

NOTES ABOUT CONTAMINANTS

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 land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animal or human activity. Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from septic systems, agriculture, livestock operations, wildlife, and sewage treatment plants
- Pesticides and herbicides that 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, that are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems
- Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil or gas production, mining, or farming
- Radioactive contaminants, like radon, can be naturally occurring or the result of oil and gas production and mining activities

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which provide the same protection for public health.

A NOTE ABOUT LEAD

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 Gwinnett Department of Water Resources is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but it 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 online at [EPA.gov/safewater/lead](https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

CONTAMINANTS AND HEALTH RISKS

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 USEPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800.426.4791.

IMPORTANT HEALTH INFORMATION

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 seniors, and infants — can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

USEPA/Centers for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800.426.4791.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For additional information or questions about this report, contact the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources Environmental Laboratory at 678.376.4272.



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WHAT IS CRYPTOSPORIDIUM?

Cryptosporidium is a one-celled parasitic protozoan often found in water sources that receive runoff from animal waste. Crypto can infect humans and have severe impacts on certain people, including organ transplant recipients, immunocompromised persons, young children, and persons undergoing cancer treatment. Water Resources has a monthly sampling and analysis program for Crypto and Giardia, another protozoan often found in water. Samples of both lake water and finished drinking water are analyzed each month. No Cryptosporidium or Giardia was detected in the lake water.

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

2020 WATER QUALITY REPORT

The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources is pleased to present the annual water quality report. This Consumer Confidence Report contains important information about the quality of your drinking water, including detailed results of state and federally mandated tests for various contaminants. We are proud to say that in 2020, there were no EPA Safe Drinking Water Act violations to report. A safe and reliable drinking supply is essential to a growing, progressive community like Gwinnett. Our staff is committed to researching and implementing innovative ways to deliver high quality water at an excellent value.

LAKE LANIER PROVIDES EXCELLENT WATER

Gwinnett County receives its drinking water supply from Lake Sidney Lanier, located just north of Buford. Lake Lanier is a part of the Chattahoochee River system, which provides drinking water for more than 60 percent of Georgia's population.

Gwinnett's two water production facilities, Shoal Creek and Lanier Filter Plants, are among the best in the industry. In 2020, The Lanier Filter Plant earned the Georgia Association of Water Professionals Plant of the Year Award and, along with Shoal Creek, was awarded the Gold Award. Together, these two plants produce more than 200 million gallons of clean water a day — ensuring plenty of water is always available for drinking, cooking, showering, and fighting fires. Both of our filter plants protect public health and safety through a state-of-the-art treatment process called ozone biofiltration. State-certified staff monitor water quality around the clock, analyzing the water produced nearly every minute of every day via computer monitoring and physically taking samples. Additionally, the County regularly evaluates treatment processes and monitors the lake to prepare for potential changes in water quality, scarcity, or changes to regulations.

WATER CONSERVATION SAVES YOU MONEY

Although water on Earth seems limitless, rivers and lakes that supply surface water for human use make up less than 0.01 percent of the world's water! With nearly 1 million Gwinnett residents using water resources each day, conservation efforts are more important than ever. Water conservation also helps keep the cost of cleaning water low since there is less water to clean. This ensures Gwinnett can focus resources on maintaining vital infrastructure. Water conservation can also dramatically reduce individual water bills. Reducing your household water use by just 17 gallons per day can save you over \$100 on your water bill each year. We also offer rebates and incentives for replacing older fixtures and a pricing structure that encourages conservation. We aim to be your community partner and resource for water conservation.

PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

The Gwinnett County Water and Sewerage Authority, which owns the Water Resources water and wastewater system, acts as an advisory agency to the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners. The authority meets monthly at the DWR Central Facility. For a schedule of meetings, visit [GwinnettCounty.com](https://www.gwinnettcountry.com).

SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT

A source water assessment of the Lake Lanier watershed was conducted for Gwinnett County in 2019 by the Atlanta Regional Commission. The goal of the assessment was to identify potential risks to the use of Lake Lanier as a drinking water source. The assessment showed that when combining the point source and non-point source rankings, an overall watershed susceptibility ranking of Low-Medium was determined. The full source water assessment is available at [GwinnettH2o.com](https://www.gwinnetth2o.com).

GWINNETT COUNTY DRINKING WATER QUALITY DATA 2020

EPA Regulated Inorganic Substances or Contaminants

Substance (Unit)	Analysis Frequency	MCL	MCLG	Average	Range	Major Sources	Violation
Fluoride ¹ (ppm)	Daily	4	4	0.97	0.68-1.11	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth	No
Nitrate/Nitrite ² (ppm)	Annually	10	10	0.48	0.43-0.52	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks; erosion of natural deposits	No

¹ Fluoride is added to water to help promote dental health in children.

