



**BEACON HILL
WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT**

2012 WATER QUALITY REPORT

Is Your Water Safe...

What the EPA Says About Contaminants

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 radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Contaminants that may be present in water sources include microbes, pesticides, herbicides, organic or inorganic chemicals and radioactive materials. To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) and/or the Washington State Board of Health prescribes regulations that limits the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and/or the Washington State Department of Agriculture regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled 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 (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791) or at www.epa.gov/safewater.

Should I 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 people, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health-care providers. Guidelines from the Environmental Protection Agency and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 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.

We are pleased to present you with this report based on water quality data for the year 2012.

Safe, reliable drinking water is a basic life necessity. Beacon Hill Water and Sewer District (BHWSD) is proud to deliver water to nearly 10,000 people every day. We think it is important for our customers to understand where their water comes from, how safe it is, and what actions we take to ensure its continuing quality. In accordance with federal guidelines, this report provides the information you need to know about the water you drink.

Commissioner Meetings

Commissioner meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month and the public is always welcome to voice comments or concerns.

Meetings are held at 4:00 pm in the upstairs meeting room, 1121 West Side Highway, Kelso, Washington

For more information, or accessibility concerns please contact the office at 636-3860

CONTACT US:

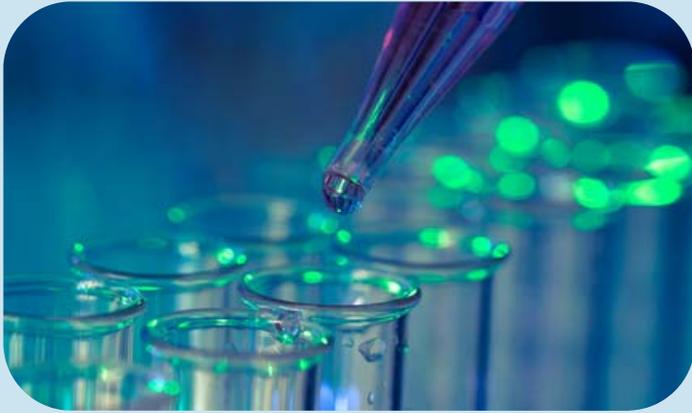
If you have any questions about your water or sewer service, please feel free to contact us. We are here to serve you. BHWSD prides itself on being local government that "works WITHOUT taxes".

BHWSD Office

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BHWSO took 124 coliform samples of distribution water and had those samples analyzed by ALS Environmental in Kelso, Washington. There was a single positive result from all of these samples during the year. The District followed Washington Drinking Water Program protocols and re-sampled the original site, upstream and downstream of the original site. All of these samples were negative. The cause of this single positive sample could have been sampling error, a contaminated sample bottle from the vendor or a combination. Chlorine residuals in the system were at normal levels at the time of the positive sample insuring disinfection of the water in the system.

All other mandated sampling results for the year were satisfactory.

Water Source...

BHWSO and the City of Longview are partners in the Longview Regional Water Treatment Plant (RWTP), located near the Longview-Kelso border. The RWTP produces the water used by most BHWSO customers, including those in the Columbia Heights, Beacon Hill, Lexington, and Ostrander areas.

The Longview Regional Water Treatment Plant takes water from the Cowlitz River about five miles north of its confluence with the Columbia River. The water is pumped across Westside Highway to the plant from a pump station on the west bank of the Cowlitz. The Cowlitz River watershed is fed by glacial melt from Mt. Rainier and several tributaries, including the Toutle River.

Reduce Lead Exposure

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. BHWSO 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 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 drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791) or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.



2012 Water Quality Report



EPA requires annual reporting on contaminants that have been detected in our water supply. We do this by collecting samples at the source, reservoirs, the distribution system and customer taps.

The City of Longview and Beacon Hill Water and Sewer District monitor over 170 contaminants, including pesticides. Water quality information presented in the table is from the most recent round of testing done in accordance with the regulations. Detectable levels were found for 15 of those contaminants and are reported below.

