

# ▶ 2024 Annual Consumer Report: Quality of Tap Water

## South Milwaukee Water Utility's Drinking Water Meets or Surpasses All Federal and State Drinking Water Standards

### ▶ LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

This is the annual report on the quality of water delivered by the South Milwaukee Water Utility. It meets the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requirement for "Consumer Confidence Reports" and contains information on the source of our water, its constituents, and the health risks associated with any contaminants. Safe water is vital to our community.

Providing this annual water quality report to our customers is an important part of our ongoing water quality efforts. If you have any questions about the Water Utility or this report, please call the office at (414) 768-8070 or visit our website at: [southmilwaukee.gov](http://southmilwaukee.gov). Regular monthly meetings of the Water/Wastewater Commission also provide opportunities for public participation and additional information. These meetings are scheduled on the second Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at the Water Utility (100 Marshall Avenue.)

**Ben Huffman, Superintendent**  
South Milwaukee Water Utility



**Este informe contiene información importante acerca de su agua potable. Haga que alguien lo traduzca para usted, o hable con alguien que lo entienda.**

**Da'im ntawv tshaabzu nuav muaj lug tseemceeb heev nyob rua huv kws has txug cov dlej mej haus. Kuas ib tug paab txhais rua koj, los nrug ib tug kws paub lug thaam.**

### Water Source

The South Milwaukee Water Utility is supplied by surface water from Lake Michigan.

### Treatment Process

The South Milwaukee Water Utility uses an ultra-filtration pressurized membrane system. The membrane technology provides a verifiable barrier against viruses, turbidity, suspended solids and pathogen contamination such as Cryptosporidium of the City's drinking water supply.

### Educational Information

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.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- 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 that can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.
- Pesticides and herbicides that may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, stormwater runoff and residential uses.
- Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organics, that are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff and septic systems.

- Radioactive contaminants that 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. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which shall provide the same protection for public health.

### Health Information

Drinking water, including bottled water, may be 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 Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

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/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).





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## Definition of Terms

### • **AL: Action Level**

The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

### • **HA and HAL: Health Advisory and Health Advisory Level**

HA: Health Advisory. An estimate of acceptable drinking water levels for a chemical substance based on health effects information.

HAL: Health Advisory Level is the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, poses a health risk and may require a system to post a public notice. Health Advisories are determined by US EPA.

### • **HI: Hazard Index**

A Hazard Index is used to assess the potential health impacts associated with mixtures of contaminants. Hazard Index guidance for a class of contaminants or mixture of contaminants may be determined by the US EPA or Wisconsin Department of Health Services. If a Health Index is exceeded a system may be required to post a public notice.

### • **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 or why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system, or both, 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.

### • **MFL: million fibers per liter**

### • **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.

### • **MRDL: 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.

### • **mrem/year : millirems per year (a measure of radiation absorbed by the body)**

### • **NTU: Nephelometric Turbidity Units**

### • **pCi/l: picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)**

### • **ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)**

### • **ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (ug/l)**

### • **ppt: parts per trillion, or nanograms per liter**

### • **ppq: parts per quadrillion, or picograms per liter**

### • **PHGS: Public Health Groundwater Standards**

Public Health Groundwater Standards are found in NR 140 Groundwater Quality. The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, poses a health risk and may require a system to post a public notice.

### • **RPHGS: Recommended Public Health Groundwater Standards**

Groundwater standards proposed by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, poses a health risk and may require a system to post a public notice.

### • **SMCL: Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels**

Secondary drinking water standards or Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels for contaminants that affect taste, odor, or appearance of the drinking water. The SMCLs do not represent health standards.

### • **TCR: Total Coliform Rule**

### • **TT: Treatment Technique**

A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

## Detected Contaminants

Your water was tested for many contaminants last year. We are allowed to monitor for some contaminants less frequently than once a year. The following tables list only those contaminants which were detected in your water. If a contaminant was detected last year, it will appear in the following tables without a sample date. If the contaminant was not monitored last year, but was detected within the last 5 years, it will appear in the tables below along with the sample date.

