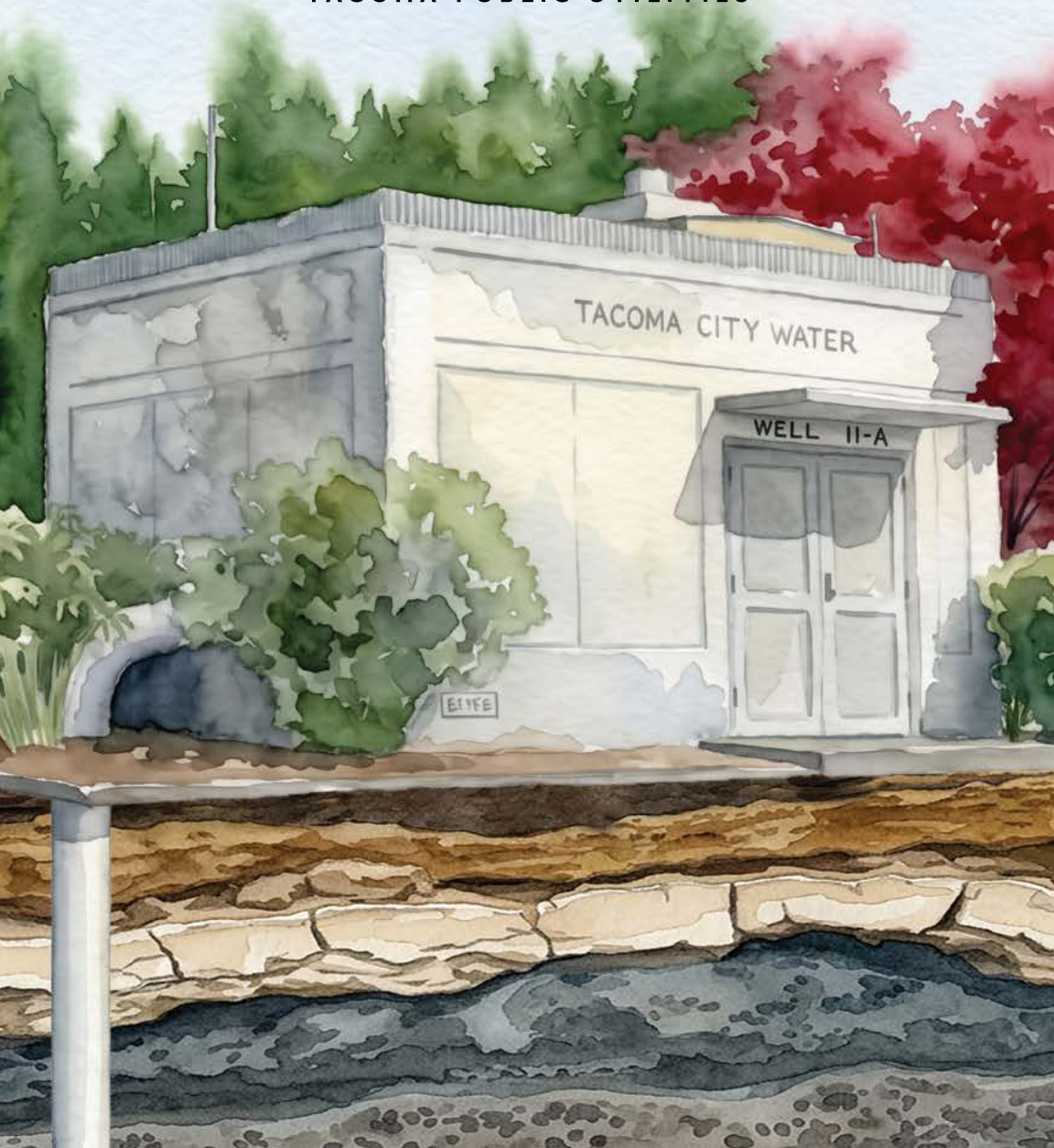


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Water Quality Report

Managing Water from the Ground Up

TACOMA  **WATER**
TACOMA PUBLIC UTILITIES



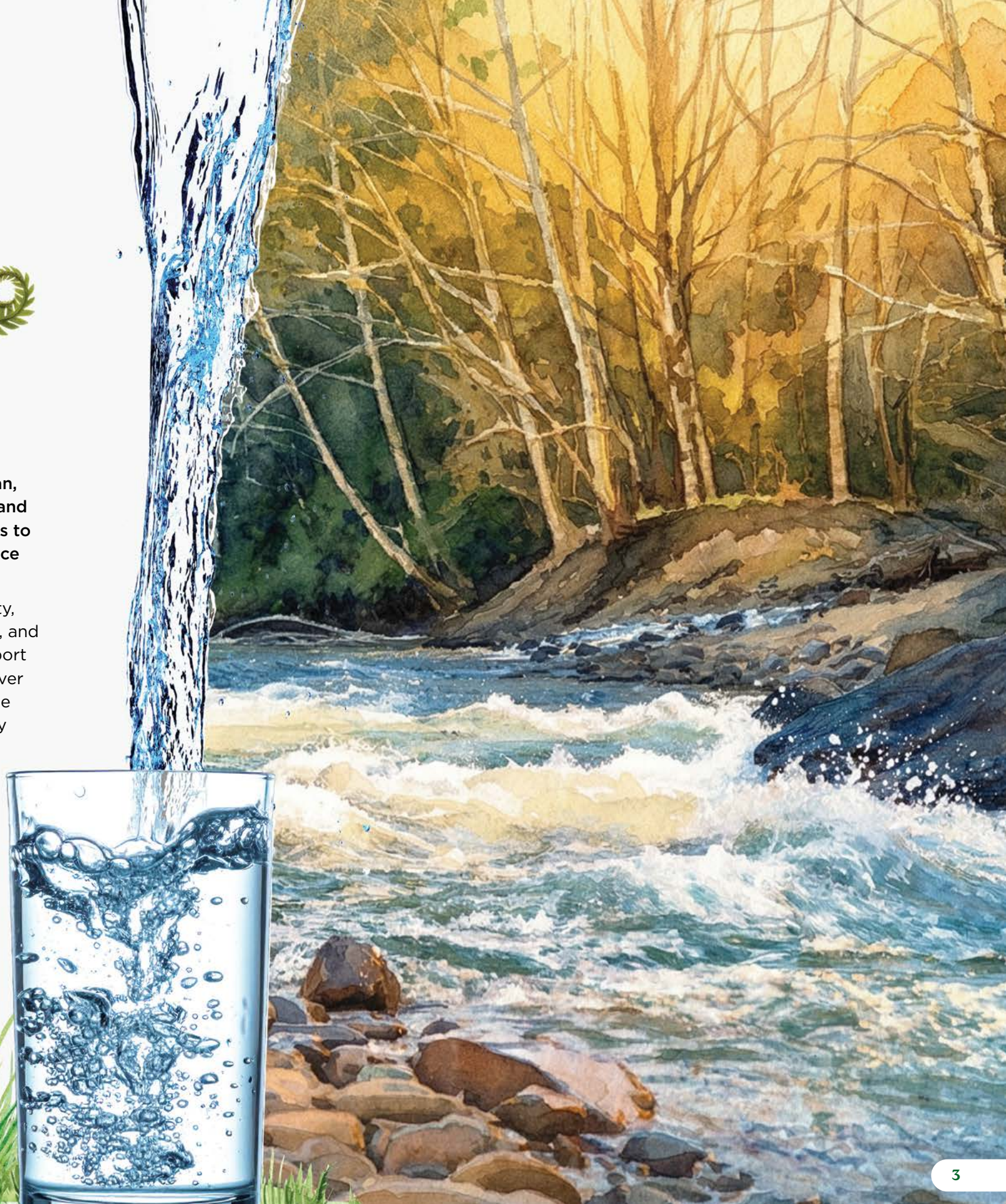


A Message from Your Water Superintendent

At Tacoma Water, we are proud to provide clean, great-tasting drinking water to our customers and community partners. Every day, our team works to earn your trust and ensure this essential resource remains safe and reliable.

