

Copy of Town of Amherst 2019 Drinking Water Quality Report

Is my water safe?

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. Last year, we conducted tests for over 80 contaminants. As we informed you at the time, our water temporarily exceeded drinking water standards. (For more information, see the section labeled Violations at the end of the report.)

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 Water Treatment Plant (WTP) receives their raw water from the Buffalo River. During times of drought conditions the Mill Creek Reservoir in Amherst County is used to supplement the river.

The raw water is pumped from the Buffalo River to the WTP. A chemical coagulate is added to the water to assist the organic matter to stick together, then the water flows to sedimentation basin at which point the floc (organic matter that has stuck together) has time to settle to the bottom of the basin. The water at the top of sedimentation basin will flow on top of the filters, where it is filtered to the clearwell. Once the finished water is in the clearwell it is then pumped out to Waugh's Ferry Tank and Union Hill Tank. Each of these tanks will hold 1 MG of water for distribution.

Source water assessment and its availability

A source water assessment was performed by the Office of Drinking Water in April 2003.

Why are there contaminants in my 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). The sources of drinking water (both tap water 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:

microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, that 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; and radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount 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.

How can I get involved?

The Town of Amherst has monthly council meetings held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7pm.

The Town of Amherst Water Treatment Plant is always looking for homes that want to be added to Lead & Copper sampling sites.

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.

Water Conservation Tips

Did you know that the average U.S. household uses approximately 400 gallons of water per day or 100 gallons per person per day? Luckily, there are many low-cost and no-cost ways to conserve water. Small changes can make a big difference - try one today and soon it will become second nature.

- Take short showers - a 5 minute shower uses 4 to 5 gallons of water compared to up to 50 gallons for a bath.
- Shut off water while brushing your teeth, washing your hair and shaving and save up to 500 gallons a month.
- Use a water-efficient showerhead. They're inexpensive, easy to install, and can save you up to 750 gallons a month.
- Run your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- Water plants only when necessary.
- Fix leaky toilets and faucets. Faucet washers are inexpensive and take only a few minutes to replace. To check your toilet for a leak, place a few drops of food coloring in the tank and wait. If it seeps into the toilet bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Fixing it or replacing it with a new, more efficient model can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- Adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered. Apply water only as fast as the soil can absorb it and during the cooler parts of the day to reduce evaporation.
- Teach your kids about water conservation to ensure a future generation that uses water wisely. Make it a family effort to reduce next month's water bill!
- Visit www.epa.gov/watersense for more information.

Source Water Protection Tips

Protection of drinking water is everyone's responsibility. You can help protect your community's drinking water source in several ways:

- Eliminate excess use of lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides - they contain hazardous chemicals that can reach your drinking water source.
- Pick up after your pets.
- If you have your own septic system, properly maintain your system to reduce leaching to water sources or consider connecting to a public water system.
- Dispose of chemicals properly; take used motor oil to a recycling center.
- Volunteer in your community. Find a watershed or wellhead protection organization in your community and volunteer to help. If there are no active groups, consider starting one. Use EPA's Adopt Your Watershed to locate groups in your community, or visit the Watershed Information Network's How to Start a Watershed Team.
- Organize a storm drain stenciling project with your local government or water supplier. Stencil a message next to the street drain reminding people "Dump No Waste - Drains to River" or "Protect Your Water." Produce and distribute a flyer for households to remind residents that storm drains dump directly into your local water body.

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 WTP 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>.

Additional Information for Arsenic

While your drinking water meets EPA's standard for arsenic, it does contain low levels of arsenic. EPA's standard balances the current understanding of arsenic's possible health effects against the costs of removing arsenic from drinking water. EPA continues to research the health effects of low levels of arsenic which is a mineral known to cause cancer in humans at high concentrations and is linked to other health effects such as skin damage and circulatory problems.

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)								
Chlorine (as Cl ₂) (ppm)	4	4	2.3	1.3	2.3	2019	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	NA	60	36	8.5	78	2019	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	NA	80	28	18	50	2019	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Organic Carbon (% Removal)	NA	TT	1.16	NA	NA	2019	No	Naturally present in the environment
Inorganic Contaminants								
Antimony (ppb)	6	6	.3	NA	NA	2019	No	Discharge from petroleum refineries; fire retardants; ceramics; electronics; solder; test addition.
Arsenic (ppb)	0	10	1	NA	NA	2019	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes

