Making Drinking Water Safe

Your drinking water primarily comes from surface water sources drawn from the Mississippi River and the Chain of Lakes.

SPRWS also has a groundwater back-up supply of 10 wells ranging from 425 to 465 feet deep that draw water from the Prairie Du Chien-Jordan aquifer. These are used as needed.

Saint Paul Regional Water Services works hard to provide you with safe and reliable drinking water that meets federal and state water quality requirements. The purpose of this report is to provide you with information on your drinking water and how to protect our precious water resources.

Contact our lab a 651-266-1635 if you have questions about SPRWS drinking water.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets safe drinking water standards. These standards limit the amounts of specific contaminants allowed in drinking water. This ensures that tap water is safe to drink for most people. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulates the amount of certain contaminants in bottled water. Bottled water must provide the same public health protection as public tap 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 Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

Lead in drinking water

You may be in contact with lead through paint, water, dust, soil, food, hobbies, or your job. Coming in contact with lead can cause serious health problems for everyone.

There is no safe level of lead. Babies, children under six years, and pregnant women are at the highest risk.

Lead is rarely in a drinking water source, but it can get in your drinking water as it passes through lead service lines and your household plumbing system.

You can find out what information is available on the materials your water service line is made of by contacting SPRWS at 651-266-6270 or going to our bill pay site at https://billpay.saintpaulwater.com and clicking on "What's my water service line made of?"

Or you can check by following the steps at: https://tinyurl.com/y2oc8wcn.

SPRWS provides high quality drinking water, but it cannot control the plumbing materials used in private buildings.

Learn how you can protect yourself from lead in drinking water.

Let the water run for three to five minutes before using it for drinking or cooking if the water has not been used in over six hours.

In most cases, letting the water run and using cold water for drinking and cooking should keep lead levels low in your drinking water. If you are still concerned about lead, contact customer service at 651-266-6350 to get information on free water testing for SPRWS customers. You will need to pick up a sample container with attached instructions at our office at 1900 Rice Street.

Testing your water is important if young children or pregnant women drink your tap water.

If letting the water run does not reduce lead, consider other options to reduce your exposure.

1. Use cold water for drinking, making food, and making baby formula. Hot water releases more lead from pipes than cold water.
2. Treat your water if a test shows your water has high levels of lead after you let the water run.

Read about water treatment units:

Point-of-Use Water Treatment Units for Lead Reduction: https://tinyurl.com/y4swvvns.

Learn more:

Visit Lead in Drinking Water: https://tinyurl.com/y4suae2p.

Visit Basic Information about Lead in Drinking Water: http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Call the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

To learn about how to reduce your contact with lead from sources in addition to your drinking water, visit Lead Poisoning Prevention: Common Sources: https://tinyurl.com/y23b5e86.

We take pride in providing you with quality drinking water at a reasonable cost. Every day, SPRWS produces an average of 39 million gallons of drinking water and distributes it through 1,200 miles of water main to 450,000 residents of Saint Paul and the surrounding communities.

To participate in decisions that may affect the quality of the water supplied by SPRWS, the public may attend the Board of Water Commissioners meetings held at 5:00 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month in room 330 at Saint Paul City Hall., 15 Kellogg Blvd. W., St. Paul, Minn.

To request additional copies of this report, please contact customer service.

SPRWS Customer Service
651-266-6350
SPRWS Water Quality
651-266-1635
EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline
800-426-4791
Minnesota Department of Health
651-201-4700

Email: waterinquiries@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Website: www.stpaul.gov/water

Español

Este informe contiene información importante sobre el agua potable. Solicite que alguien lo traduzca o hable con alguien que lo entienda.

Somali

Warbixintaan waxaa ku jira macluumaad muhiim ah oo ku saabsan biyaha aad cabtid. Ha laguu tarjumo ama la hadal qof fahamsan warbixinta.

Hmong

Tsab ntawv no muaj cov lus tseem ceeb txog koj cov dej haus. Hais kom leej twg muab txhais los yog tham nrog ib tug neeg uas nkag siab tau.