This report highlights your drinking water quality, recent system and infrastructure improvements, and the work of the dedicated employees who support our operations. With sources from the Green River and groundwater, we maintain a resilient, flexible supply that meets our community's needs today and into the future. Thank you for trusting us to protect your water and deliver the high-quality service you expect.

Keri Burchard-Juarez,
Superintendent





Why a Diverse Water Supply Matters

Benefits of a diverse supply

While the Green River provides most of your drinking water, groundwater plays an important supporting role. Weather conditions and seasonal water-use patterns can change, creating variability in how we use our water sources. By having access to both the Green River and groundwater, we maintain a more resilient and reliable water supply.

Groundwater

We own and operate 24 wells in and around Tacoma. In a typical year, groundwater provides about 4% to 11% of total demand, primarily during the summer when demand increases and, in the fall, when surface water is less abundant.

Groundwater is a reliable source because the aquifer naturally recharges during the wet winter season. Our wells are also less affected by drought than river flows, adding important flexibility and stability to our supply.

Planning and rehabilitation

Our planning and modeling show we will need to expand our groundwater sources to meet future demands and strengthen system reliability. We hold groundwater rights that are not fully used today, and our aquifers have the capacity to provide significantly more water.

We have completed a comprehensive evaluation to identify the most beneficial supply projects and the best timing for them. Future well development will align with ongoing efforts to improve water treatment and seismic resiliency.

We recently rebuilt two of our South Tacoma wells and plan to rehabilitate others in the near future. Over time, these improvements, combined with other supply strategies, will strengthen reliability and provide multiple system benefits. By planning ahead, we can responsibly manage water supply for our community and partners.



How We Treat Groundwater to Keep Your Water Safe

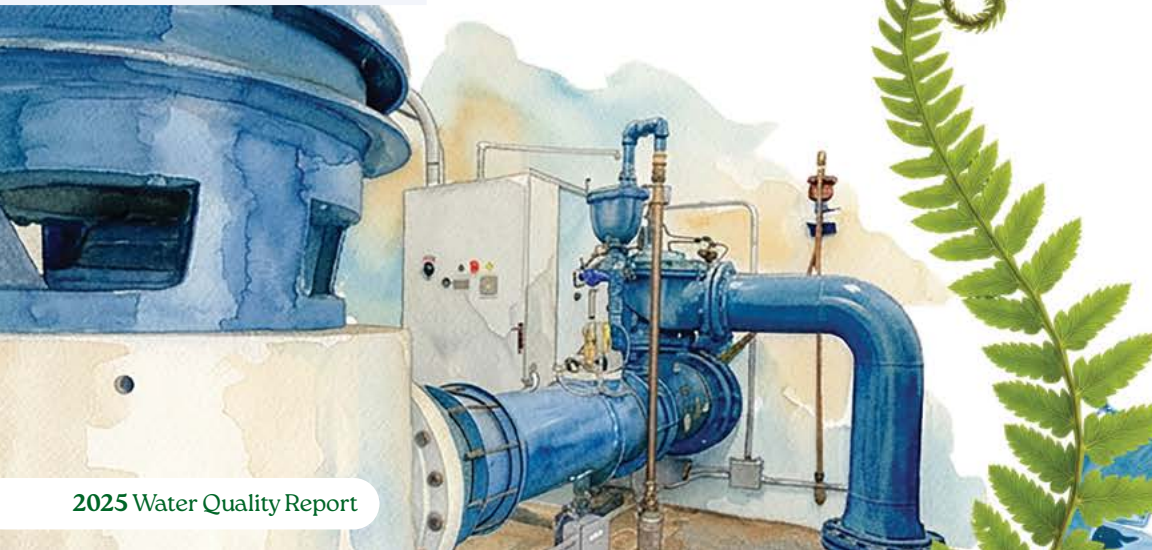
Like the Green River supply, we treat our groundwater to ensure it remains safe and meets all drinking water standards. Both sources go through many of the same treatment processes.

