

# ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

Reporting Year 2021



*Presented By*  
**West Travis County  
Public Utility Agency**

Este reporte incluye información importante sobre el agua para tomar. Para asistencia en español, favor de llamar al telefono (512) 263-0125.

PWS ID#: 2270235



## Quality First

Once again, we are proud to present our annual water quality report covering the period between January 1 and December 31, 2021. We are committed to delivering the best-quality drinking water possible. Our exceptional staff continues to work hard every day—at all hours—to deliver the highest-quality drinking water without interruption. We remain vigilant in meeting the challenges of new regulations, source water protection, water conservation, and community outreach while continuing to serve the needs of all of our water users.

## Source Water Assessment

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the state regulatory agency, completed an assessment of your source water, and results indicate that some of your sources are susceptible to certain contaminants. The sampling requirements for our water system are based on this susceptibility and previous sample data. Any detections of these contaminants may be found in this Consumer Confidence Report. Further details about sources and source water assessments are available at Drinking Water Watch, [tceq.state.tx.us/DWW](http://tceq.state.tx.us/DWW). If you would like a copy of our assessment, please feel free to contact our office during regular business hours at (512) 263-0125 or visit [wtcpua.org](http://wtcpua.org).

## Water Treatment Process

The treatment process consists of a series of steps. First, raw water is drawn from our source and sent to clarifiers. Along the way, chlorine is added for disinfection, and just before the water reaches the clarifiers, aluminum chlorohydrate and polymer are added. The addition of these substances causes small particles (called floc) to adhere to one another, making them heavy enough to settle into a basin, from which sediment is removed. At this point, the water is filtered through layers of fine coal and silicate sand. As smaller suspended particles are removed, turbidity disappears and clear water emerges.

“  
When the well is dry, we  
know the worth of water.

—Benjamin Franklin

Chlorine is added again as a precaution against any bacteria that may still be present. (We carefully monitor the amount of chlorine, adding the lowest quantity necessary to protect the safety of your water without compromising taste.) Finally, a corrosion inhibitor (to protect distribution system pipes) is added before the water is pumped to reservoirs and water towers and into your home or business.

## Where Does My Water Come From?

Our drinking water source is Lake Austin, a reservoir on the Colorado River. It is maintained at a constant level by releases of water from Lake Travis upstream.

## Lead in Home Plumbing

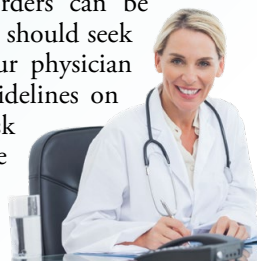
If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. This water supply is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water, 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 two 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 at (800) 426-4791 or [epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://epa.gov/safewater/lead).

## Community Participation

Public input concerning the water system may be made at regularly scheduled board meetings, which are generally held on the third Thursday of every other month at 1:00 p.m. at City Hall, 4000 Galleria Parkway, Bee Cave.

## Important Health Information

You may be more vulnerable than the general population to certain microbial contaminants, such as *Cryptosporidium*, in drinking water. Infants, some elderly, or immunocompromised persons such as those undergoing chemotherapy for cancer; those who have undergone organ transplants; those who are undergoing treatment with steroids; and people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders can be particularly at risk from infections. You should seek advice about drinking water from your physician or health care provider. Additional guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.



**QUESTIONS?** For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Customer Service at (512) 263-0125.

## Substances That Could Be in Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA prescribes regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

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 can acquire naturally occurring minerals, in some cases, radioactive material, and substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances 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, or wildlife;

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may 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 by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems;

Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Contaminants may be found in drinking water that may cause taste, color, or odor problems. These types of problems are not necessarily causes for health concerns. For more information on the taste, odor, or color of drinking water, please contact our business office. For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, call the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

## FOG (Fats, Oils, and Grease)

You may not be aware of it, but every time you pour fat, oil, or grease (FOG) down your sink (e.g., bacon grease), you are contributing to a costly problem in the sewer collection system. FOG coats the inner walls of the plumbing in your house as well as the walls of underground piping throughout the community. Over time these greasy materials build up and form blockages in pipes, which can lead to wastewater backing up into parks, yards, streets, and storm drains. These backups allow FOG to contaminate local waters, including drinking water. Exposure to untreated wastewater is a public health hazard. FOG discharged into septic systems and drain fields can also cause malfunctions, resulting in more frequent tank pump-outs and other expenses.

Communities spend billions of dollars every year to unplug or replace grease-blocked pipes, repair pump stations, and clean up costly and illegal wastewater spills. Here are some tips that you and your family can follow to help maintain a well-run system now and in the future:

### NEVER:

- Pour fats, oil, or grease down the house or storm drains.
- Dispose of food scraps by flushing them.
- Use the toilet as a wastebasket.

### ALWAYS:

- Scrape and collect fat, oil, and grease into a waste container, such as an empty coffee can, and dispose of it with your garbage.
- Place food scraps in waste containers or garbage bags for disposal with solid wastes.
- Place a wastebasket in each bathroom for solid wastes like disposable diapers, creams and lotions, and personal hygiene products, including nonbiodegradable wipes.

## Water Loss Audit

In the water loss audit submitted to the Texas Water Development Board during the year covered by this report, our system lost an estimated 153 million gallons of water. If you have any questions about the water loss audit, please call West Travis County PUA at (512) 263-0125.





