

Town of Amherst 2021 Drinking Water Quality Report

Annual Report Introduction:

We are pleased to present this year's Annual Water Quality Report (Consumer Confidence Report) as required by the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). This report is designed to provide details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies. This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality. We are committed to providing you with information because informed customers are our best allies.

Do I need to take special precautions?

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/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 Water Drinking Hotline (800-426-4791).

Where does my water come from?

The Town of Amherst's source water for its drinking water is the Buffalo River and its associated watershed. The Amherst County Watershed Protection Ordinance provides exceptional protection for the entire Graham Creek and Mill Creek watersheds. The protected parts of the Buffalo River watersheds lie above the water intake point for the Town. The purpose of the Watershed Protection Ordinance is to prevent and minimize pollution of the sources of drinking water. It is almost always better and cheaper to avoid water pollution than it is to have to treat polluted water to make it safe to drink.

The Robert E. Lee Soil and Water Conservation District works with Amherst County to conduct land use surveys of the drinking water watersheds. If activities are identified that might pollute the water, landowners may be contacted. Farmers who install agricultural conservation practices that protect drinking supplies at the source may be eligible for a local incentive grant.

Amherst Tree Buffer Program: Landowners that sign up will receive free native hardwood trees

and tree shelters that must be planted along local waterways. This program is funded through forestry grants and strives to protect water at the source.

Why are there contaminants in 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 Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Description of Water Treatment Process

Your water is treated in a "treatment train" (a series of processes applied in a sequence) that includes coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, and disinfection. Coagulation removes dirt and other particles suspended in the source water by adding chemicals (coagulants) to form tiny sticky particles called "floc," which attract the dirt particles. Flocculation (the formation of larger flocs from smaller flocs) is achieved using gentle, constant mixing. The heavy particles settle naturally out of the water in a sedimentation basin. The clear water then moves to the filtration process where the water passes through sand, gravel, charcoal or other filters that remove even smaller particles. A small amount of chlorine or other disinfection method is used to kill bacteria and other microorganisms (viruses, cysts, etc.) that may be in the water before water is stored and distributed to homes and businesses in the community.

Cross Connection Control Survey

The purpose of this survey is to determine whether a cross-connection may exist at your home or business. A cross connection is an unprotected or improper connection to a public water distribution system that may cause contamination or pollution to enter the system. We are responsible for enforcing cross-connection control regulations and insuring that no contaminants can, under any flow conditions, enter the distribution system. If you have any of the devices listed below please contact us so that we can discuss the issue, and if needed, survey your connection and assist you in isolating it if that is necessary.

- Boiler/ Radiant heater (water heaters not included)

- Underground lawn sprinkler system
- Pool or hot tub (whirlpool tubs not included)
- Additional source(s) of water on the property
- Decorative pond
- Watering trough

Additional Information for Lead

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. Town of Amherst Water System is 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>.

Water Quality Data Table

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the calendar year of this report. Although many more contaminants were tested, only those substances listed below were found in your water. All sources of drinking water contain some naturally occurring contaminants. At low levels, these substances are generally not harmful in our drinking water. Removing all contaminants would be extremely expensive, and in most cases, would not provide increased protection of public health. A few naturally occurring minerals may actually improve the taste of drinking water and have nutritional value at low levels. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done in the calendar year of the report. The EPA or the State requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not vary significantly from year to year, or the system is not considered vulnerable to this type of contamination. As such, some of our data, though representative, may be more than one year old. In this table you will find terms and abbreviations that might not be familiar to you. To help you better understand these terms, we have provided the definitions below the table.

Contaminants	MCLG or MRDLG	MCL, TT, or MRDL	Detect In Your Water	Range		Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source
				Low	High			
Disinfectants & Disinfection By-Products								
(There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants)								
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	NA	60	19.03	10.1	25.1	2021	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	NA	80	35.13	20.2	53.9	2021	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Organic Carbon (% Removal)	NA	TT	NA	NA	NA	2021	No	
Inorganic Contaminants								
Barium (ppm)	2	2	.0192	NA	NA	2021	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Chromium (ppb)	100	100	.27	NA	NA	2021	No	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	.86	.37	.86	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	10	10	.21	NA	NA	2021	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (optional) (ppm)	NA		15.3	NA	NA	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching
Contaminants	MCLG	AL	Your Water	Sample Date	# Samples Exceeding AL	Exceeds AL	Typical Source	
Inorganic Contaminants								
Copper - action level at consumer taps (ppm)	1.3	1.3	.187	January to June 2021	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits	
Lead - action level at consumer taps (ppb)	0	15	1.4	2021	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits	

Unit Descriptions	
Term	Definition
ppm	ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/L)

Unit Descriptions	
ppb	ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (µg/L)
NA	NA: not applicable
ND	ND: Not detected
NR	NR: Monitoring not required, but recommended.

Important Drinking Water Definitions	
Term	Definition
MCLG	MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level 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.
MCL	MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level: 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.
TT	TT: Treatment Technique: A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
AL	AL: Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
Variances and Exemptions	Variances and Exemptions: State or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.
MRDLG	MRDLG: Maximum residual disinfection level goal. 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.
MRDL	MRDL: Maximum residual disinfectant level. 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.
MNR	MNR: Monitored Not Regulated
MPL	MPL: State Assigned Maximum Permissible Level

For more information please contact:

Contact Name: Gary S. Williams
Address: P.O. Box 280
Amherst, VA 24521
Phone: 434-946-1267