As groundwater moves through layers of rock and soil, it is naturally filtered. After we pump it from the aquifer, water from each well flows to a central treatment facility. There, we add caustic soda to raise the pH – a measure of acidity – so the water is less corrosive to plumbing. We also add fluoride, as required by city ordinance, to support dental health, and disinfect the water with chlorine. Chlorine kills microorganisms that may be present in the water and continues to protect the water as it travels through the distribution system.

We carefully adjust chemical levels and continuously monitor water quality as the groundwater leaves the treatment facility and moves through our system.

Some wells require additional treatment due to historical contamination in parts of the aquifer. At Well 12A, we use air-stripping towers to remove volatile organic compounds. In the future, we will add treatment for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in wells that do not meet new federal and state drinking water standards. This will likely include granular activated carbon or ion exchange systems, which filter water through specialized media to remove PFAS. Until then, we operate only wells that ensure compliance with the new standards.

Whether your water comes from the Green River, our groundwater wells, or a blend of both, you can trust that it is fully treated and safe to drink. We are committed to delivering services essential to quality of life.



The Importance of the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule

You may wonder how we decide which contaminants to test for in your drinking water. We routinely test for common contaminants such as bacteria, lead and copper, and treatment-related additives like chlorine, fluoride, and pH. We also test for less common contaminants when needed.

We adhere to the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR), which requires us to monitor contaminants that are not yet regulated. This helps determine whether they are present in drinking water and how frequently they occur.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) works with engineers, scientists, physicians, and other health professionals to establish a Contaminant Candidate List (CCL). This is a list of drinking water contaminants known or expected to occur in public water systems that are not yet regulated by the EPA. The EPA reviews the monitoring results and decides whether new regulations are needed.

In making its determination, the EPA considers whether a contaminant:

- Might adversely affect people's health
- Is present, or likely to occur, at levels that could pose a risk to public health
- Can be reduced through regulation to meaningfully protect public health

This report includes results from the fifth round of the UCMR cycle (UCMR5), which focused on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and lithium. We tested and analyzed 29 PFAS compounds and lithium in both our Green River supply and groundwater sources.

We did not detect PFAS or lithium in the Green River supply. In groundwater, we detected two PFAS compounds, both at levels below the state action levels and the proposed maximum contaminant levels. We did not detect lithium in groundwater.

We will continue to monitor for PFAS in 2026 and will report any detections in next year's Water Quality Report.



Water quality table - UCMR5*

Constituent	Perfluorohexanesulfonic Acid (PFHxS)	Perfluorobutanesulfonic Acid (PFBS)
Highest level detected	5.1 ppt	3.3 ppt
Average level detected	2.4 ppt	0.4 ppt
Range of level detected	0-5.1 ppt	0-3.3 ppt
SAL	65 ppt	345 ppt
MCL effective 2029	10 ppt	N/A
Potential sources of contaminant	Discharge from manufacturing and industrial chemical facilities, use of certain consumer products, occupational exposures, and certain firefighting activities	Discharge from manufacturing and industrial chemical facilities, use of certain consumer products, occupational exposures, and certain firefighting activities

*Listed SALs were current at time of sampling. SALs were updated in January 2026 and are currently 10 ppt for PFHxS and N/A for PFBS.

Employee Spotlight

Gary Fox
Water Quality Engineer



As a professional engineer on the water quality engineering team, I support operations and maintenance staff by providing engineering expertise for drinking water treatment, water quality, and regulatory compliance. My work focuses on process optimization and troubleshooting, long-term planning, leading studies, and managing projects to ensure operations meet or exceed water quality standards.

My background in chemical engineering directly supports this work and helps ensure our customers receive high-quality water now and in the future. One of my favorite projects was designing and managing the replacement of chemical feed lines at the Green River Filtration Facility last summer. The project required careful planning and close coordination with the contractor and operations and maintenance staff. We completed the work successfully without interrupting daily operations."



