

STAFFORD
Virginia

REPORT REVISED
JUNE 6, 2017

2016 Water Quality Report

Crows Nest

Photo taken by Brant Stevenson

STAFFORD
COUNTY
UTILITIES

George Washington's
Boyhood Home





Message from the Director

The Stafford County Department of Utilities is pleased to present this year's Water Quality Report. This information summarizes the results of hundreds of tests taken during the 2016 calendar year, ensuring the water we provide to you meets all requirements of the Virginia Department of Health and the Environmental Protection Agency. The Department of Utilities provided an average of 8.9 million gallons of water per day in 2016, through more than 638 miles of water line, to serve more than 108,000 valued customers.

Lead in drinking water has continued to be a topic in the news. Testing has shown that our reservoirs do not contain lead. In addition, the water main pipelines used to deliver water do not contain lead. Even though there are no lead pipes in Stafford's distribution system, our treatment facilities still add a corrosion inhibitor to the finished water to prevent lead from plumbing fixtures in older homes from leaching into those residents' drinking water. Testing in accordance with EPA procedures has demonstrated that the water provided by Stafford County meets EPA regulatory standards.

Our commitment to you, our customer and community, is evident with every call we take, and the thousands of tests we perform, to provide the clean water you've come to expect from us. This report summarizes the great value available for you, our customer, every time you reach for your tap.

Jason D Towery

Director
Stafford Department of Utilities

We Want To Hear From You!

Today, we face many water-related issues including protection of our water resources, timely renewal and replacement of aging pipes, planning to meet current and future water needs, and upgrades to our treatment facilities to meet increasingly stringent water quality requirements. We ask for and value your input as these issues are discussed. Please attend meetings of the Board of Supervisors and the Utilities Commission in the George L. Gordon, Jr., Government Center, to stay informed on important issues. Please visit us online at www.staffordcountyva.gov for meeting dates and times. You can also call us at 311 or 540-658-8630 for more information.

Source Water Assessments

In 2002, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) conducted an assessment of our water reservoir at Smith Lake to determine how susceptible it is to contamination. An assessment of Lake Mooney and the Rappahannock River has not yet been completed by VDH. Since there are industrial, commercial, agricultural and residential land uses in our watersheds and our sources are open to the environment, they are susceptible to contamination. Although we operate state-of-the-art treatment facilities to a standard that ensures protection of public health, we ask for your help to properly dispose of trash, waste oil, antifreeze, and other hazardous materials and minimize application of fertilizer and pesticides so that they do not enter streams, storm drains, and other water bodies. You can report illegal dumping to the Stafford County Sheriff's Office at 540-658-4400. A copy of the Smith Lake assessment is available by calling us at the number listed above.

Important Health Information

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised individuals, such as those undergoing chemotherapy, organ transplant recipients, those with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, and some elderly people and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. If you feel you are at risk, please seek advice about drinking tap water from your 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 at (800) 426-4791.

Assessment Required

Each month, we collect at least 100 samples for coliform bacteria. During May 2016, 11 samples were positive for coliform, one of which was also positive for *E. coli*. Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are 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 problems and to correct any problems that are found. During 2016, we were required to conduct a Level 1 assessment following the positive samples during May, which we completed.

We determined that an access hatch at one of our water tanks had been left open following maintenance by a telecommunications contractor, allowing rainwater and other possible contaminants to enter the tank. We immediately closed and locked the hatch, and have reviewed our tank management procedures and have made improvements to prevent this in the future. No other corrective actions were necessary.



Regulated Substances Table 2016, PWSID #6179100

Definitions

AL, Action Level: the concentration of a contaminant which triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Level 1 assessment - a study of the waterworks to identify potential problems and determine, if possible, why total coliform bacteria have been found in our waterworks.

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.

NTU, Nephelometric Turbidity Units: a measurement of the clarity of water.

pCi/L, Picocuries per liter: measure of radioactivity

ppm, Parts per million: measure of concentration equal to 1 cent in \$10,000 or about 1 minute in 694 days.

ppb, Parts per billion: measure of concentration equal to 1 cent in \$10 million or about 1 minute in 1,902 years.

