
Pay Your Water Bill Online! Customers can make payments online by accessing the City's website at <https://arcata.merchanttransact.com/Login>. The online payment system provides convenient paperless statements via email, ability to view and pay bills online, obtain account usage information, 24/7 account access, reduced time paying bills, and saving on stamps. For questions regarding the online process, please contact the Finance Department at (707) 822-5951.



City of Arcata Public Water System 2024 Consumer Confidence Report

May 2025

The City of Arcata (City) is responsible for providing safe, reliable, high quality drinking water to its customers. The Consumer Confidence Report, or CCR, is an annual water quality report that the City is required to provide to customers under the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act. The purpose of the CCR is to raise customer awareness of the quality of their drinking water, where their drinking water comes from, and the importance of protecting drinking water sources. Please take a moment to read this report to learn about the quality of your drinking water. This report shows the results of drinking water monitoring from January 1 through December 31, 2024.

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua para beber. Favor de comunicarse Ciudad de Arcata a (707) 822-5953 para asistirlo en español.

In 2024, results from our water quality monitoring and testing program indicated that our water quality is very good, as has consistently been the case in past years. No constituents were detected at a level higher than allowed by drinking water regulations. Water test results are presented in the [Sampling Results](#) section of this report.

Where Does My Drinking Water Come From?

The source of drinking water for the City is water purchased from [Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District](#) (HBMWD). HBMWD draws source water from wells below the bed of the Mad River northeast of Arcata. The water-bearing ground below the river is an aquifer. The wells, called Ranney Wells, draw water from the sands and gravel of the aquifer at depths of 60 to 90 feet, thereby providing a natural filtration process. During the summer, HBMWD disinfects naturally filtered water with chlorine and delivers treated water to the City via transmission lines. During the winter, HBMWD

treats the water at a Turbidity Reduction Facility, before disinfection, which reduces the turbidity (cloudiness) in the source water. While turbidity itself is not a health concern, at elevated levels, turbidity could potentially interfere with the disinfection process.

Before delivery to the distribution system, it is City policy to add fluoride to an optimal level to prevent tooth decay. During all of 2024, however, the City of Arcata water system fluoridation system was offline for equipment upgrades and replacement. Information about fluoridation is available at http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Fluoridation.shtml.

Summary Information for Operating Under a Variance or Exemption

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) classified HBMWD's source water as groundwater, not under the direct influence of surface water. This classification is important as to the regulations that water systems must follow to ensure water quality. In 2009, HBMWD requested the water system be exempt from triggered source groundwater monitoring under the Groundwater Rule because the system consistently achieves 4-log virus inactivation before their first service connection. The California Department of Public Health concurred and approved the requested exemption.

Source Assessment & Vulnerability Assessment

California Drinking Water Source Assessment and Protection Program completed a Drinking Water Source Assessment on HBMWD's source water in August 2002. The Drinking Water Source Assessment report is available by contacting the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water, District 01 at (530) 224-4800 or 364 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 101, Redding, CA 96002. The assessment found that the source water of the Ranney wells might be vulnerable to activities that contribute to the release of aluminum and barium. Aluminum is associated with some surface water treatment processes and erosion of natural deposits. Barium is associated with the discharges of oil drilling waste or metal refineries and the erosion of natural deposits.

Additional Information about Drinking Water

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, 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 that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- *Inorganic contaminants*, such as salts and metals, that can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- *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, agricultural applications, and septic systems.
- *Radioactive contaminants* that can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations and California law also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that provide the same protection for public health. For more information on bottled and vended water regulations and quality standards visit the California Department of Public Health at <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/Pages/FDBPrograms/FoodSafetyProgram/Water.aspx>.

Drinking Water and Your Health

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 the 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 (1-800-426-4791).

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 healthcare providers. USEPA/Centers for Disease Control (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).

Sampling Results

Tables 1 through 6 list all the drinking water contaminants detected during the most recent sampling for the constituent. The presence of contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Drinking water regulations allow the City to monitor certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Some of the data, though representative of the water quality, were collected before 2024.