Reporting Chemicals in Your Water

The water quality table below shows substances we identified at the water source, treatment plant, and in the distribution system during our most recent sampling. The table doesn't include the other 35 inorganic, 67 volatile organic chemicals and 73 synthetic organic chemicals we test for — including many industrial chemicals, herbicides, and pesticides — but did not find.

Regulated at our groundwater sources

Constituent	Highest level allowed (MCL)	Highest level detected	Ideal goal (MCLG)	Range of level detected	Regulation met	Potential sources of contaminant
Arsenic	10 ppb	1.7 ppb (2021)	0	0-1.7 ppb	Yes	Natural erosion
Nitrate	10 ppm	4.0 ppm (2025)	10 ppm	0-4.0 ppm	Yes	Agricultural uses, septic
Trichloroethylene	5 ppb	1.6 ppb (2025)	0	0-1.6 ppb	Yes	Industrial contamination

Unregulated at our groundwater sources

Constituent	MCL	Highest level detected	MCLG	Range of level detected	Regulation met	Potential sources of contaminant
Chloroform	N/R	1.3 ppb (2025)	N/R	0-1.3 ppb Average 0.26 ppb	N/R	Industrial contamination

Regulated at our treatment plant

Constituent	MCL	Highest level detected	MCLG	Range of level detected	Regulation met	Potential sources of contaminant
Fluoride	4 ppm	0.96 ppm	4 ppm	0.04-0.96 ppm	Yes	Treatment additive
Turbidity	1 NTU	0.036 NTU	N/A	0.017-0.036 NTU	Yes	Soil erosion

Regulated in our distribution system

Disinfection byproducts	Highest running annual average allowed	Our running annual average	MCLG	Range of level detected	Regulation met	Potential sources of contaminant
Total Trihalomethanes	80 ppb average	12.8 ppb average	N/A	3.58-35.4 ppb	Yes	Disinfection interaction
Haloacetic Acids	60 ppb average	2.0 ppb average	N/A	<1-4.55 ppb	Yes	Disinfection interaction
Bromate	10 ppb	0	0	0	Yes	Disinfection interaction
Chlorine Residual	4 ppm	N/A	4 ppm (MRDLG)	0.27-1.66 ppm	Yes	Treatment additive
Total Coliform	<5% positive	0.000%	0	0 of 2,469 sites	Yes	Sampling technique

Regulated at your tap

Lead and copper sampled in 2025 (required once every three years)	90% of samples must be below the action level (AL)	90% of samples were at or below this level	MCLG	# of sites above the action level (AL)	Regulation met	Potential sources of contaminant
Lead	15 ppb (AL)	N/D	0	0 of 51 sites	Yes	Household plumbing
Copper	1.3 ppm (AL)	N/D	1.3 ppm	0 of 51 sites	Yes	Household plumbing

Definitions

AL

Action Level is the concentration which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow. Action Levels are reported at the 90th percentile for homes at greatest risk.

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 technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)

The level of a contaminant in drinking water below for 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.

Minimum Reporting Level, also known as Method Reporting Limit (MRL)

The smallest amount of a substance we can reliably measure and report in a sample.

N/A

Not Applicable.

N/D

Not Detected (result is below the laboratory minimum detection level).

N/R

Not Regulated (not currently subject to EPA drinking water regulations).

NTU

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit is a standard to measure water clarity.

ppb

One part per billion.

ppm

One part per million.

ppt

One part per trillion.

State Action Level (SAL)

A level in water expected to be without appreciable health effects over a lifetime of exposure, including in sensitive groups.

Treatment Technique (TT)

A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Bonney Lake Water System

This table was provided by the City of Bonney Lake and applies only to the Falling Water subdivision, which received water from the Bonney Lake water system for a few days in early April 2025 during a Tacoma Water pipeline maintenance shutdown. Please direct any questions to the City of Bonney Lake at 253-447-4319.

