

Water Conservation

You can play a role in conserving water and saving yourself money in the process 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. Here are 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.



Village of Oak Park
123 Madison Street
Oak Park, IL 60302

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ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

Water testing performed in 2007



PWS ID#: 0312250

What's in My Water?

We are pleased to report that during the past year, the water delivered to your home and business complied with or did better than, all state and federal drinking water requirements. For your information, we have compiled the tables below to show what substances were detected in our water for the period of January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007. Although all of the substances listed are under the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) set by the U.S. EPA, we feel that it is important that you know exactly what was detected and how much of the substance was present in the water.

The state requires us to monitor for certain substances less 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.

REGULATED SUBSTANCES	Village of Oak Park				City of Chicago				VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
	YEAR SAMPLED	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH			
Barium (ppm)	2007	2	2	NA	NA	0.018	0.018-0.018	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits	
Beta/Photon Emitters¹ (pCi/L)	2007	50	0	NA	NA	2.000	ND-2.000	No	Decay of natural and man-made deposits	
Chlorine (ppm)	2007	[4]	[4]	0.8	0.66-0.91	0.77	0.65-0.77	No	Water additive used to control microbes	
Fluoride (ppm)	2007	4	4	NA	NA	0.98	0.90-0.98	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories	
Haloacetic Acids [HAA] (ppb)	2007	60	NA	17.3	5.5-17.3	8.53	4.6-12.3	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection	
Sodium² (ppm)	2007	NA	NA	NA	NA	7.40	7.30-7.40	No	Erosion of naturally occurring deposits; used in water softener regeneration	
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	2007	80	NA	28.6	10.3-28.6	16.5	9.9-24.0	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination	
Total Nitrate + Nitrite (ppm)	2007	10	10	NA	NA	0.42	0.37-0.42	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits	
Turbidity³ (NTU)	2007	TT	NA	NA	NA	0.58	ND-0.58	No	Soil runoff	
Turbidity (Lowest monthly percent of samples meeting limit)	2007	TT	NA	NA	NA	100	NA	No	Soil runoff	

Tap water samples were collected from 30 sample sites throughout the community

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	ACTION LEVEL	MCLG	AMOUNT DETECTED (90TH%TILE)	SITES ABOVE ACTION LEVEL	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Copper (ppm)	2006	1.3	1.3	0.22	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives
Lead (ppb)	2006	15	0	6	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

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

² Sodium is not currently regulated by the U.S. EPA. However, the state has set an MCL for this contaminant for supplies serving a population of 1,000 or more.

³ Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. It is monitored because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the filtration system.

Definitions

AL (Action Level): The concentration of a contaminant that triggers treatment or other required actions by the water supply.

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

ND (Not detected): Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Units): Measurement of the clarity, or turbidity, of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

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.

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, which 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 dissolves 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.

For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, call the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800.426.4791.

Cryptosporidium in Drinking Water

Cryptosporidium is a microbial parasite found in surface water throughout the U.S. Although filtration removes *Cryptosporidium*, the most commonly used filtration methods cannot guarantee 100% removal. The monitoring of source water and finished water indicates the presence of these organisms. Current test methods do not allow us to determine if the organisms are dead or if they are capable of causing disease. Symptoms of infection include nausea, diarrhea, and abdominal cramps. Most healthy individuals can overcome the disease within a few weeks. However, immunocompromised people are at greater risk of developing life-threatening illness. We encourage immunocompromised individuals to consult their doctor regarding appropriate precautions to take to avoid infection. *Cryptosporidium* must be ingested to cause disease, and it may be spread through means other than drinking water.

Since April 1993, the Chicago Department of Water Management has conducted monthly *Cryptosporidium* analyses on the source water.

Cryptosporidium has not been detected in these samples. Treatment processes have been optimized to ensure that if *Cryptosporidium* oocysts exist in the source water, they will be removed during the treatment process. By maintaining low turbidity and thereby removing the particles from the water, the possibility of *Cryptosporidium* organisms getting into the drinking water system is greatly reduced.

Tap vs. Bottled

Thanks in part to aggressive marketing, the bottled water industry has successfully convinced us all that water purchased in bottles is a healthier alternative to tap water. However, according to a four-year study conducted by the Natural Resources Defense Council, bottled water is not necessarily cleaner or safer than most tap water. In fact, about 25% of bottled water is actually just bottled tap water (40% according to government estimates).

The Food and Drug Administration is responsible for regulating bottled water, but these rules allow for less rigorous testing and purity standards than those required by the U.S. EPA for community tap water. For instance, the high mineral content of some bottled waters makes them unsuitable for babies and young children. Further, the FDA completely exempts bottled water that's packaged and sold within the same state, which accounts for about 70% of all bottled water sold in the United States.

