

ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

Reporting Year 2022





Our Mission Continues

Once again, we are pleased to present our annual water quality report covering all testing performed between January 1 and December 31, 2022. As in years past, we are committed to delivering the best-quality drinking water possible. To that end, we remain vigilant in meeting the challenges of new regulations, source water protection, water conservation, and community outreach and education while continuing to serve the needs of all our water users. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to serve you and your family. We encourage you to share your thoughts with us on the information contained in this report. After all, well-informed customers are our best allies.

Water Sources of Highridge

The water system is currently supplied by a series of mountain reservoirs with a combined total raw water storage capacity of approximately 400 million gallons. These reservoirs, amid western Pennsylvania's Laurel Mountains, are located on Tubmill Creek, south of New Florence, and Big Springs Run and Little Sugar Run, outside the borough of Seward.

Think Before You Flush!

Flushing unused or expired medicines can be harmful to your drinking water. Properly disposing of unused or expired medication helps protect you and the environment. Keep medications out of our waterways by disposing responsibly. To find a convenient drop-off location near you, please visit <https://bit.ly/3leRyXy>.

Receive Water Emergency Alerts, Leak Repair Advice, or Pay Water Bills

Despite being a dependable water utility, emergencies do occur. Be notified and updated in several ways about service interruptions. a) Provide HWA with a working phone number so you can be notified promptly by a recorded message, and b) Also furnish us with an email address and receive news alerts about emergencies and flushing notices. Log onto our website highridgewater.org to get the latest news. You can use this site to pay water bills, receive instructions regarding repairs, find plumbing supply stores, and obtain tips for conserving water.



Pink Stains on Bathroom Fixtures

Chlorine based cleaners, if used periodically on fixtures, will disinfect and help eliminate pink residue. The reddish pink color seen in bathrooms on various fixtures is caused by the growth of *serratia* bacteria, that thrives in moist warm conditions. Continually clean and dry the involved areas. Chlorine can also be used in toilets. Avoid using abrasive cleaners which may scratch the surfaces of fixtures.

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. Lead is a very soft metal and was never used to make large water mains. Although lead was used for centuries because of its resistance to pinhole leaks, it wasn't until the 20th century that the risks of lead plumbing became widely known. The U.S. EPA banned new lead service lines in the 1950s and has gradually eliminated lead in solder and household plumbing fixtures. Although HWA is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water, we cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. We will, however, require that you replace lead service lines. HWA has required new water lines to be made of PVC (plastic) for more than two decades.

If 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. Lead exposure is measured in parts per billion. Water companies cannot exceed 15 parts per billion (ppb). Analogies for 1 ppb would be one sheet of toilet paper in a roll of paper stretching from New York to London, one pinch of salt in 10 tons of potato chips, or one second in nearly 32 years. When drinking water is monitored according to federal and state regulations, the risk of human exposure to lead in water is negligible. 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 at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Community Participation

Highridge Water Authority (HWA) encourages its customers to participate in our meetings, held on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the James F. Conway Conference Room at 17 Maple Avenue, Blairsville.

QUESTIONS? For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call George E. Sulkosky, Executive Director, at (724) 459-8033.



Drinking Water Safety

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA and Pennsylvania DEP prescribe regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration and DEP 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.

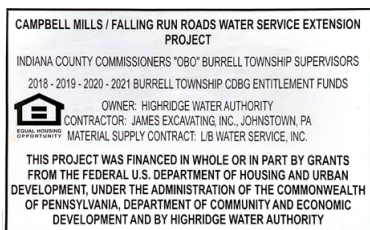
Of the below mentioned contaminants, Highridge Water Authority monitors around the clock for Ph levels, chlorine levels, and water clarity levels. Other contaminants are sampled either weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually after being filtered at various locations throughout the water system. Over 500 samples are sent to the testing laboratory throughout the year.

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, may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, or wildlife; Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, can occur naturally or may result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming; Pesticides and Herbicides may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, residential uses, and golf course turf maintenance; Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems; Radioactive Contaminants 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.

Completed! Finally!

The Campbell's Mill Road/Falling Run Road water main extension project, which took only six weeks to construct, was ready for use on December 13, 2022. Plagued by numerous issues dating back to 2016, the 1.5-mile extension of PVC water line cost \$422,853 and was paid for by community development block grants, courtesy of Burrell Township, and a contribution of \$128,784 by HWA. As of March 1, 2023, thirteen residences are receiving public water.