Constituent	Highest level allowed (MCL)	Highest level detected	Range of detection	MCL violation	Potential sources of contaminant	Source of regulation
Nitrate	10 ppm	4.6 ppm	0.22-4.66 ppm	No	Septic systems, agricultural	Groundwater
Hardness	N/A	48 ppm	48.0-128.0 ppm	No	Erosion of natural deposits	Groundwater
Sodium	N/A	10.7 ppm	6.9-14.2 ppm	No	Erosion of natural deposits	Groundwater
Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)	4 ppt	N/D	0-2.0 ppt	No	Run-off or leaching from firefighter foam, industrial discharge, landfills, and wastewater treatment plants	Groundwater
Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS)	4 ppt	N/D	N/D	No	Run-off or leaching from firefighter foam, industrial discharge, landfills, and wastewater treatment plants	Groundwater
*Fluoride	4 ppm	0.91 ppm	0-0.91 ppm	No	Erosion of natural deposits, treatment additive	Treatment plant
Turbidity	5 NTU	0.34 NTU*	0.015-0.34 NTU	No	Soil erosion, pipe sediment	Treatment plant
Manganese	50 ppb	<10 ppb	N/D - <10 ppb	N/A	Naturally occurring	EPA Unregulated contaminant, monitoring
Chloroform	N/A	9.19 ppb	N/D - <7.2 ppb	N/A	Industrial	EPA Unregulated contaminant, monitoring
Contamination iron	N/A	<0.05 ppm	N/D - <0.05 ppm	N/A	Naturally occurring, corrosion	EPA Unregulated contaminant, monitoring
*Chlorine	4 ppm	1.72 ppm	0.30-1.72 ppm	No	Treatment additive	Distribution system
*Haloacetic Acids	60 ppb	8.49 ppb	<1-8.49 ppb	No	Byproduct of disinfection	Distribution system
*Total Trihalomethanes	80 ppb	15.6 ppb	5.6-36.6 ppb	No	Byproduct of disinfection	Distribution system

Substance	Action level (AL)	90th percentile	Samples above AL	Regulation met	Source	Source of regulation
Copper	1.3 ppm	0.86 ppm	0 of 35	Yes	Corrosion of household plumbing, erosion of natural deposits	Consumers tap
Lead	0.015 ppm	0.003 ppm	0 of 35	Yes	Corrosion of household plumbing, erosion of natural deposits	Consumers tap
Total Coliform	<5% positive	0.00%	0 of 480	Yes	Naturally present throughout the environment	Consumers tap

*Data supplied by Tacoma Water.

Conserving Water Matters

Water conservation begins by using only what we need. By conserving water, we support future growth, reduce withdrawals from reservoirs and wells, and leave more water in the rivers for fish and wildlife. When we all take small steps, we protect our water supply and help ensure enough water for our environment and growing community. Together we can make a difference.

We're now in the final two years of our 10-year Water Conservation Plan, and your participation is more important than ever. From May through October, our goal is to reduce peak summer water use by 6.65% per person from 2018 to 2027. You can read about our plan at [MyTPU.org/WaterConservationPlan](https://www.mytpu.org/WaterConservationPlan).

Every household and business that waters outdoors can help conserve water. Water landscapes early in the day, repair leaks promptly, and use smart irrigation controllers or hose timers to prevent overwatering. Letting your lawn go dormant during the summer also helps support our community's water conservation goal.

Looking to save more water at home and outdoors? Explore conservation tips, customer programs, rebates for smart irrigation controllers, and free outdoor water-saving kits at [MyTPU.org/WaterSmart](https://www.mytpu.org/WaterSmart).



Employee Spotlight

Ken Young

Water Quality Mechanic



I am a water quality mechanic in the Wells Group. I am responsible for keeping our drinking water safe by maintaining and calibrating chlorine, pH, and turbidity meters at our sample stations across the system. These meters continuously monitor water quality where water enters our system, helping us prevent contamination and maintain proper water chemistry.

I also maintain and operate our in-town groundwater wells used during periods of high demand or need. We generate a chlorine solution from a saltwater brine and run it through the Hood Street Reservoir to ensure the water is safe.

I also work with the water quality technicians when needed. It takes all of us to keep good, fresh, clean water flowing to your tap."