### Synthetic Organic Contaminants including Pesticides and Herbicides

Contaminant (units)	Site	MCL	MCLG	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2024)	Violation	Typical Source of Contaminant
ATRAZINE (ppb)		3	3	0.0	0.0-0.0	4/19/23	No	Runoff from herbicide used on row crops

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## Disinfection Byproducts

Contaminant (units)	Site	MCL	MCLG	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2024)	Violation	Typical Source of Contaminant
HAA5 (ppb)	304	60	60	23	12-32		No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHM (ppb)	304	80	0	47.6	26.5-9.9		No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
HAA5 (ppb)	307	60	60	30	16-37		No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHM (ppb)	307	80	0	52.3	28.6-58.6		No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
HAA5 (ppb)	402	60	60	24	11-34		No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHM (ppb)	402	80	0	45.9	29.0-53.0		No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
HAA5 (ppb)	407	60	60	29	15-40		No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHM (ppb)	407	80	0	54.0	32.4-62.2		No	By-product of drinking water chlorination

## Radioactive Contaminants

Contaminant (units)	Site	MCL	MCLG	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2024)	Violation	Typical Source of Contaminant
GROSS ALPHA, EXCL. R & U (pCi/l)		15	0	1.0	1.0	4/13/20	No	Erosion of natural deposits
COMBINED URANIUM (ug/l)		30	0	0.8	0.8	4/13/20	No	Erosion of natural deposits

## Inorganic Contaminants

Contaminant (units)	Site	MCL	MCLG	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2024)	Violation	Typical Source of Contaminant
ARSENIC		10	N/A	0.68	0.68	3/1/21	No	Erosion of Natural Deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff
BARIUM (ppm)		2	2	0.021	0.021		No	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
FLUORIDE (ppm)		4	4	0.6	0.6		No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
NICKEL (ppb)		100		0.63	0.63	3/1/21	No	Nickel occurs naturally in soils, ground water and surface waters, and is often used in electroplating, stainless steel, and alloy products.
NITRATE (NO3-N) (ppm)		10	10	0.32	0.32		No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits.
SODIUM (ppm)		N/A	N/A	13.00	13.00		No	N/A
THALLIUM TOTAL (ppb)		2	0.5	1.2	1.2		No	Leaching from ore-processing sites; Discharge from electronics, glass, and drug factories
Contaminant (units)	Action Level	MCLG	90th Percentile Level Found	Range	# of Results	Sample Date (if prior to 2024)	Violation	Typical Source of Contaminant
COPPER (ppm)	AL=1.3	1.3	0.1800	0.007-0.350	0 of 36	6/12/23	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives.
LEAD (ppb)	AL=15	0	7.70	0.00-12.00	0 of 36	7/11/23	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits



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## PFAS Contaminants with a Recommended Health Advisory Level

Perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a large group of human-made chemicals that have been used in industry and consumer products worldwide since the 1950. The following table lists PFAS contaminants which were detected in your water and that have a Recommended Public Health Groundwater Standard (RPHGS) or Health Advisory Level (HAL). There are no violations for detections of contaminants that exceed the RPHGS or HAL. The RPHGS are levels at which concentrations of the contaminant present a health risk and are based on guidance provided by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

Note: The recommended health-based levels in the table below were in effect in 2024. These levels were revised by WDHS in 2025. They can be found here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/water/gws.htm>.

**Typical Source of Contaminant:** Drinking water is one way that people can be exposed to PFAS. In Wisconsin, two-thirds of people use groundwater as their drinking water source. PFAS can get into groundwater from places that make or use PFAS and release from consumer products in landfills.

