

City of Sumas Water Quality Report – 2018

This brochure is a snapshot of the quality of the water that we have provided. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards. We are committed to providing you with information because informed customers are our best allies. For more information about your water, call (360) 988-5711 and ask for Ruben Hernandez. **In past years we conducted more than 180 tests for over 80 drinking water contaminants. We only detected one type of contaminant. Nitrates were found at levels below what the EPA allows.**

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 see 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 Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Your water comes from five municipal wells sunk about 80 feet into an underground source of water called the Abbotsford-Sumas Aquifer. These wells are located west of town at Kneuman and Barbo roads. The town owns the land around these wells and restricts any activity that could contaminate them. After the water comes out of the wells, we pump it to the reservoir and system.

Our City council meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the council chambers. Please feel free to participate in these meetings.

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's 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 grounds, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive materials, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water before treatment may include:

- *Microbial contaminants*, such as viruses and bacteria, which 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 storm water runoff, industrial or domestic production, mining or farming.
- *Pesticides and herbicides*, which may come from a variety of sources as agricultural and residential uses.
- *Radioactive contaminants*, which are naturally occurring.
- *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 storm water runoff, and septic systems.

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. At this time, our water meets EPA standards in its untreated condition. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

WATER QUALITY DATA

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the 2018 calendar year. The presence of these contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018. The state requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once a year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of the data, though representative of the water quality, is more than one year old.

Terms & abbreviations used below:

- **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 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.
- **Action Level (AL):** the concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- **n/a:** not applicable. **-nd:** not detectible at testing limit. **-ppb:** parts per billion or micrograms per liter. **-ppm:** parts per million or milligrams per liter. **-pCi/l:** picocuries per liter (a measure of radiation).

Inorganic Contaminants	MCL	MCLG	System Results	Range of Detection	Dates Tested	Violations	Typical Source of Contaminant
Nitrate as nitrogen (ppm)	10	10	3.39	nd-3.39	2018	None	Fertilizer Runoff

About Nitrate: Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant, you should ask for advice from your health care provider.

Is our water system meeting other rules that govern our operations? The state and EPA require us to test our water on a regular basis to ensure its safety. We test every month for coliform bacteria and quarterly for nitrate and nitrite levels. We periodically test for volatile organic (VOC), synthetic organic (SOC), inorganic (IOC), and radioactive contaminants. We also test for lead and copper. **We're proud to report we had no violations and that our water meets or exceeds federal and state standards.**