An Important Message from the EPA

Your drinking water currently meets the EPA's revised drinking water standard for arsenic. However, it does contain low levels of naturally occurring arsenic not associated with known sources of industrial contamination. There is a small chance that some people who drink water containing low levels of arsenic for many years could develop circulatory disease, cancer, or other health problems. Most types of cancer and circulatory diseases are due to factors other than exposure to arsenic. The EPA standard balances the current understanding of arsenic's health effects against the costs of removing arsenic from drinking water.

Identifying Substances in Your Water

Tap water and bottled water sources include rivers, lakes, streams, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and can pick up other substances resulting from the presence of animals or human activity. Those substances may include inorganic material such as salts and metals, synthetic and volatile organic material from industrial processes, storm water runoff and septic systems, and pesticides and herbicides from agriculture and residential uses. To ensure your drinking water is safe, the EPA and the Washington State Board of Health prescribe regulations that limit the number of certain contaminants in public water systems.

Gases

Radon

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas. Breathing radon can cause lung cancer in humans. Ninety-eight percent of detected radon comes from indoor air generally released from soil beneath homes. Radon can release from tap water, but in much smaller quantities – only about one percent of radon exposure comes from drinking water. We test for radon in our groundwater sources. Federal guidelines require drinking water to contain no more than 4,000 picocuries per liter (a picocurie is a measure of radiation). We took 117 samples and tested them between 1992 and 2025. Findings show an average of 291 picocuries per liter. Our largest single test shows 530 picocuries per liter.

Organisms

Cryptosporidium (KRIP-toe-spo-RID-ee-um)

Cryptosporidium is a microscopic organism commonly found in open surface water sources. Swallowing Cryptosporidium can cause diarrhea, fever, and other stomach and abdominal symptoms. Federal and state regulations require us to treat Green River water for Cryptosporidium. We remove any Cryptosporidium that might be present effectively with filtration. We have had no reported instances of Cryptosporidium-related health problems in our service area.

Giardia (GEE-are-DEE-uh)

Giardia lamblia is another microscopic organism commonly found in open surface waters such as rivers, lakes, and streams. Like other water systems that use open surface water sources, federal and state regulations require us to treat Green River water for Giardia. We kill Giardia effectively with disinfecting chemicals like chlorine and ozone.

Minerals

Lead and Copper

Studies cited by the EPA show swallowing lead or copper can cause health problems, especially in pregnant women and young children. Lead and copper found in drinking water usually come from home plumbing. Some homes have higher levels than other homes. Water with a low pH can cause copper to dissolve directly from pipes into water and lead to dissolve from solder used to join copper pipes.

Federal and state drinking water rules establish “action levels” allowable for lead and copper in water samples collected from homes. At least 90% of samples may have no more than 15 parts per billion (ppb) of lead in one liter of water and no more than 1.3 parts per million (ppm) of copper per liter.

Once every three years, we sample at least 50 homes for lead and copper.

We completed the most recent sampling in 2025. Results show our system met action levels for both lead and copper. Although we detected lead in a few homes, all were at levels below the 15 ppb action level. To continue ensuring we meet regulatory requirements, we will continue to monitor and adjust pH levels to reduce corrosion in pipes. We will sample again for lead and copper in 2028.

Pregnant women and young children can be more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general

population. If you have concerns about lead levels in the water at your home, have your water tested. Running water for two minutes after it sits stagnant in the pipe for a few hours can help clean the tap and reduce the amount of lead and copper in your water. A change in the temperature of water will also tell you when fresh water arrives.

Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline, 1-800-426-4791 or at [EPA.gov/SafeWater/Lead](https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

Sand and Silt

Because we take our water from the Green River, which, prior to 2015, was an unfiltered water source, pipeline shutdowns and fire flows from hydrants can stir up sand and silt that sits in the bottom of water mains throughout the water supply system.

Even though the water is treated, turbid events like these can cause water to appear visually unpleasant, but it remains safe.