Source Water Assessment

The greatest potential threats to Highridge's water supply sources are:

1. Accidents and spills along the roadways within the assessment area;
2. Potential contamination due to discharge from a small residential wastewater plant;
3. Potential nonpoint source contamination associated with farming;
4. Activities using pesticides or herbicides, mining, logging, and road de-icing; and
5. Leaks or spills from an underground fuel storage tank.

A copy of the assessment can be viewed at the HWA office, 17 Maple Avenue, Blairsville.

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 or <http://water.epa.gov/drink/hotline>.



Test Results

Our water is monitored for many different kinds of substances on a very strict sampling schedule, and the water we deliver must meet specific health standards. Here, we only show 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 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

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Barium (ppm)	2022	2	2	0.0299	0.0298–0.0299	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Chlorine [distribution] (ppm)	2022	[4]	[4]	1.01	0.6–1.01	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Chlorine [entry point] (ppm)	2022	MinRDL: SW=0.2/ GW=0.4	NA	1 ¹	1–1.5	No	Water additive used to control microbes
<i>Cryptosporidium</i> (oocyst/L)	2018	TT	0	0.30	0.195–0.30	No	Naturally present in the environment
Dalapon (ppb)	2022	200	200	1.2	1.2–1.2	No	Runoff from herbicide used on rights-of-way
Di(2-ethylhexyl) Phthalate (ppb)	2022	6	0	3.3	ND–13.2	Yes	Discharge from rubber and chemical factories
Haloacetic Acids [HAAs]–Stage 1 (ppb)	2022	60	NA	40.19	12.7–81.4 ²	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (ppm)	2022	10	10	0.5	0.47–0.5	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
TTHMs [total trihalomethanes]–Stage 1 (ppb)	2022	80	NA	34.675	8.3–58.4	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Turbidity ³ (NTU)	2022	TT	NA	0.11	0.02–0.11	No	Soil runoff

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)	2022	1.3	1.3	0.059	0/30	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	2022	15	0	ND	0/30	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; 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 which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

GW: Groundwater source.

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.

MinRDL (Minimum Residual Disinfectant Level): The minimum level of residual disinfectant required at the entry point to the distribution system.

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.

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).

SW: Surface water source.

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

UNREGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	TYPICAL SOURCE
Bromodichloromethane (ppm)	2022	0.0033225	0.0012–0.0051	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chlorodibromomethane (ppm)	2022	0.0000325	ND–0.00051	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chloroform (ppm)	2022	0.031335	0.0071–0.0536	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Dichloroacetic Acid (ppm)	2022	0.017935	0.0077–0.0365	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nickel (ppm)	2022	0.0014	0.00067–0.0014	Naturally present in the environment
Trichloroacetic Acid (ppm)	2022	0.0222525	0.0046–0.0534	By-product of drinking water disinfection

¹The lowest level that was detected.

²Despite high readings in two locations, compliance is determined by the running annual average from sampling throughout the system. The average for 2022 was 40.19 ppb, well below the MCL of 60 ppb.

³Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor turbidity to check the effectiveness of our filtration system.

About Our Violation

On August 5, 2022, HWA received notice of an exceedance of the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (DEHP) by 0.0001 part per million. A retest taken immediately upon receiving results indicated no evidence of the contaminant. In fact, results for this particular contaminant dating back to the inception of the compound in 1992 have all been below the laboratory detection limit. We believe the August 5, 2022, occurrence was a laboratory error.

Despite our disagreement with DEP that common sense should prevail where such trivial data is concerned, rules are rules, and HWA understands its obligation to comply with state regulations. The public was notified of this violation on September 22, 2022.

Some people who drink water containing di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate in excess of the MCL over many years may have problems with their liver, experience reproductive difficulties, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

Water Conservation Tips

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 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.

Low Flow? Black Slime?

These can be occasional problems in household plumbing fixtures. Faucet gaskets, overtime, can break down and cause the black oily stains. Replace the gasket.

For low flow issues, remove the faucet screens, if white particles are present, they are either calcium deposits which dissolve in white vinegar, or pieces of plastic from the dip tube in your hot water tank, a sign that your tank is deteriorating.

