Thank you for taking a moment to read through this Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). Providing the results of tests of your treated drinking water is a requirement of the Safe Drinking Water Act. This information makes clear that Bellingham’s water treatment process, and the drinking water we deliver to 20,830 homes in Bellingham, are excellent. It also reminds us of the importance of clean, safe drinking water to our health and quality of life. Health and quality of life have been a heightened focus this year as we navigate through the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Difficult and unexpected circumstances have presented us with many challenges, including protecting workers who deliver vital services each day. Thank you to the entire City of Bellingham employee team, who acted responsibly, gave up in-person social connections, and took many other precautions, to make sure essential City services – like the delivery of drinking water – continued uninterrupted throughout the pandemic. These steps helped protect health and quality of life in our community and for that we all are grateful.

With spring in the air and widespread distribution of COVID-19 vaccines now underway, I feel hopeful about the year ahead. We will emerge from these times with a renewed sense of optimism, ready to continue the important work of building a sustainable, equitable and thriving city in this monumentally consequential decade.

TO GET INVOLVED VISIT cob.org/gov/public

Pledge to conserve

Visit cob.org/CONSERVE to take the outdoor water conservation pledge and request free tools to help you stick to your water conservation goals. Follow our City's climate action goals:

- Water a few minutes at a time to reduce evaporation loss.
- Water your lawn between 7 and 10 a.m. to reduce evaporation loss, and
- Follow the voluntary watering schedule.

Each of us can do our part by pledging to conserve water this summer.

It has never been more relevant to understand how each person's actions can affect our shared resources. When it comes to water conservation, outdoor water conservation can be done simply:

- follow the voluntary watering schedule,
- irrigate between 7 and 10 a.m. to reduce evaporation loss, and
- use a rain gauge to avoid overwatering.

Small changes like these will save you money, decrease the strain on our City's water system, reduce energy expenditures, and help meet our City's Climate Action goals.

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Detected Regulated Contaminants

2020 Water Quality analysis results

In accordance with federal and state regulations, the table below includes all results from contaminants that were detected or are above the state reporting level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter (2020 or most recent)</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Public Health Goal or MCLG</th>
<th>Maximum Allowable MCL</th>
<th>Bellingham Drinking Water Range or Other</th>
<th>Average Value or Highest Result</th>
<th>In Compliance?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Coliform Bacteria</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5% positive per month</td>
<td>1% positive in July. All repeat samples at the site that month were negative. 0% positive all other months.</td>
<td>1% positive in July. 0% positive all other months.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bellingham collects over 90 samples a month at locations throughout our water distribution system and analyzes these for coliform bacteria to ensure water purity. No more than 5% of these samples can be positive for total coliform bacteria and none can be positive for Escherichia coli. No Escherichia coli was detected in 2020.

Free Chlorine Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>EPA REGULATIONS</th>
<th>BELLINGHAM WATER RESULTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free Chlorine Levels</td>
<td>ppm</td>
<td>Detectable in 95% of samples</td>
<td>4.0 MRDL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bellingham monitors chlorine levels continuously at the water filtration plant. Over 90 distribution system samples are also analyzed each month to ensure a disinfectant residual remains in treated water on its way to our customer’s homes. We must be able to detect chlorine in 95% of the samples we analyze in the distribution system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>EPA REGULATIONS</th>
<th>BELLINGHAM WATER RESULTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAA-5</td>
<td>ppb</td>
<td>0 to 60</td>
<td>4.0 MRDL</td>
<td>Highest site &lt; 12.8 ppb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTHM</td>
<td>ppb</td>
<td>0 to 80</td>
<td>4.0 MRDL</td>
<td>Highest site &lt; 35.8 ppb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Haloacetic acids and total trihalomethanes are formed as byproducts of the drinking water chlorination process. The HAA-5 and TTHM results are from 8 representative locations in Bellingham’s treated water distribution system. Compliance is based on a site-specific running average. The highest site average from 2020 is shown above.

Lead and copper are monitored every 3 years in our customers’ homes to assess the amount of corrosion occurring in home plumbing. The water sampled is the first draw of stagnant water in homes identified as having lead solder and copper pipe. There are no lead service lines in Bellingham. Sampling will next be conducted in 2023.

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. Bellingham’s source water is Lake Whatcom on the eastern edge of town. 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 occur naturally or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, and 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 can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.
- **Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally occurring or the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

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

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population.

- Immunocompromised 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.
- The 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).

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Department of Health and EPA prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Washington State Department of Agriculture regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.

Elevated levels of lead in drinking water can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. In Bellingham, fortunately, lead is not found in the treated water, but lead in drinking water can come from pipes and faucets in our customers’ homes. The City of Bellingham is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in customers’ plumbing. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for at least 30 seconds before using the water for drinking or cooking. You can capture this water to use on plants. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may opt to have your water analyzed by a local laboratory. To learn more about lead in water, go to: https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/basic-information-about-lead-drinking-water.

Definitions

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

**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 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 (e.g., chlorine, chloramines, chlorine dioxide).

**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 are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.