Treating Your Water

In addition to filtering your water, in 2025 we treated our Green River drinking water supply with chlorine, fluoride, caustic soda, and ozone. Treating water with the chemical disinfectants chlorine and ozone is important to protect your health when water is drawn from a surface supply like the Green River. Placing disinfecting chemicals in water kills germs and microorganisms, making it safe to drink. When we use our groundwater supply, it is treated with chlorine, fluoride, and caustic soda.

Fluoride

Tacoma voters approved fluoride treatment in 1988 and 1989 because of the dental health benefits it provides. The Tacoma City Council then enacted an ordinance directing fluoridation of our water supply. We currently fluoridate at a level of 0.7 ppm.

Caustic soda

We treat the Green River water and groundwater supplies with caustic soda to raise the pH (a measurement of acidity) of the water, making it less corrosive on plumbing and reducing the amount of lead and copper that can dissolve into your drinking water.

Ozone

We treat the Green River water supply with ozone, which effectively destroys any undesirable taste and smells that can occur and provides disinfection benefits to help ensure your water remains safe to drink. Ozone gas generates when we expose pure oxygen gas to electricity in an ozone generator. After creating ozone gas, we combine it with water and inject into pipeline reactors at our Green River Filtration Facility. Ozone only lasts for a few minutes in the water and is not present in the water supply when it leaves the treatment site.

Chlorine

Chlorine is our primary disinfection treatment. While it does an excellent job of killing the microorganisms that may be harmful to you, chlorine also reacts with the natural organic material commonly found in surface water sources like lakes, rivers, and streams. This reaction forms compounds called “disinfection byproducts.” We must meet drinking water standards for two groups of disinfection byproduct compounds. Byproduct levels found in water depend primarily on:

- The amount of natural organic material in the water
- The amount of chlorine used to treat the water
- The amount of time it takes water to reach the customer

Byproduct levels vary throughout the year. Byproducts often increase during the warmest months when our water supply has its highest levels of natural organic material and chemical reactions happen faster. We work to minimize byproduct levels and have adjusted portions of our system operations.

Keeping You Healthy

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, 1-800-426-4791.

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.

Delivering Your Water

Most of your water comes from the Green River in South King County. The Green River Watershed is a 231-square-mile forested area that serves as a collection point for melting snow and seasonal rainfall in an uninhabited area of the Cascade Mountains between Chinook and Snoqualmie Passes. We own land along the river, which is about 11% of the watershed.

Through agreements with other landowners, we limit watershed access and carefully control activities, such as recreation, road maintenance and logging. We also own and operate seven wells on the North Fork of the Green River and take water from them during periods when Green River water is turbid. We supplement the Green River supply with groundwater from more than 20 additional wells to meet peak summer demands. Most are in Tacoma city limits.



TACOMA WATER

TACOMA PUBLIC UTILITIES

3628 S. 35th St. • Tacoma, WA 98409

Tacoma Public Utility Board

The Tacoma Public Utility Board is the governing and policy-making body for Tacoma Water. To be involved in water quality decisions, you may participate in public meetings, held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Tacoma Public Utilities Auditorium, 3628 S. 35th St., Tacoma. Meetings are also held virtually via Zoom Meetings and televised live on TV Tacoma. For details, visit MyTPU.org.

Your Water Quality Report

This report contains information about your drinking water. Congress and the EPA require us to inform you annually about your drinking water and its impacts. Although most content in this report is required, we are pleased to share additional helpful information about your water and the work we do to get it to you.

Contact Information

Water Quality
253-502-8384 • WaterQuality@Tacoma.gov

Conservation
253-502-8723 • MyTPU.org/WaterSmart

Cross Connection Control / Backflow Prevention
253-502-8215 • MyTPU.org/BackFlow • Backflow@Tacoma.gov

Rates
253-441-4942

National Radon Hotline
1-800-55-RADON • 1-800-557-2366

Washington State Department of Health
DOH.WA.Gov/DrinkingWater

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Safe Drinking Water Hotline
1-800-426-4791 • EPA.Gov/SafeWater

MyTPU.org/WaterQuality

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