



# ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

Reporting Year 2023



*Presented By*  
**Garrett Water Works**



PWS ID#: IN5217004



## Our Commitment

We are pleased to present to you this year's annual water quality report. This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality covering all testing performed between January 1 and December 31, 2023. Included are details about your source of water, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water and providing you with this information because informed customers are our best allies.

## Water Treatment Process

The treatment process consists of a series of steps. First, raw water is drawn from our water source and sent to an aeration tank, which allows for oxidation of high iron levels. Then the water goes to pressure filters, where the remainder of the iron is removed. The water then goes to ion exchange softeners to remove hardness.

Chlorine is added as a precaution against any bacteria that may still be present. (We carefully monitor the amount of chlorine, adding the lowest quantity necessary to protect the safety of your water without compromising taste.) A corrosion inhibitor (to protect distribution system pipes) is added before the water is pumped to sanitized underground reservoirs, water towers, and your home or business.

## Where Does My Water Come From?

The City of Garrett Water Works customers are fortunate because we enjoy an abundant water supply from four high-production wells. The Garrett Water Treatment Plant draws water from the four wells and can produce over two million gallons.

## Important Health Information

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 may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (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 at (800) 426-4791 or <http://water.epa.gov/drink/hotline>.

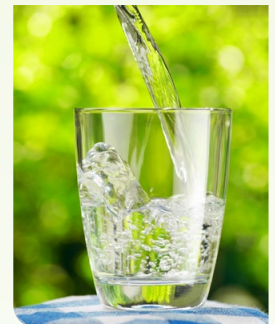


## Community Participation

You are invited to participate in our public Board of Works and voice your concerns about your drinking water. We meet the first and third Tuesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall, 130 South Randolph Street.

## Lead in Home Plumbing

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. We are responsible for providing high-quality drinking water, but we 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 two 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 at (800) 426-4791 or [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).



## QUESTIONS?

For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Department Superintendent Pat Kleeman at (260) 357-3811.

## Substances That Could Be in Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA prescribes regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

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, in some cases radioactive material, and substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances 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, or wildlife;

**Inorganic Contaminants**, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may 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 may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems;

**Radioactive Contaminants**, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, call the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

## Water Main Flushing

Distribution mains (pipes) convey water to homes, businesses, and hydrants in your neighborhood. The water entering distribution mains is of very high quality; however, water quality can deteriorate in areas of the distribution mains over time. Water main flushing is the process of cleaning the interior of water distribution mains by sending a rapid flow of water through them.

Flushing maintains water quality in several ways. For example, flushing removes sediments like iron and manganese. Although iron and manganese do not pose health concerns, they can affect the taste, clarity, and color of the water. Additionally, sediments can shield microorganisms from the disinfecting power of chlorine, contributing to the growth of microorganisms within distribution mains. Flushing helps remove stale water and ensures the presence of fresh water with sufficient dissolved oxygen and disinfectant levels and an acceptable taste and smell.

During flushing operations in your neighborhood, some short-term deterioration of water quality, though uncommon, is possible. You should avoid tap water for household uses at that time. If you do use the tap, allow your cold water to run for a few minutes at full velocity before use and avoid using hot water to prevent sediment accumulation in your hot water tank. Please contact us if you have any questions or if you would like more information on our water main flushing schedule.

## Water Conservation Tips

You can play a role in conserving water and save yourself money in the process by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using and looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It is not hard to conserve water. Here are a few tips:

- Automatic dishwashers use four to six gallons for every cycle, regardless of how many dishes are loaded. So get a run for your money and load it to capacity.
- Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.
- Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day. Fix it and you can save almost 6,000 gallons per year.
- Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Watch for a few minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons a day from an invisible toilet leak. Fix it and you save more than 30,000 gallons a year.
- Use your water meter to detect hidden leaks. Simply turn off all taps and water-using appliances. Then check the meter after 15 minutes. If it moved, you have a leak.

## Test Results

Our water is monitored for many different kinds of substances on a very strict sampling schedule, and the water we deliver must meet specific health standards. Here, we only show those substances that were detected in our water (a complete list of all our analytical results is available upon request). Remember that detecting a substance does not mean the water is unsafe to drink; our goal is to keep all detects below their respective maximum allowed levels.