² Nitrate and Nitrite are measured together

Gwinnett County Water Distribution System - Lead and Copper Levels at Residential Taps

Substance (Unit)	Action Level 90%	90th Percentile sample result	Number of sites exceeding Action Level (AL)	Major Sources	Violation
Lead ³ (ppb)	15	1.2	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	No
Copper ⁴ (ppm)	1.3	0.17	0	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	No

Gwinnett is required to test a minimum of 50 homes for lead and copper every three years. The last testing occurred in 2020, and the next testing will take place in 2023. Compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule is based on obtaining the 90th percentile of the total number of samples collected and comparing it against the lead and copper action levels. To have an exceedance, the 90th percentile value must be greater than 15 ppb for lead or 1.3 ppm for copper.

³Of the 50 homes tested in 2020, no sites exceeded the action level (AL) for lead.

⁴ Of the 50 homes tested in 2020, no sites exceeded the action level (AL) for copper.

Disinfection By-Products, By-Product Precursors and Disinfectant Residuals

Substance (Unit)	Analysis Frequency	MCL (LRAA)	MCLG (LRAA)	Highest Detected LRAA ⁵	Range	Major Sources	Violation
TTHMs (Total Trihalomethanes) (ppb) - Stage 2	Quarterly	80	0	59.7	11.125-59.7	By-products of drinking water disinfection	No
HAA5s (Haloacetic Acids) (ppb) - Stage 2	Quarterly	60	0	31.125	11.275-31.125	By-products of drinking water disinfection	No
TOC (Total Organic Carbon) (ppm)	Monthly	TT	N/A	Average=1.08	0.88-1.3	Decay of naturally-occurring organic matter in the water withdrawn from sources such as lakes and streams	N/A
Chlorine (ppm)	Monthly	MRDL=4	MRDLG=4	1.64	0.82-2.29	Drinking Water Disinfectant	No
Bromate (ppb)	Monthly	10	0	Average=1.5	<1.0-2.4	By-product of drinking water disinfection utilizing ozone	No

⁵LRAA= Locational Running Annual Average

Turbidity

Substance (Unit)	Analysis Frequency	MCL	MCLG	Highest value reported	Lowest % of samples meeting limit	Major Sources	Violation
Turbidity (NTU)	Continuous	TT, <0.3 in 95% of monthly samples	0	0.26	100%	Soil Runoff	No

Note: Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. It is monitored because it is a good indicator of water quality. High turbidity can hinder the effectiveness of disinfectants.

Microbiological Contaminants

Substance (Unit)	Analysis Frequency	MCL	MCLG	Highest % positive samples (monthly)	Range	Major Sources	Violation
Total Coliform Bacteria 6 +/-	Monthly	<5% positive samples (monthly)	0	0.13%	0-0.13%	Naturally present in the environment	No

⁶ 270 samples taken monthly

UNDERSTANDING THE WATER QUALITY CHART

As in previous years, the Water Quality Report compares the quality of your tap water to state drinking water standards. The report includes information on all regulated and unregulated drinking water contaminants that were detected during calendar year 2019. Contaminants that were tested for, but not detected, are not included in this report.

PPM and PPB: Simply put, "PPM" means "parts per million" and "PPB" means "parts per billion." PPM corresponds to one penny in \$10,000 or one minute in two years. PPB corresponds to one penny in \$10,000,000 or one minute in 2,000 years.

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.

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 technologically feasible.

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.

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

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

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU): A measure of suspended material in water. Turbidity is measured by shining a beam of light through water and measuring the angle at which the light is scattered by the suspended material. An instrument called a Turbidimeter is used for this purpose.

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.

TIPS FOR CONSERVING WATER

- Turn off the faucet while you brush your teeth or shave
- Catch the initial cold water in a bucket while waiting for the shower or sink to warm up and use it to water plants
- Only run the dishwasher or clothes washer when you have a full load
- Routinely check your faucets and toilets for leaks
- Use a broom to clean walkways and driveways instead of a water hose
- Water plants early in the morning to reduce evaporation
- Use auto shut-off nozzles on your water hose
- Install rain barrels to collect rainwater

To learn more about water conservation in Gwinnett, please visit DWRConserve.com.

GETTING INVOLVED

The Department of Water Resources offers many opportunities for residents to get involved. Throughout the year, the department hosts classes and events focused on conservation and protection of our water supply. The department also offers opportunities to get more hands-on-experience at several festivals throughout the year.

Residents can participate in programs such as the high-efficiency toilet rebate program, which offers rebates to qualified homeowners for replacing old, inefficient toilets. The department also offers free leak detection kits to help you determine if you have leaky toilet or an inefficient faucet. Fixing leaks your home not only conserves water, but can save you money on your monthly bill.

Learn more about programs and events and see a full schedule of workshops at GwinnettH2o.com.

To schedule an educational program or tour for your group, please contact DWR Outreach and Education at DWRSchools@GwinnettCounty.com or 678.376.6722. All public outreach programs are offered free of charge to Gwinnett County residents, schools, and businesses.