

Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for 2023
Paul Smith's College
P.O. Box 265, Paul Smiths, New York 12970
(Public Water Supply ID NY1612265)

Introduction

To comply with State regulations, Paul Smith's College will be annually issuing a report describing the quality of your drinking water. The purpose of this report is to raise your understanding of drinking water and awareness of the need to protect our drinking water sources. Last year your tap water met all State drinking water health standards. We are proud to report that our system has not violated a maximum contaminant level or any other water quality standard. This report provides an overview of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to State standards. We want our students and faculty to be informed about their drinking water. If you have any questions about this report or want to learn more about your drinking water, please contact Timothy Riddle, Facilities Operations Manager at (518) 327-6463.

Where does our water come from?

In general, 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 activities. Contaminants that may be present in source water include microbial contaminants, inorganic contaminants, pesticides and herbicides, organic chemical contaminants, and radioactive contaminants. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the State and the EPA prescribe regulations which limit the concentration of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The State Health Department's and the FDA's regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

Our water system serves approximately 1100 individuals through 35 service connections. The water source for the college is groundwater from two drilled wells located on campus. The water is disinfected with chlorine solution prior to distribution.

The NYS Dept. of Health has completed a source water assessment for this system based on available information. The source water assessment has rated these wells as having an elevated susceptibility. No significant sources of contamination were identified. The wells draw water from an unconfined aquifer and overlying soils are not known to provide adequate protection from potential contamination. Please note that our water supply is disinfected to ensure that the finished water delivered to your home meets the New York State's drinking water standards for microbiological contamination.

Are there contaminants in our drinking water?

As the State regulations require, we routinely test your drinking water for numerous contaminants. These contaminants include total coliform, gross alpha and beta, inorganic compounds, nitrate, nitrite, lead and copper, volatile organic compounds, total trihalomethanes, haloacetic acids, radiological and synthetic organic compounds, including PFAS and 1,4-dioxane. The table presented below depicts which compounds were detected in your drinking water. The State allows us to test for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.

It should be noted that all drinking water, including bottled drinking 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) or the New York State Department of Health at (518) 891-1800.

Table of Detected Contaminants							
Contaminant	Violation Yes/No	Date of Sample	Level Detected	Unit Measure -ment	MCLG	Regulatory Limit (MCL, TT or AL)	Likely Source of Contamination
Inorganic Contaminants							
Nitrate	No	2023	ND	mg/L	10	10 (MCL)	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage, erosion of natural deposits.
Iron	No	2022	ND-0.27	mg/L	0.3	0.3 (MCL)	Naturally occurring
Manganese	No	2020	0.14- 0.22	mg/L	n/a	.3 (MCL)	Naturally occurring; Indicative of landfill contamination
Sodium	No	2022	89	mg/L	n/a	(see Notes ³)	Naturally occurring; Road salt; Water softeners; Animal waste.
Chloride	No	2023	170	mg/L	n/a	250 (MCL)	Naturally occurring or indicative of road salt contamination
Barium	No	2023	0.0773	mg/L	2	2(MCL)	Erosion of natural deposits
Sulfate	No	2019	5.6	mg/L	n/a	250 (MCL)	Naturally occurring
Copper Jan 1 – June 30	Yes	2023	1.4 ¹ (0.10- 31) ²	mg/L	1.3	1.3 (AL)	Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
July 1 – Dec 31	No	2023	0.70 ¹ (ND-0.99) ²				
Lead Jan 1 – June 30	Yes	2023	0.100 ¹ (ND-0.59) ²	mg/L	0	0.015 (AL)	Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
July 1 – Dec 31	Yes	2023	0.047 ¹ (ND-0.047) ²				
Disinfection Byproducts							
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs)	No	2023	34	ug/L	n/a	80 (MCL)	By-products of drinking water chlorination
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5s)	No	2023	0	ug/L	n/a	60 (MCL)	By-product of drinking water chlorination

NOTES:

1 – The level presented represents the 90th percentile of the 20 sites tested. A percentile is a value on a scale of 100 that indicates the percent of a distribution that is equal to or below it. The 90th percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of the lead and copper values detected at your water system. In this case, 20 samples were collected at your water system and the 90th percentile value was the third highest value.

2 – The level presented represents a range of the lead and copper samples collected. The Action Level for copper was exceeded at three locations between January 1st and June 30th. The Action Level for copper was not exceeded between July 1st and December 31st. The Action Level for lead was exceeded at 5 locations between January 1st and June 30th. The Action Level for lead was exceeded at 3 sampling locations between July 1st and December 31st. The action level for lead was exceeded at four locations in the distribution system.

3 - Water containing more than 20 mg/l of sodium should not be used for drinking by people on severely restricted sodium diets. Water containing more than 270 mg/l of sodium should not be used for drinking by people on moderately restricted sodium diets.

Definitions:

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.

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 contamination.

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

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

Non-Detects (ND): Laboratory analysis indicates that the constituent is not present.

Milligrams per liter (mg/l): Corresponds to one part of liquid in one million parts of liquid (parts per million - ppm).

Micrograms per liter (ug/l): Corresponds to one part of liquid in one billion parts of liquid (parts per billion -ppb).

Picocuries per liter (pCi/L) – picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

What does this information mean?

As you can see by the table above, our system had action level exceedance for both lead and copper during 2023. All other water quality parameters were either below detection limits or were at low levels that were less than regulatory limits. We have learned through our testing that some contaminants have been detected, however, these contaminants were below the level allowed by the state.

In November 2023, we began implementing a corrosion control program which includes the addition of zinc orthophosphate to our water to help coat the water pipes and reduce lead and copper levels. As you can see from the Table of Detected Contaminants, both lead and copper levels decreased during the second half of the year. We will be collecting lead and copper samples again (twice) in 2024 and anticipate that the lead and copper results will continue to decrease.

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. Paul Smith's College is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in your home. You share the responsibility for protecting yourself and your family from the lead in your home plumbing. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Before drinking tap water, flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. You can also use a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead in drinking water. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact Timothy Riddle, Facilities Operations Manager at (518) 327-6463. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

IS OUR WATER SYSTEM MEETING OTHER RULES THAT GOVERN OPERATIONS?

Last year our system was in general compliance with applicable State drinking water operating, monitoring and reporting requirements. We began adding zinc orthophosphate to our water as a corrosion control inhibitor to help lower lead and copper levels for the pipes in our water distribution system. We will continue to sample for lead and copper in 2024. It is important to know that our water source does not contain lead or copper.

Do I need to take special precautions?

Although our drinking water met or exceeded state and federal regulations, some people may be more vulnerable to disease causing micro-organisms or pathogens 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 from their health care provider about their drinking water. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia* and other microbial pathogens are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

WHY SAVE WATER AND HOW TO AVOID WASTING IT?

Although our system has an adequate amount of water to meet present and future demands, there are a number of reasons why it is important to conserve water:

- Saving water saves energy and some of the costs associated with both of these necessities of life;
- Saving water reduces the cost of energy required to pump water and the need to construct costly new wells, pumping systems and water towers; and
- Saving water lessens the strain on the water system during a dry spell or drought, helping to avoid severe water use restrictions so that essential firefighting needs are met.

You can play a role in conserving water by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using, and by looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It is not hard to conserve water. Conservation tips include:

- Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.
- Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day.
- Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank, watch for a few minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl.

Closing

Thank you for allowing us to continue providing you with clean, quality water this year. We ask that the entire Paul Smith's community help us protect our water sources. Please call our office if you have questions regarding the information contained in this report.