The state recommends monitoring for certain substances less than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data are included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

We participated in the fifth stage of the U.S. EPA's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR5) program by performing additional tests on our drinking water. UCMR5 sampling benefits the environment and public health by providing the U.S. EPA with data on the occurrence of contaminants suspected to be in drinking water to determine if it needs to introduce new regulatory standards to improve drinking water quality. Unregulated contaminant monitoring data are available to the public, so please feel free to contact us if you are interested in obtaining that information. If you would like more information on the U.S. EPA's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule, please call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

### REGULATED SUBSTANCES

| SUBSTANCE<br>(UNIT OF MEASURE)        | YEAR<br>SAMPLED | MCL<br>[MRDL]   | MCLG<br>[MRDLG] | AMOUNT<br>DETECTED | RANGE<br>LOW-HIGH | VIOLATION | TYPICAL SOURCE  |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------|---|
| Barium                                | 2021            | 2               | 2               | 0.351              | NA                | No        | Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits                                |
| Beta/Photon Emitters                  | 2017            | 50 <sup>1</sup> | 0               | 1.7                | NA                | No        | Decay of natural and human-made deposits  |
| Fluoride                              | 2021            | 4               | 4               | 0.909              | NA                | No        | Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories |
| Nitrate (ppm)                         | 2023            | 10              | 10              | 0.31               | NA                | No        | Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits                               |
| TTHMs [total trihalomethanes]–Stage 1 | 2022            | 80 <sup>2</sup> | NA              | 15                 | NA                | No        | By-product of drinking water disinfection   |
| Uranium                               | 2017            | 30              | 0               | 0.1365             | NA                | No        | Erosion of natural deposits   |

Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community

| SUBSTANCE<br>(UNIT OF MEASURE) | YEAR<br>SAMPLED | AL  | MCLG | AMOUNT<br>DETECTED<br>(90TH %ILE) | SITES ABOVE<br>AL/TOTAL<br>SITES | VIOLATION | TYPICAL SOURCE  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----|------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|---|
| Copper (ppm)                   | 2023            | 1.3 | 1.3  | 0.822                             | 0/20                             | No        | Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits  |
| Lead (ppb)                     | 2023            | 15  | 0    | 5                                 | 0/20                             | No        | Lead service lines; corrosion of household plumbing systems, including fittings and fixtures; erosion of natural deposits |

<sup>1</sup> The MCL for beta particles is 4 millirems per year. U.S. EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for beta particles.

<sup>2</sup> Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous system and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

## Definitions

**90th %ile:** The levels reported for lead and copper represent the 90th percentile of the total number of sites tested. The 90th percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of our lead and copper detections.

**AL (Action Level):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**Level 1 Assessment:** A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system.

**Level 2 Assessment:** A Level 2 assessment is a very detailed study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why an *E. coli* MCL violation has occurred and/or why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system on multiple occasions.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant 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.

**NA:** Not applicable.

**pCi/L (picocuries per liter):** A measure of radioactivity.

**ppb (parts per billion):** One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

## BY THE NUMBERS

 **5.1 TRILLION**

The dollar value needed to keep water, wastewater, and stormwater systems in good repair.

 **12 THOUSAND**

The average amount in gallons of water used to produce one megawatt-hour of electricity.

 **2**

How often in minutes a water main breaks.

 **47.5 TRILLION**

The amount in gallons of water used to meet U.S. electric power needs in 2020.


 **1.7 TRILLION**

The gallons of drinking water lost each year to faulty, aging, or leaky pipes.

 **33**

The percentage of water sector employees who will be eligible to retire by 2033.

### Level 1 Assessment Update

 Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful, waterborne pathogens may be present or that a potential pathway exists through which contamination may enter the drinking water distribution system. We found coliforms, indicating the need to look for potential problems in water treatment or distribution. When this occurs, we are required to conduct assessments to identify and correct any problems.

During the past year, we were required to conduct 1 Level 1 assessment. 1 Level 1 assessment was completed. In addition, we were required to take 2 corrective actions, and we completed 2 of these actions.

### Think Before You Flush!

Flushing unused or expired medicines can be harmful to your drinking water. Properly disposing of unused or expired medication helps protect you and the environment. Keep medications out of our waterways by disposing responsibly. To find a convenient drop-off location near you, please visit <https://bit.ly/3IeRyXy>.

### How Long Can I Store Drinking Water?

The disinfectant in drinking water will eventually dissipate even in a closed container. If that container housed bacteria prior to filling up with the tap water the bacteria may continue to grow once the disinfectant has dissipated. Some experts believe that water could be stored up to six months before needing to be replaced. Refrigeration will help slow the bacterial growth.