Contaminant (units)	Site	RPHGS or HAL (PPT)	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2024)
PFBS (ppt)		450,000	0.46	0.39-0.46	1/17/2023
PFHXS (ppt)		40	1.00	0.87-1.00	1/17/2023
PFOS (ppt)		20	2.30	2.00-2.30	4/19/2023
PFOA (ppt)		20	2.40	1.80-2.40	1/17/2023
PFHXA (ppt)		150,000	1.90	1.40-1.90	1/17/2023
PFOA and PFOS Total (ppt)		20	4.40	4.10-4.40	1/17/2023

## Contaminants with a Public Health Groundwater Standard, Health Advisory Level, or a Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level

The following table lists contaminants which were detected in your water and that have either a Public Health Groundwater Standard (PHGS), Health Advisory Level (HAL), or a Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level (SMCL), or both. There are no violations for detections of contaminants that exceed Health Advisory Levels, Public Health Groundwater Standards or Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels. Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels are levels that do not present health concerns but may pose aesthetic problems such as objectionable taste, odor, or color. Public Health Groundwater Standards and Health Advisory Levels are levels at which concentrations of contaminant present a health risk.

Contaminant (units)	Site	SMCL (ppm)	PHGS or HAL (ppm)	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2024)	Typical Source of Contaminant
SULFATE (pp.)		250		22.00	22.00		Runoff/leaching from natural deposits, industrial waste

## Unregulated Contaminants

Unregulated contaminants are those for which EPA has not established drinking water standards. The purpose of unregulated contaminant monitoring is to assist EPA in determining the occurrence of unregulated contaminants in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted. EPA required us to participate in this monitoring.

Contaminant (units)	Level Found	Range	Sample Date (if prior to 2024)
ALDRIN (ppb)	0.1	0-0.1	4/19/2023
METOLACHLOR (DUAL) (ppb)	0.1	0-0.1	4/19/2023
HAA5 (ppb)	19.425	14.963-19.425	2/19/2023
HAA6Br (ppb)	13.924	11.103-13.924	2/19/2023
HAA9 (ppb)	8.503	4.083-8.503	2/19/2019
MANGANESE (ppb)	0.616	0-0.616	2/19/2019

Within the last 12 months we conducted Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring in accordance with US EPA rules. We are required to inform you of this sampling. We are only required to include results showing detections within this report; however, if you would like a copy of all results, please contact us at 414-768-8070. South Milwaukee did not have any detectable levels of these contaminants.





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## Additional Health Information

### Lead

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and in home plumbing. South Milwaukee Waterworks is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formula, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. If you have a lead service line or galvanized requiring replacement service line, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact South Milwaukee Water Utility at 414-768-8070. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

### Additional Information on Service Line Materials

We are required to develop an initial inventory of service lines connected to our distribution system by October 16, 2024 and to make the inventory publicly accessible. You can access the service line inventory here/by:

<https://smwi.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/13a834a08e8e4fe5a734f2617a27265d>

## Other Compliance

### Turbidity Monitoring

In accordance with s. NR 810.29, Wisconsin Administrative Code, the treated surface water is monitored for turbidity to confirm that the filtered water is less than 0.1 NTU/0.3NTU. Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of water. We monitor for it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system. During the year, the highest single entry point turbidity measurement was 0.04 NTU.

## OUR COMMUNITY CONNECT PAYMENT PORTAL

**The South Milwaukee Water Utility is now offering its customers the ability to setup an account in its new online payment portal.**

Visit [southmilwaukee.gov](https://southmilwaukee.gov) and click on "Departments," then "Water Utility" and then "Our Community Connect Payment Portal." Click on "Create Your Account." You will be able to pay bills using a credit or debit card, or bank account (fees apply).

You will also be able to view utility bills and balance due, sign up to receive paperless utility bills, sign up for auto pay, and receive text notices re: your South Milwaukee water utility account.

The mission of the South Milwaukee Water Utility is to provide a continuous supply of safe, potable drinking water for all aspects of life and industry to the City of South Milwaukee – at the lowest possible cost to the consumer. The Utility must meet and/or exceed all local, state and federal laws related to water purification and distribution management.