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

Regulated Contaminants (samples taken from the water distribution system)							
Parameter	Average Results	Range of Results	Units	MCL	MCLG	In Compliance? Yes/No	Source
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5s)	41 (highest 4-qr. compliance avg.)	15 -45 (for individual sample sites)	ppb	Average of last 4 quarters ≤ 60 ppb	N/A	Yes	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Trihalomethanes (TTHMs)	73 (highest 4-qr. compliance avg.)	25 - 79 (for individual sample sites)	ppb	Average of last 4 quarters ≤ 80 ppb	N/A	Yes	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Fluoride	0.72	0.5-0.8	ppm	4	4	Yes	Added to water to promote strong teeth
Nitrate + Nitrite	0.26	0.18 - 0.26	ppm	10	10	Yes	Erosion of natural deposits, fertilizer runoff
Barium	0.014	0.013-0.014	ppm	2	2	Yes	Erosion of natural deposits
E. Coli	1 positive sample out of 1,439 collected during 2016		N/A	A routine sample and a repeat sample are coliform positive and one is also E. coli positive	0	Yes	Human and animal fecal waste
Total Organic Carbon (TOC)	N/A		N/A	Treatment Technique		Yes	Naturally present in the environment
Chlorine (samples taken from the water distribution system)							
Parameter	Highest 12-Month Running Annual Average	Range of Results (individual sites)	Units	MRDL	MRDLG	In Compliance? Yes/No	Source
Chloramines	3.2	0.2 - 3.9	ppm	4.0	4.0	Yes	Added as water disinfectant
Metals (samples taken from the customer's tap)							
Parameter	Action Level	MCLG	Test Results	Number of sampling locations above the EPA Action Level	In Compliance? Yes/No	Source	
Lead	90% of all test results must be 15 ppb or less	15 ppb	90 th percentile: 1.4 ppb Range from Below Detection Level to 5.0 ppb;	0	Yes	Corrosion in household plumbing systems	
Copper	90% of all test results must be 1.3 ppm or less	1.3 ppm	90 th percentile: 0.04 ppm Range from Below Detection Level to 0.1 ppm;	0	Yes	Corrosion in household plumbing systems	
Turbidity (samples taken from filtered water at the treatment facility)							
Parameter	MCL	Units	Max. Detected	Lowest Percentage of Monthly Samples Meeting Limit	In Compliance? Yes/No	Source	
Turbidity	Treatment Technique (TT) - at least 95% of all samples taken each month must be 0.3 NTU or less; 1 NTU maximum	NTU	0.36	99.5% of all samples taken were 0.3 NTU or less	Yes	Soil erosion from runoff	

1. Tests were performed for an additional 109 possible contaminants which were NOT DETECTED.
 2. Lead and copper results are from 2015. Monitoring for lead and copper is done every three years because our results in the past have been satisfactory.

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. Stafford County Utilities is responsible for providing high quality drinking water. We have no lead service lines, 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 2 minutes, or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature 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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 (TTY 711) or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Important Information About Your Drinking Water

Stafford County Utilities Did Not Meet Monitoring Requirements

Our water system recently violated a drinking water requirement. Although this was **not** an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we did to correct this situation. We routinely monitor your water for turbidity (cloudiness). This tells us whether we are effectively filtering the water supply. From March 12 through March 14, 2016, we failed to complete all the turbidity testing as required by state and federal regulations at our Lake Mooney water treatment plant. Although turbidity tests were done on the water entering the distribution system using automatic meters showing the water was within required parameters, the required manual tests were not done on each individual filter.

What should I do?

- There is nothing you need to do. You do not need to boil your water or take other actions. We do not know of any contamination, and none of our testing has shown disease-causing organisms in the drinking water.

What does this mean?

- This is **not** an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified within 24 hours. Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provides a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea and associated headaches. These symptoms are not caused only by organisms in drinking water. If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice. **Again, we do not know of any contamination, and none of our testing has shown disease-causing organisms in the drinking water.**

What is being done?

- On March 14, 2016, we corrected the problem by resuming manual turbidity monitoring along with our other means of testing, returning to full compliance. For more information, please contact Jason Pauley at 540-658-8620.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (people in apartments, nursing homes, schools and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

This notice is being sent to you by Stafford County Utilities. Date Distributed: May 10, 2017

Potential Sources of Water Contaminants

Lake Mooney and Smith Lake reservoirs are the sources of public water in Stafford County. More than 86 square miles of land drain into these reservoirs. Most of the water in Lake Mooney is pumped from the Rappahannock River. As the water travels over 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, 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 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 storm water runoff and residential uses;
- **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; or
- **Radioactive contaminants** which can be naturally occurring or can be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

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. 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 contain small amounts of some of these contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. We must test the water to ensure that any contaminants present are below the maximum levels set by EPA. We test for color, iron, manganese, turbidity, organics and other materials. We add fluoride to promote healthy teeth, and the water is disinfected to protect against waterborne disease. You can obtain additional information and learn about potential health effects by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

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