**BHWS D water
meets or surpasses
federal and state drinking water
standards.**

WATER QUALITY MONITORING RESULTS

Contaminant	Test Date	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Results	Major Sources	Violations
Alpha Emitters	May 2010	ppb	15	0	- .87	Certain minerals are radioactive and may emit forms of radiation known as alpha radiation. Some people who drink water containing alpha emitters in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.	No
Asbestos*	April 2008	mfl	7	7	<0.195	Decay of asbestos cement in water mains; erosion of natural deposits	No
Beta Emitters	May 2010	ppb	4	0	.21	Certain minerals are radioactive and may emit forms of radiation known as photons and beta radiation. Some people who drink water containing beta and photon emitters in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.	No
Chlorine	2012	ppm	MRDL	MRDLG	0.27-1.1	Water additive used to control microbes	No
Copper**	Oct. 2011	ppm	AL=1.3	1.3	.182	Corrosion of household plumbing and erosion of natural deposits	No
Fluoride	April 2012	ppm	4	4	.99	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.	No
Haloacetic	July 2010	ppb	60	n/a	51.4	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	No
Iron	Aug. 2008	ppb	300	n/a	280	Naturally occurring; corrosion of cast iron pipes. Leaching from natural deposits, industrial wastes	No
Lead**	Oct. 2011	ppb	AL=15	0	.002	Corrosion of household plumbing, erosion of natural deposits	No
Manganese	Aug. 2008	ppb	50	n/a	15	Erosion of naturally occurring substances that are found in soil, air, water and food at low levels	No
Nitrate (as Nitrogen)	May 2012	ppm	10	n/a	.11	Runoff from fertilizer use, leaching from septic tanks, sewage, erosion of natural deposits	No
Radium 228	May 2010	pCi/l	30	0	.12	Some people who drink water containing radium 226 or 228 in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.	No
TOC	Dec. 2012	ppb	TT	TT	590	By-product of chlorination used for drinking water disinfection	No
Total Trihalomethanes	July 2010	ppb	80	n/a	65.3	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	No

Definitions in Table

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

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): 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.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): 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.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): 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 (e.g. chlorine, chloramines, chlorine dioxide).

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): 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.

Million Fibers per Liter (MFL): A measurement of the presence in water of asbestos fibers longer than 10 micrometers in length.

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU): A unit of measurement for light refraction.

Picocuries per liter (pCi/l): A measurement of radiation.

Parts per million (ppm); Parts per billion (ppb): These units describe the levels of detected contaminants. One ppm is about 1/2 of a dissolved aspirin tablet (162.5 mg) in a full bathtub of water (about 50 gallons). One ppb is about one dissolved aspirin tablet (325 mg) in a typical 25-meter length swimming pool (about 100,000 gallons).

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

Turbidity: A unit of measurement for water clarity and may indicate the presence of contaminants.

*Federal law requires **asbestos** testing every nine years. BHSD will next test for the presence of asbestos in 2017.

** Federal law requires **copper and lead** testing every three years. BHSD will next test for the presence of copper and lead in 2014.

Water Use: Drop It When It's Hot

When the mercury rises on your thermometer, so does your water use. "Peak" water use describes the time of year when residential water use is at its highest, **usually in late July or early August**, depending on where you live. From lawn watering to car washing to filling backyard pools to even washing beach towels more frequently—it all adds up to about four times as much water or more than you use the rest of the year!

We can all reduce our peak water use by watering only as needed, washing full loads of laundry, and using more efficient plumbing fixtures. In fact, WaterSense labeled toilets and faucets helped consumers save more than 9.3 billion gallons of water and more than \$55 million in water and sewer bills in 2008 alone. The WaterSense label is an easy way to identify plumbing fixtures that use at least 20 percent less water, even during peak water use season. Here are some more facts and tactics to try:

-  The average American home uses about 260 gallons of water per day; however, during peak season the average household can use about 1,000 gallons of water in a day. Some homes use as much as 3,000 gallons on a peak day! That's equivalent to the water a garden hose left running for nearly 8 hours would waste.
-  Water landscapes only when needed; very early morning or evening is best. Peak hourly use usually occurs between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., with a secondary peak between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.
-  Wash only full loads of laundry and dishes, and scrape dishes off instead of rinsing when loading the dishwasher.
-  For a summer refreshment, keep a pitcher of water in the fridge instead of running the tap until it's cold.
-  Put your favorite handy person to work fixing leaks around the home, which can waste about 200 gallons per week.

REMEMBER...*conservation not only saves water, it saves you money as well.*

Water Leaks

Checking for a leaky toilet:

1. **Remove the tank lid.** Don't worry, this water is clean until it enters the bowl.
2. **Add some food coloring** to turn the water a different color. Put the tank lid back on.
3. **After about 30 minutes, look in the bowl.** If you see colored water, you have a leak.



How to Conserve Water

- Install a 1.6 gallon toilet
- Buy a water-efficient washing machine
- Repair leaks
- Reduce water use in yard and garden
- Wash full loads
- Minimize shower time
- Install low flow shower head
- Reduce faucet water use



If you do have a leak, there are a number of possible causes. If you remove the tank lid and can easily identify the cause, correct the problem and try your leak test again. Consider that "fixes" such as bending the float back to shape, or adjusting how the rubber flapper falls, often end up failing soon afterward. In most cases, you will simply want to replace the toilet flapper (the rubber device at the bottom of the tank that keeps water in the tank) and/or the filling mechanism. These are available at hardware stores and home centers for about \$8 each.