

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

What is this report and why do I receive it every year?

Water system providers are mandated by federal law to provide their customers with an annual consumer confidence report (annual water quality report). This report serves many functions. It allows you, the user, to make informed choices about your water; also, it allows you to know what contaminants, if any, are in your water, and allows your water provider a chance to tell you everything it takes to deliver safe drinking water to your tap.

What causes my water to occasionally have a “milky” appearance?

A “milky” look is caused when tiny air bubbles are in the water. These form when the water coming into your home or business is under pressure and gasses (air) are dissolved and trapped in the pressurized water. These bubbles will not affect the quality or the taste of your water.

Is it okay to use hot water from the tap for cooking and drinking?

You should always use cold water since hot water has a higher chance of containing potential contaminants from your household plumbing and water heaters. These contaminants can include, but are not limited to rust, copper, and lead and can dissolve in hot water faster than they can in cold water.

How much water do I use during a typical shower?

Based on the age of your house and your showerheads, anywhere from 20 to 40 gallons of water can be used during a typical shower.

What can I do to conserve water?

There are many things you can do to conserve water. Running your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full can save up to 1,000 gallons a month. Watering your lawn and garden in the morning or evening when temperatures are cooler will help minimize evaporation. Shortening your shower by a minute or two can save up to 150 gallons per month. Turning off the water while you are brushing your teeth can save up to 25 gallons per month. Also, take time to review your water bill on a regular basis as this can help you quickly realize if there are leaks in your system.

Public Participation Opportunities

The public is invited to participate at the next meeting.

Date: July 10th

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

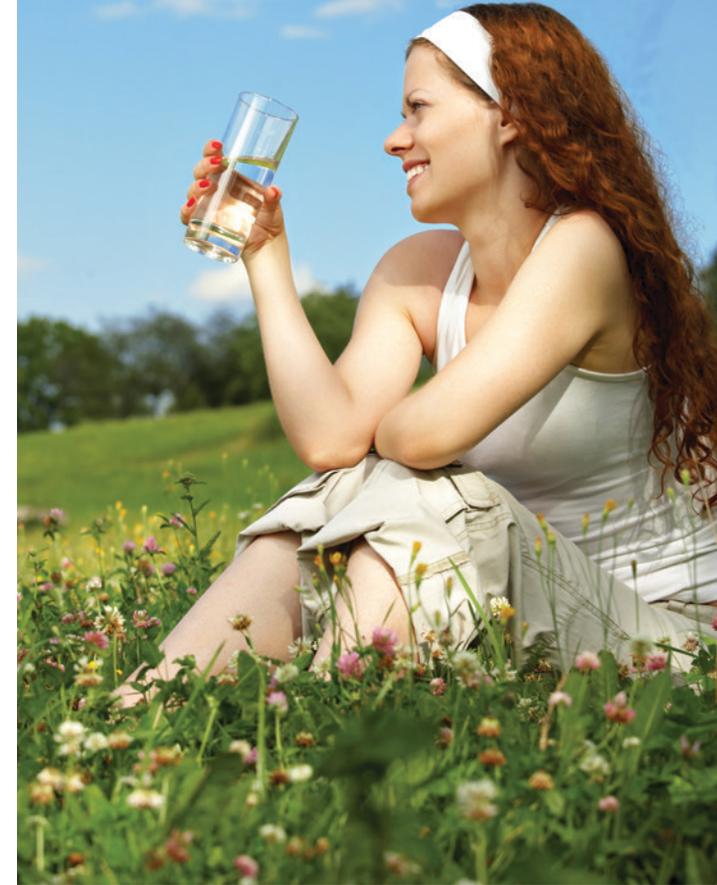
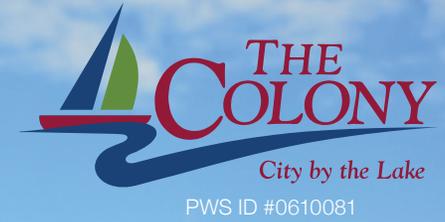
Location: Office Creek Pump Station, 4180 Main Street, The Colony, TX 75056

Phone (972) 625-4471

For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please contact Jimmy Arthur, Water Production Department Supervisor, at (972) 625-4471.

En Español

Este informe incluye información importante sobre el agua potable. Si tiene preguntas o comentarios sobre éste informe en español, favor de llamar al tel. (972) 625-4471 – para hablar con una persona bilingüe en español.



2012 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

Our Drinking Water Is Regulated

The City of The Colony is pleased to share this report with you. This report is a summary of the quality of the water we provide our customers. The analysis covers January 1 through December 31, 2012, and was made by using the data from the most recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) required tests and is presented in the attached pages. We hope this information helps you become more knowledgeable about what's in your drinking water.

Source of Drinking Water

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, 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 stormwater

runoff, and residential uses.

- Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.
- Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

All Drinking Water May Contain Contaminants

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. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which 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. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

Where Do We Get Our Drinking Water?

The City of The Colony owns and operates 4 wells (ground water), 3 of which are on the Trinity Sands Aquifer and 1

on the Paluxy Aquifer. The Colony also purchases up to 6 million gallons of water a day from the City of Dallas. Dallas uses surface (lake) water from seven sources: the Elm Fork of the Trinity River and lakes Ray Roberts, Lewisville, Grapevine, Ray Hubbard and Tawakoni and Fork.