Furthermore, Americans purchase more bottled water than any other nation in the world; approximately 30 billion bottles each year, with only about 20% or 6 billion bottles recycled. In order to make these bottles, manufacturers use 17 million barrels of crude oil--enough to fuel more than one million cars for a year. Imagine a water bottle filled a quarter of the way up with oil, that's about how much oil was needed to produce that bottle. In addition to the amount of oil, more than 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide is produced to manufacture these 30 million bottles each year.

If you buy bottled water, recycle the bottle. But the better solution - for you and the environment - is to drink tap water.

For a detailed discussion on the NRDC study results, check out their Web site at www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/bw/exesum.asp.



Meeting the Challenge

The Village of Oak Park is proud to provide its residents with this annual water quality report. This report covers all testing completed from January 1 through December 31, 2007. Over the years, we have dedicated ourselves to supplying drinking water that exceeds all state and federal drinking water standards. As a snapshot of last year's water quality, this report identifies the source of our water, what it contains, and the treatment process. Oak Park's water quality has remained well within the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (U.S.EPA) guidelines for municipal water quality.

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 elderly, and infants may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. The U.S. EPA/CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) 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.

Where Does My Water Come From?

Lake Michigan is the only Great Lake that is entirely contained within the United States. It borders Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin, and is the second largest Great Lake by volume with 1,180 cubic miles of water. Lake Michigan is Oak Park's sole source of drinking water and arrives pretreated via pipelines from the City of Chicago. The water is then stored in four underground reservoirs totaling 12.5 million gallons. The water remains in constant motion even in the reservoirs to maintain freshness. Then only a small amount of chlorine needs to be added by Oak Park before pumping it into our system of 105 miles of water mains. To ensure purity, water samples are routinely gathered throughout the water system, from the source right to your home. A state-certified lab tests the samples using equipment that can measure substances down to one part in a billion! In addition, the Village's treatment facility is constantly maintained, evaluated and upgraded to incorporate the latest in technology, health sciences and environmental regulations.

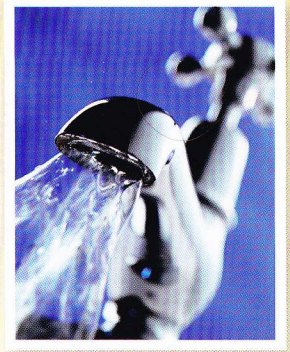
Source Water Assessment

The Illinois EPA considers all surface water sources of community water supply to be susceptible to potential pollution problems. The very nature of surface water allows contaminants to migrate into the intake with no protection other than dilution. This is the reason for mandatory treatment for all surface water supplies in Illinois. Chicago's offshore intakes are located at a distance great enough that shoreline impacts are not usually considered a factor on water quality. At certain times of the year, however, wet-weather flows and river reversals can potentially contaminate offshore intakes. In addition, the placement of the crib structures may serve to attract waterfowl, gulls and terns that frequent the Great Lakes area, thereby concentrating fecal deposits at the intake and thus compromising the source water quality. Conversely, the shore intakes are highly susceptible to stormwater runoff, marinas, and shoreline point sources due to the influx of groundwater to the lake. Chicago has taken extraordinary steps to ensure a safe source of drinking water in the area, from the building of the offshore cribs and the introduction of interceptor sewers to the lock-and-dam system of Chicago's waterways and the city's Lakefront Zoning Ordinance. The city now looks to the recently created Department of Water Management, the Department of Environment and the MWRDGC to ensure the safety of the city's water supply. Also, Lake Michigan has a variety of organizations and associations that are currently working to either maintain or improve water quality.

Finally, one of the best ways to ensure a safe source of drinking water is to develop a program designed to protect the source water against potential contamination on the local level. Since the predominant land use within the Illinois boundary of the Lake Michigan watershed is urban, a majority of the watershed protection activities in this document are aimed at this purpose. Citizens should be aware that everyday activities in an urban setting might have a negative impact on their source water. Efforts should be made to improve awareness of stormwater drains and their direct link to the lake within the identified local source water area. A proven best management is necessary to keep the lake a safe and reliable source of drinking water.

Further information on our community water supply's Source Water Assessment Program is available by calling the City of Chicago, Department of Water Management, at 312.744.6635.

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Community Participation

Village board meetings are held on the first and third Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Village Hall, 123 Madison Street. For information on the agendas, call the Village Manager's Office at 708.358.5770, or visit www.oak-park.us.

Questions?

For more information on this report, or for answers to any questions concerning Oak Park's drinking water, please contact Brian Jack, Superintendent of the Water and Sewer Division, at 708.358.5700, or e-mail publicworks@oak-park.us.