SAINT PAUL REGIONAL WATER SERVICES

1900 Rice Street
Saint Paul, MN 55113

Drinking Water Sources

Minnesota's primary drinking water sources are groundwater and surface water. Groundwater is the water found in aquifers beneath the surface of the land. Surface water is the water in lakes, rivers, and streams above the surface of the land. Surface water supplies 25 percent of Minnesota drinking water.

Contaminants can get in drinking water sources from the natural environment and from people's daily activities. There are five main types of contaminants in drinking water sources.

Microbial contaminants, such as viruses, bacteria, and parasites. Sources include sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, pets, and wildlife.

Inorganic contaminants include salts and metals from natural sources (e.g. rock and soil), oil and gas production, mining and farming operations, urban stormwater runoff, and wastewater discharges.

Pesticides and herbicides are chemicals used to reduce or kill unwanted plants and pests. Sources include agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and commercial and residential properties.

Organic chemical contaminants include synthetic and volatile organic compounds. Sources include industrial processes and petroleum production, gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

Radioactive contaminants such as radium, thorium, and uranium isotopes come from natural sources (e.g. radon gas from soils and rock), mining operations, and oil and gas production.

SPRWS Source Water Assessment

The Minnesota Department of Health provides information about your drinking water source(s) in a source water assessment, including:

- How Saint Paul Regional Water Services is protecting your drinking water source(s);
- Nearby threats to your drinking water sources;
- How easily water and pollution can move from the surface of the land into drinking water sources, based on natural geology and the way wells are constructed.

Find your source water assessment at Source Water Assessments: Call 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Also at https://tinyurl.com/y4xmkk5a.

2019 SPRWS Water Quality Test Results

The Value of Water

Drinking water is a precious resource, yet we often take it for granted. Throughout history, civilizations have risen and fallen based on access to a plentiful, safe water supply. That's still the case today. Water is key to healthy people and healthy communities. Water is also vital to our economy. We need water for manufacturing, agriculture, energy production, and more. One-fifth of the U.S. economy would come to a stop without a reliable and clean source of water. Systems are in place to provide you with safe drinking water. The state of Minnesota and local water systems work to protect drinking water sources. We treat water to remove harmful contaminants. And we do extensive testing to ensure the safety of drinking water. If we detect a problem, we take corrective action and notify the public. Water from a public water system like yours is tested more thoroughly and regulated more closely than water from any other source, including bottled water.

Monitoring Results: Unregulated Substances

In addition to testing drinking water for contaminants regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act, we sometimes also monitor for contaminants that are not regulated. Unregulated contaminants do not have legal limits for drinking water.

Detection alone of a regulated or unregulated contaminant should not cause concern. The meaning of a detection should be determined considering current health effects information. We are often still learning about the health effects, so this information can change over time.

The table shows the unregulated contaminants we detected last year, as well as human-health based guidance values for comparison, where available. The comparison values are based only on potential health impacts and do not consider our ability to measure contaminants at very low concentrations or the cost and technology of prevention and/or treatment. They may be set at levels that are costly, challenging, or impossible for water systems to meet (for example, large-scale treatment technology may not exist for a given contaminant).

A person drinking water with a contaminant at or below the comparison value would be at little or no risk for harmful health effects. If the level of a contaminant is above the comparison value, people of a certain age or with special health conditions - like a fetus, infants, children, elderly, and people with impaired immunity – may need to take extra precautions. Because these contaminants are unregulated, EPA and MDH require no particular action based on detection of an unregulated contaminant. We are notifying you of the unregulated contaminants we have detected as a public education opportunity.

More information is available on the Minnesota Department of Health website:
https://tinyurl.com/y6ouo5z6
and at: https://tinyurl.com/y4j37gyv

Special Cases

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. The developing fetus and therefore pregnant women may also be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water. These people or their caregivers 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 Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

About These Results

This report contains our monitoring results from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2019.

We work with the Minnesota Department of Health to test drinking water for more than 100 contaminants. It is not unusual to detect contaminants in small amounts. No water supply is ever completely free of contaminants.