## Count on Us

Delivering high-quality drinking water to our customers involves far more than just pushing water through pipes. Water treatment is a complex, time-consuming process. Because tap water is highly regulated by state and federal laws, water treatment plant and system operators must be licensed and are required to commit to long-term, on-the-job training before becoming fully qualified. Our licensed water professionals have a basic understanding of a wide range of subjects, including mathematics, biology, chemistry, and physics. Some of the tasks they complete on a regular basis include:

- Operating and maintaining equipment to purify and clarify water.
- Monitoring and inspecting machinery, meters, gauges, and operating conditions.
- Conducting tests and inspections on water and evaluating the results.
- Maintaining optimal water chemistry.
- Applying data to formulas that determine treatment requirements, flow levels, and concentration levels.
- Documenting and reporting test results and system operations to regulatory agencies.
- Serving our community through customer support, education, and outreach.

So the next time you turn on your faucet, think of the skilled professionals who stand behind each drop.

## Safeguard Your Drinking Water

Protection of drinking water is everyone's responsibility. You can help protect your community's drinking water source in several ways:

- Eliminate excess use of lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides—they contain hazardous chemicals that can reach your drinking water source.
- Pick up after your pets.
- If you have your own septic system, properly maintain it to reduce leaching to water sources, or consider connecting to a public water system.
- Dispose of chemicals properly; take used motor oil to a recycling center.
- Volunteer in your community. Find a watershed or wellhead protection organization in your community and volunteer to help. If there are no active groups, consider starting one. Use U.S. EPA's Adopt Your Watershed to locate groups in your community.
- Organize a storm drain stenciling project with others in your neighborhood. Stencil a message next to the street drain reminding people "Dump No Waste—Drains to River" or "Protect Your Water." Produce and distribute a flyer for households to remind residents that storm drains dump directly into your local water body.

## Water Conservation Tips

You can play a role in conserving water and save yourself money in the process by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using and looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It's not hard to conserve water. Here are a few tips:

- Automatic dishwashers use 15 gallons for every cycle, regardless of how many dishes are loaded. So get a run for your money and load it to capacity.
- 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. Fix it and you can save almost 6,000 gallons per year.
- 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. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons a day from an invisible toilet leak. Fix it and you save more than 30,000 gallons a year.
- Use your water meter to detect hidden leaks. Simply turn off all taps and water-using appliances. Then check the meter after 15 minutes. If it moved, you have a leak.

## Test Results

We are pleased to report that your drinking water meets or exceeds all federal and state requirements.

Our water is monitored for many different kinds of substances on a very strict sampling schedule. Also, the water we deliver must meet specific health standards. Here, we show only those substances that were detected in our water. (A complete list of all our analytical results is available upon request.) Remember that detecting a substance does not mean the water is unsafe to drink; our goal is to keep all detects below their respective maximum allowed levels.

The state recommends monitoring for certain substances less often than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data are included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

The percentage of total organic carbon (TOC) removal was measured each month, and the system met all TOC removal requirements set.

REGULATED SUBSTANCES							
SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Barium (ppm)	2021	2	2	0.0639	0.0639–0.0639	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Beta/Photon Emitters (pCi/L)	2017	50 <sup>1</sup>	0	4.6	4.6–4.6	No	Decay of natural and human-made deposits
Chlorine Residual (ppm)	2021	4	4	2.96	0.7–4.5	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Cyanide (ppb)	2021	200	200	110	110–110	No	Discharge from steel/metal factories; Discharge from plastic and fertilizer factories
Fluoride (ppm)	2021	4	4	0.2	0.2–0.23	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive that promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Haloacetic Acids [HAAs]–Stage 1 (ppb)	2021	60	NA	12	8.5–12	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (ppm)	2021	10	10	0.19	0.19–0.19	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Total Coliform Bacteria (positive samples)	2021	TT	NA	1	NA	No	Naturally present in the environment
TTHMs [total trihalomethanes]–Stage 1 (ppb)	2021	80	NA	39 <sup>2</sup>	20.2–39	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection

Turbidity				
	LEVEL DETECTED	LIMIT (TREATMENT TECHNIQUE)	VIOLATION	LIKELY SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
Highest Single Measurement	0.55 NTU	1 NTU	No	Soil runoff
Lowest Monthly % Meeting Limit	100%	0.3 NTU	No	Soil runoff

Information Statement: Turbidity is a measurement of the cloudiness of the water caused by suspended particles. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of water quality and the effectiveness of our filtration system and disinfectants.

### Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AL	MCLG	AMOUNT DETECTED (90TH %ILE)	SITES ABOVE AL/TOTAL SITES	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Copper (ppm)	2020	1.3	1.3	0.588	0/30	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	2020	15	0	1.24	0/30	No	Lead service lines; Corrosion of household plumbing systems, including fittings and fixtures; Erosion of natural deposits

## Definitions

**90th %ile:** The levels reported for lead and copper represent the 90th percentile of the total number of sites tested. The 90th percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of our lead and copper detections.

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

**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.

**pCi/L (picocuries per liter):** A measure of radioactivity.

**ppb (parts per billion):** One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

**ppm (parts per million):** One part substance per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

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

<sup>1</sup> The MCL for beta particles is 4 millirems per year. The U.S. EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for beta particles.

<sup>2</sup> The highest average of all sample results collected at a location over a year.