Contaminants	MCLG or MRDLG	MCL, TT, or MRDL	Detect In Your Water	Range		Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source
				Low	High			
Barium (ppm)	2	2	.018	NA	NA	2019	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Beryllium (ppb)	4	4	.2	NA	NA	2019	No	Discharge from metal refineries and coal-burning factories; Discharge from electrical, aerospace, and defense industries
Cadmium (ppb)	5	5	.2	NA	NA	2019	No	Corrosion of galvanized pipes; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from metal refineries; runoff from waste batteries and paints
Chromium (ppb)	100	100	1	NA	NA	2019	No	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	.19	NA	NA	2019	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Mercury [Inorganic] (ppb)	2	2	.1	NA	NA	2019	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from refineries and factories; Runoff from landfills; Runoff from cropland
Nitrate [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	10	10	.375	NA	NA	2019	No	The sampling for Nitrate is ran as a combine sampling results for both Nitrate/Nitrite. Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Nitrite [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	1	1	.375	NA	NA	2019	No	The sampling for Nitrite is ran as a combine sample/results for Nitrite/Nitrate. Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Selenium (ppb)	50	50	3	NA	NA	2019	No	Discharge from petroleum and metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from mines
Sodium (optional) (ppm)	NA		12.7	NA	NA	2019	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching

Contaminants	MCLG or MRDLG	MCL, TT, or MRDL	Detect In Your Water	Range		Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source
				Low	High			
Thallium (ppb)	.5	2	.2	NA	NA	2019	No	Discharge from electronics, glass, and Leaching from ore-processing sites; drug factories
Microbiological Contaminants								
Turbidity (NTU)	NA	0.3	100	NA	NA	2019	No	Soil runoff
100% of the samples were below the TT value of .3. A value less than 95% constitutes a TT violation. The highest single measurement was .31. Any measurement in excess of 1 is a violation unless otherwise approved by the state.								
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	.203	2019	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits	
Lead - action level at consumer taps (ppb)	0	15	46	2019	3	Yes	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits	

Violations and Exceedances
<p>Lead - action level at consumer taps</p> <p>Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.</p> <p>The Town of Amherst WTP collected Lead & Copper samples from 20 approved sites in the town, having plumbing material of lead and copper. The results from the 20 sites then are listed from the lowest result to the highest result, the 90th percentile is the 18th result down the list. The Town of Amherst WTP collected 20 Lead & Copper samples, January thru June 2019, 3 of those sites exceed the lead action level of 0.015mg/L. The Lead action level was exceeded in few homes within the Town of Amherst starting in July 2017. Since that time, the Town of Amherst WTP has been collecting 20 Lead & Copper samples every six months (Jan-Jun and Jul-Dec). The cycle Jan-Jun 2019 was the last cycle that lead level had exceeded. The cycle July - December 2019 DID NOT HAVE ANY EXCEEDANCE OF THE LEAD ACTION LEVEL, which is the first six-month cycle to pass the Lead result level.</p> <p>The Town of Amherst WTP has increased the chemical to coat the inside distribution system pipes, to protect the metal in the pipe from contacting the water. Lead education material has been mailed out to residents and staff is working with homeowners to help identify any changes that may have cause the home to exceed action level for lead. Request for any resident with Lead & Copper plumbing that would like to be added to the Approval Lead & Copper site list for sampling to contact Town of Amherst WTP.</p>

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)
NTU	NTU: Nephelometric Turbidity Units. Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.
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

TT Violation	Explanation	Length	Health Effects Language	Explanation and Comment
Lead and copper rule violations	The Town of Amherst WTP collected Lead & Copper samples from 20 approved sites in the town, having plumbing material of lead and copper. The results from the 20 sites then are listed from the lowest result to the highest result. The 90th percentile is the 18th result down the list. The Town of Amherst WTP collected 20 Lead &	The Lead action level was exceeded in few homes within the Town of Amherst starting in July 2017. Since that time, the Town of Amherst WTP has been collecting 20 Lead & Copper samples every six months (Jan-Jun and Jul-Dec). The Jan-Jun 2019 cycle was the	Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.	The Town of Amherst WTP has increased the chemical to coat the inside distribution system pipes, to help in limiting contact between the metal piping and the water. Lead education material has been mailed out to residents, and staff is working with homeowners to help identify any changes that may have to

TT Violation	Explanation	Length	Health Effects Language	Explanation and Comment
	Copper samples, January thru June 2019, 3 of those sites exceed the lead action level of 0.015mg/L.	last cycle that the lead level had exceeded. The July - December 2019 cycle DID NOT have any exceedance of the lead action level, which is the first six-month cycle to pass the Lead result level.		cause the home to exceed the action level for lead. We ask if there are any residents with Lead & Copper plumbing that would like to be added to our Lead & Copper site list for sampling to please contact the Town of Amherst at (434) 946-5769 or (434) 946-1267.

For more information please contact:

Contact Name: Becky Cash
Address: PO Box 280
Amherst, VA 24521
Phone: (434) 946-1267