Drinking water standards protect Minnesotans from substances that may be harmful to their health.

Learn more by visiting the Minnesota Department of Health's web page Basics of Monitoring and Testing of Drinking Water in Minnesota at: https://tinyurl.com/y653g4on.

The table at right shows the contaminants we found last year or the most recent time we sampled for that contaminant. They also show the levels of those contaminants and the Environmental Protection Agency's limits. Substances that we tested for but did not find are not included in the table.

We sample for some contaminants less than once a year because their levels in water are not expected to change from year to year.

If we found any of these contaminants the last time we sampled for them, we included them in the table with the detection date.

We may have done additional monitoring for contaminants that are not included in the Safe Drinking Water Act.

To request a copy of these results, call the Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Key to Chart

AL (Action Level): The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
EPA: Environmental Protection Agency
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): Does not apply.
NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Units): A measure of the cloudiness of the water (turbidity).
ppb (parts per billion): One part per billion in water is like one drop in one billion drops of water, or about one drop in a swimming pool. ppb is the same as micrograms per liter (µg/l).
ppm (parts per million): One part per million is like one drop in one million drops of water, or about one cup in a swimming pool. ppm is the same as milligrams per liter (mg/l).
TT (Treatment Technique): A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

*The percentage of Total Organic Carbon (TOC) removal was measured each month. The system met all TOC removal requirements, unless there is a "No" under the Meets Standards column.

Regulated Substances Related to Disinfection and Tested in Drinking Water

Substance (units)	EPA Limit (MCL or MRDL)	EPA Ideal Goal (MCLG or MRDLG)	Range Detected	Highest Average or Single Test Result	Typical Source	Meets Standards?
Trihalomethanes (Total THM) (ppb)	80	NA	30.90 - 46.40	43.8	Disinfection by-product	Yes
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	60	NA	20.40 - 39.30	32.9	Disinfection by-product	Yes
Chlorine (ppm)	4.0	4.0	2.60 - 2.97	2.78	Water additive to control microbes	Yes

Inorganic and Organic Substances Tested in Drinking Water

Substance (units)	EPA Limit (MCL)	EPA Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Range Detected	Highest Average or Single Test Result	Typical Source	Meets Standards?
Nitrate as Nitrogen (ppm)	10.4	10	N/A	0.18	Fertilizer, sewer, natural deposits	Yes

Other Substances Tested in Drinking Water

Substance (units)	EPA Limit (MCL)	EPA Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Range Detected	Highest Average or Single Test Result	Typical Source	Meets Standards?
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.63 - 0.65	0.68	Additive to promote strong teeth; erosion of natural deposits	Yes

Treatment Indicator Tested During Treatment

Substance (units)	Removal required	Lowest Monthly Percent of Results in Compliance	Highest Test Result	Typical Source	Meets Standards?
Turbidity (NTU)	TT	100 %	0.078	Soil runoff	Yes

Disinfection Byproduct Indicator Tested in Source Water and Drinking Water

Substance (units)	Removal Required	Range of Percent Removal Achieved	Average Percent of Removal Achieved	Typical Source	Meets Standards?
Total Organic Carbon*	Variable	49 - 100	62	NA	Yes

Regulated Substances Tested at the Customer's Tap

Substance (units)	EPA Action Level (AL)	EPA Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Number of Homes with High Levels	90% of Results Were Less Than	Typical Source	Meets Standards?
Lead (ppb) (09/12/2017)	90 % of homes must be under 15.0	0	2 out of 50	11.4	Corrosion of home plumbing	Yes
Copper (ppm) (09/12/2017)	90 % of homes must be under 1.3	0	0 out of 50	0.05	Corrosion of home plumbing	Yes

Unregulated Substances Tested in Drinking Water

Substance (units)	Comparison Value	Highest Average Result or Highest Single Test Result	Range of Detected Test Results
Group of 6 Haloacetic Acids (HAA6Br) (ppb)	NA	2.9	2.02 - 4.17
Group of 9 Haloacetic Acids (HAA9) (ppb)	NA	28.49	26.40 - 31.92