Austin Ranch Customers receive water from The City of Plano. Plano purchases water from North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD). NTMWD utilizes three reservoirs for its raw water supplies (lake): Lavon Lake, Lake Jim Chapman and Lake Texoma.

Lead and Drinking Water

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. The City of The Colony Water Utilities is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in customer plumbing components. When your water has been sitting in the home piping for 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 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 Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.



We routinely monitor for constituents in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The test results table shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2012. In the table you might find terms and abbreviations you are not familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

Definitions

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

Action Level Goal (ALG) – the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. ALGs allow for a margin of safety.

Avg. – Regulatory compliance with some MCLs is based on running annual average of monthly samples.

< – Symbol indicates the level found is less than the number that follows it.

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.

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.

mrem – millirems per year (a measure of radiation absorbed by the body).

NA – not applicable.

ND – not detected.

NTU – Nephelometric Turbidity Units.

Parts per billion (ppb) – micrograms per liter (µg/l) or one ounce in 7,800,000 gallons of water.

Parts per million (ppm) – milligrams per liter (mg/l) or one ounce in 7,800 gallons of water.

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 Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

Regulated Substances (measured on the water leaving the treatment facility)

Substance (Units)	Year Sampled	MCLG [MRDLG]	MCL [MRDL]	The Colony Water Utility		Dallas Water Utility		Plano Water Utilities		Typical Source
				Amount Detected	Range	Amount Detected	Range	Amount Detected	Range	
Arsenic (ppb)	2012	0	10	0.431 ³	0.363-0.499 ³	0.7 ³	<0.226-1.0 ³	1.1	0.95-1.1	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Atrazine (ppb)	2012	3	3	NA	NA	0.19	0.15-0.23	0.71	0-0.71	Runoff from herbicide used on row crops
Barium (ppm)	2012	2	2	0.0463 ³	0.0258-0.0667 ³	0.015 ³	0.011-0.021 ³	0.0389	0.0364-0.0389	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
Beta/photon emitters (pCi/L)	2012	0	50 ¹	2.2	<4.0-4.3	5.3 ³	4.0-7.2 ³	4.4 ²	4.4-4.4 ²	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Chloramines (ppm)	2012	[4]	[4]	3.16	0.68-4.6	NA	NA	2.55	0.7-3.5	Water additive used to control microbes
Chlorite (ppm)	2012	0.8	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.42	0.08-0.81	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chromium (ppb)	2011	100	100	1.14	0.602-1.67	1	0.6-1.3	NA	NA	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	2012	4	4	0.62	0.62	0.65	0.51-0.76	0.66	0.50-0.66	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive that promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories

Regulated Substances (measured on the water leaving the treatment facility)

Substance (Units)	Year Sampled	MCLG [MRDLG]	MCL [MRDL]	The Colony Water Utility		Dallas Water Utility		Plano Water Utilities		Typical Source
				Amount Detected	Range	Amount Detected	Range	Amount Detected	Range	
Haloacetic Acids [HAAs] (ppb)	2012	NA	60	11.3	<1.0-16.4	NA	NA	NA	NA	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (ppm)	2012	10	10	0.823	<0.01-1.3	0.62	0.32-0.98	0.345	0.345	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Simazine (ppb)	2012	4	4	NA	NA	0.32	0.29-0.37	0.38	0.11-0.38	Herbicide runoff
Total Organic Carbon (ppm)	2012	NA	TT	NA	NA	4.16	2.96-6.81	$\frac{4.92^5}{4.16^6}$	$\frac{4.32-6.34^5}{2.95-4.16^6}$	Naturally present in the environment
Total Organic Carbon (TOC) Removal Ratio	2012	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	39.40%	14%-39.4%	NA
Total Trihalomethanes [TTHMs] (ppb)	2012	NA	80	14.7	<1.0-30.5	NA	NA	NA	NA	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Turbidity (NTU) ⁴	2012	NA	TT=1	NA	NA	0.29 Highest Single Measurement		0.62 Highest Single Measurement		Soil runoff
Turbidity (lowest monthly percent of samples meeting limit)	2012	NA	TT=95% of samples <0.3	NA	NA	100%		98.16%		Soil runoff

Tap Water Samples: Lead and Copper

The Colony Water Utility

Substance (Units)	Year Sampled	MCLG	Action Level	90th Percentile	Number of Samples	Number of Samples Above Action Level	Typical Source
Copper (ppm)	2010	1.3	1.3	0.24	30	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
Lead (ppb)	2010	0	15	1.8	30	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits

Secondary Unregulated Substances

The Colony Water Utility

Substance (Units)	Year Sampled	Secondary MCL	Amount Detected	Range	Typical Source
Calcium (ppm)	2011	NA	11.24	3.47-19	Abundant naturally occurring element
Magnesium (ppm)	2011	NA	4.1855	0.821-7.55	Abundant naturally occurring element
Hardness (as CaCO3)	2011	NA	45.3	12-78.6	Naturally occurring calcium
Sodium (ppm)	2011	NA	363.5	313-474	Naturally occurring
pH (ph units)	2012	6.5-8.5	8.6	8.6	Measure of corrosivity of water
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO3)	2012	NA	307	307	Naturally occurring soluble mineral salts

Notes:

1. The MCL for Beta Particles is 4 mrem/year. The U.S. EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for Beta Particles.
2. Measurement was taken in 2010.
3. Measurement was taken in 2011.
4. Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the filtration system.
5. Source water
6. Treated water