healthy water supplies.

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

Additional Tests

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 drinking water, please contact the PCWA Customer Service Department.



The Source of Your Water Supply

Water for the PCWA delivery system originates in the Sierra snow-pack. 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 Lahontan system are supplied with well water. The Bianchi system was converted from well water to surface water during 2003.

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 2003 (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	SEE (A)(B) SEE (C)(D)	None	0.49 100%	0.21 100%	0.68 99%	0.18 100%	0.44 100%	0.28 100%	NA NA	0.37 100%
Total Coliform Bacteria	mg/L	SEE (E)	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	1.6%	ND	ND
Lead (at the tap 90th percentile) (1)	ug/L	AL=15	2	ND	6**	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	5.4***
1, 1, 2-Trichloroethane*	ug/L	5	(3)	ND	ND	ND-3.0 (0.75)	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Total Trihalomethanes	ug/L	80	None	NA	NA	22.5-68 (41.7)	19-53 (32)	NA	19-53 (41.7)	ND	NA
Total Haloacetic Acids	ug/L	60	None	NA	NA	14-36 (26.9)	14-23 (18)	NA	12-36.1 (27.3)	ND	NA
Chlorine	mg/L	[4]	[4]	NA	NA	0.6-0.9 (0.8)	0.2-2.0 (1.1)	NA	0.47-0.8 (0.7)	NA	NA
Total Organic Carbon	mg/L	TT=RAL<2	None	NA	NA	1.2-2.0 (1.6)	1.3-1.6 (1.5)	NA	1.1-1.8 (1.5)	ND	NA
Arsenic	ug/L	50	NA	ND	ND	ND	4.1***	ND	ND	1.5-8.2 (4.7)	ND
Chromium	ug/L	50	(100)	ND	ND	ND	10***	ND	ND	1.2-3.4 (2.3)	ND
Nitrate	mg/L	45	45	ND	ND	ND	7.1***	ND	ND	ND	ND
Fluoride	mg/L	2	1	ND	ND	ND	0.7-0.9 (0.8)	ND	0.7-0.9 (0.8)	ND	ND
Vanadium **	ug/L	AL=50	None	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND-5 (2.5)	ND
Thallium	ug/L	2	0.1	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND-1.4 (ND)	ND
Copper (at the tap 90th percentile) (2)	mg/L	AL=1.3	0.17	ND	ND	0.09	ND	ND	ND	0.2**	ND

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. Soil runoff is a likely source of contamination.

- (A) TT = 5 NTU for Alta, Applegate, Colfax, Monte Vista water systems.
- (B) TT = 1.0 NTU for Auburn/Bowman, Foothill/Sunset, Bianchi water systems.
- (C) TT = 95% of samples <0.5 NTU for Alta, Applegate, Colfax, Monte Vista.
- (D) TT = 95% of samples <0.3 NTU Auburn/Bowman, Foothill/Sunset, Bianchi.
- (E) MCL = Systems that collect more than 40 samples per month: More than 5.0% positive samples: Foothill/Sunset.

* Sampled in 2000. ** Sampled in 2001. ***Sampled in 2002.

(1) Five sites were sampled for lead, no sites were above the AL

(2) Copper test is from 2002. Twenty sites were sampled, no sites were reported above the AL.

Bianchi System: This system was converted from well water to surface water in July, 2003. It is now served through the City of Roseville. Roseville information is included.

Auburn-Bowman: This system was supplied from time to time through an intertie with the Nevada Irrigation District. NID information is included in this report.

Foothill/Sunset: This system was supplied from time to time through an intertie with the City of Roseville. Roseville information is included.

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	26	42	35-46 (39)	53-200 (126)	45	31-53 (42)	110-130 (120)	44
Specific Conductance	umho/cm	1600	None	38	55	42-58 (49)	81-210 (146)	55	50-81 (66)	180	59
Chloride	mg/L	500	None	3.7	4.7	2-4.3 (3.4)	3-16 (10)	5	3-3.5 (3)	1.2-1.5 (1.4)	6.3
Sulfate	mg/L	500	None	0.98	0.96	3-4.8 (5.2)	4.6-5.7 (5.2)	4.6	5.7-6.3 (6)	1.3-1.6 (1.5)	0.98
Color	units	15	None	5	5	ND	ND	5	5-10 (8)	10	5
Odor	units	3	None	ND	ND	1	ND	ND	3	ND	ND

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 \(1-800-426-4791\)](https://www.epa.gov/safewater).

Note to At-Risk Water Users

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised 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 mate-

rial, 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. The Lahontan community near Truckee is supplied with well water.

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 (Two wells near Roseville were replaced by surface water in July, 2003)

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	5.2	7	2.0-2.7 (2.4)	3.3-18 (11)	7	3.3-5.5 (4.4)	8.8-12 (10.4)	8.4
Hardness	mg/L	None	None	7.4	11	12-23 (17)	28-63 (46)	10	10-28 (19)	65-75 (70)	9.4
Total Trihalomethanes	ug/L	100	None	27.5-45.3 (40.1)*	64	NA	NA	35.6-47.1 (46.3)	NA	ND	27.8-72.9 (53.9)
Total Haloacetic Acids	ug/L	None	None	14.0-31.3 (22.9)*	35	NA	NA	15-38.7 (32)	NA	ND	16-62.3 (44.1)
Chlorine	mg/L	(4)	(4)	0.5-1.2 (0.8)	0.4-1.4 (0.9)	NA	NA	0.4-0.9 (0.8)	NA	0.2-0.6 (0.4)	0.5-0.8 (0.7)
Total Organic Carbon	mg/L	TT=RAL<2	None	0.7-1.8 (1.4)	1.3-2.2 (1.6)	NA	NA	1.1-2.0 (1.4)	NA	ND	1-1.7 (1.4)
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	NA	ND-1.1 (ND)**	NA

*Sampled in 2002 and 2003. ** 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