

# Whatcom County Water District No. 13 Public Water System 959143 Annual Water Quality Report 2023

## Consumer Confidence Report for the Year 2023

We are pleased to present to you the 2023 Annual Water Quality Report. This report is designed to inform you about the quality of the water that was provided last year. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state standards. We believe the information provides a valuable service to our customers.

Your drinking water is highly regulated by the EPA and is tested regularly. Keeping pace with upgraded water testing and more stringent federal standards is a challenge but one that Whatcom County Water District No. 13 strongly supports. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe source of drinking water.

## Who We Are...

Whatcom County Water District No. 13 is a water utility of 437 active connections. Our Board of Directors consists of 5 members who meet at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center at 6:30 pm on the fourth Tuesday of every month to bring you good quality water. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this water utility, your water, or this report, we will be happy to answer them. **In case of emergency, please call our emergency line or after regular hours phone number at 1-360-982-5170.**

Whatcom County Water District No. 13 water source consists of 2 groundwater wells. Water is pumped from these wells into two 150,000-gallon tanks. From the storage tanks, water is gravity fed throughout the distribution system to the consumers. Information about the source wells can be found at the Washington State Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water's website here:

<https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/eh/portal/odw/si/SingleSystemViews/SourceSingleSys.aspx>

If you don't have access to the Web, we encourage you to use the Internet service available through the public library system.

## Presence of Contaminants in Drinking Water

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).

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 and, in some cases, radio-active material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. 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 Department of Agriculture regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.

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 be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water 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 and residential uses.

## Presence of Contaminants Continued...

- Radioactive contaminants, which are naturally occurring.
- 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 storm water runoff, and septic systems.

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the number of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. We treat our water according to EPA's regulations.

**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 (800-426-4791).

**Additional Information for Lead in Drinking Water:** In Washington State, lead in drinking water comes primarily from materials and components used in household plumbing. The more time water has been sitting in pipes, the more dissolved metals, such as lead, it may contain. Elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially in pregnant women and young children.

To help reduce potential exposure to lead: for any drinking water tap that has not been used for 6 hours or more, flush water through the tap until the water is noticeably colder before using for drinking or cooking. You can use the flushed water for watering plants, washing dishes, or general cleaning. Only use water from the cold-water tap for drinking, cooking, and especially for making baby formula. Hot water is likely to contain higher levels of lead. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water is available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or online at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

**Additional Information for Coliform Bacteria:** Every month our system is tested for Coliform Bacteria. All samples taken during 2023 came back negative for Coliform Bacteria. We're proud that your drinking water meets or exceeds all Federal and State requirements.

### Water Conservation Tips

Water conservation is about using water efficiently and not wastefully. Reducing your water use is inexpensive, quick, easy to accomplish, and benefits everyone. With greater and greater competing water uses, conservation just makes sense. Simple things you can do include:

- adjusting sprinklers so that you water only where it is needed
- getting leaks fixed
- installing low-flow faucet and shower heads and reducing your showering time
- only run your dishwasher and washing machine when you have a full load
- turn off the faucet when brushing your teeth or shaving
- water your lawn and garden during the cooler morning or evening hours
- use a spray nozzle on your hose when washing your car

### Water Conservation Rebates

Water conservation rebates are currently available for high efficiency WaterSense toilet upgrades, WaterSense irrigation controllers and high efficiency Energy Star clothes washer upgrades. For more information about these rebates, please visit Whatcom Water Alliance at <https://www.whatcomwateralliance.org/rebates>.

## Water Quality Data

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that were detected during the 2023 calendar year. The presence of these contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done January 1 through December 31, 2023. The state requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of the data, though representative of the water quality, is more than one year old.

### Terminology

**MCLG** (Maximum Contaminant Level Goal): the level of a contaminant allowed in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLG's allow for a margin of safety.

**MCL** (Maximum Contaminant Level): the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the MCLG's as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

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

**ND** (Not Detected).

**ppm** (parts per million or milligrams per liter (mg/L)): about the same as ½ an aspirin tablet dissolved in a full bathtub (50 gallons of water).

**ppb** (parts per billion or micrograms per liter (ug/L)): about the same as 1 dissolved aspirin tablet in a 100,000-gallon swimming pool.

**pCi/L** (picocuries per liter of air: describes the radioactivity emitted per volume of water.

Inorganic Contaminants	MCL	MCLG	WCWD #13 Water	Range of Detections	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Sources of Contaminant
Arsenic (ppb)	.010	0	.001	.001	2017	NO	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards
Nitrate (ppm)	10	10	S01 0.71	0.71	2023	NO	Runoff from fertilizer use
Nitrate (ppm)	10	10	S02 1.00	1.00	2023	NO	Runoff from fertilizer use
Lead & Copper	AL	MCLG	WCWD #13 Water	Total # of Samples / # Exceeding AL	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Sources of Contaminant
Lead (ppb)	.015	0	.001	10 / 0	2022	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	.091	10 / 0	2022	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing
Synthetic Organic Contaminants	MCL	MCLG	WCWD #13 Water	Range of Detections	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source of Contamination
Herbicides	N/A	N/A	ND	S01 & S02 ND	2018	NO	Runoff from herbicide used on row crops
Pesticides	N/A	N/A	ND	S01 & S02 ND	2018	NO	Runoff from herbicide used on row crops
Radioactive Contaminants	MCL	MCLG	WCWD #13 Water	Range of Detections	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Sources of Contaminant
Gross Alpha (pCi/l)	15	0	S01 & S02 1.06	1.06	2022	NO	Erosion of natural deposits
Gross Beta (pCi/l)	50	0	S01 & S02 0.76	0.76	2022	NO	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Radium 228	5	0	S01 & S02 .60	.60	2022	NO	Erosion of natural deposits
Microbiological Contaminants	MCL	MCLG	WCWD #13 Water	Range of Detections	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Sources of Contaminant
Total Coliform Bacteria	0	0	ABSENT	PRESENT/ ABSENT	2023	NO	Naturally present in the environment