TERMS USED IN THIS REPORT	
Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. Primary MCLs are set as close to the PHGs (or MCLGs) as is economically and technologically feasible. Secondary MCLs are set to protect the odor, taste, and appearance of drinking water.	NTU: Nephelometric Turbidity Units
Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected health risk. MCLGs are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).	ppb: Parts per billion or micrograms per liter (µg/L). One ppb is equivalent to one second in nearly 32 years.
Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): The highest level of disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that the addition of a disinfectant is necessary for the control of microbial contaminants.	ppm: Parts per million or milligrams per liter (mg/L). One ppm is equivalent to one second in 11.5 days.
Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected health risk. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.	Primary Drinking Water Standards (PDWS): MCLs, MRDLs, and Treatment Techniques (TTs) for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements.
N/A: Not applicable	Public Health Goal (PHG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected health risk. PHGs are set by the California Environmental Protection Agency.
ND: Not detectable at testing limit	Regulatory Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant that, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.
	Treatment Technique (TT): A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
	µS/cm: microSiemens per centimeter



TABLE 1 - SAMPLING RESULTS SHOWING THE DETECTION OF COLIFORM BACTERIA IN 2024					
Microbiological Contaminants	Highest No. of Detections	No. of Months in Violation	MCL	MCLG	Typical Source of Bacteria
Total Coliform Bacteria	0	0	1 positive monthly sample (a)	0	Naturally present in the environment.
Fecal Coliform and <i>E. coli</i>	0	0	0 (b)	0	Human and animal fecal waste.
<p>(a) For systems collecting fewer than 40 samples per month a Level 1 Assessment is required within 30 days if the system detects more than one Total Coliform positive sample in a month and if the system fails to collect all required repeat samples after detecting a Total Coliform positive sample. A Level 1 Assessment will require the water system to identify a possible cause to the Total Coliform positive sample(s) and corrective actions taken or needed.</p> <p>(b) A Level 2 Assessment is required when <i>E. coli</i> is detected in a repeat sample following a Total Coliform detection, when Total Coliform is detected in a repeat sample following <i>E. coli</i> detection, when all required repeat samples are not collected, or when the water system fails to test for <i>E. coli</i> after a Total Coliform positive repeat sample. A Level 2 assessment will require the water system to identify a possible cause to the <i>E. coli</i> positive sample(s) and corrective actions taken or needed and will be performed by a local regulatory agency.</p>					

Lead and copper monitoring is conducted throughout the water distribution system to determine whether there is any evidence of lead or copper in the tap water of our community. 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 City is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but 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 2 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 your exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791) or at <http://www.epa.gov/lead> and <https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule>. Lead and copper monitoring results are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2 - SAMPLING RESULTS SHOWING THE DETECTION OF LEAD AND COPPER (testing conducted in 2022)							
Constituent (reporting units)	No. of Samples Collected	90 th Percentile Level Detected	No. of Sites Exceeding the AL	AL	PHG	No. of Schools Requesting Lead Sampling	Typical Source of Contaminant
Lead (ppb)	31	2.1	0	15	0.2	0	Internal corrosion of household water plumbing systems; discharges from industrial manufacturers; erosion of natural deposits.
Copper (ppm)	31	1.1	0	1.3	0.3	N/A	Internal corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives.

TABLE 3 - DETECTION OF CONTAMINANTS WITH A PRIMARY DRINKING WATER STANDARD							
Constituent (reporting units)	Sample Source	Year Sampled	Average	Range	MCL	PHG	Typical Source of Contaminant
Fluoride, naturally occurring (ppm)	Distribution System	2022	0.055	N/A	2.0	1	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive that promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.
Chlorine (ppm)	Distribution System	2024	0.6	0.2 – 1.0	4.0 (as Cl ₂)	4.0 (as Cl ₂)	Drinking water disinfectant added for treatment.
TTHMs (ppb) Total Trihalomethanes	Distribution System	2024	15	N/A	80	N/A	A by-product of drinking water chlorination.
HAA5 (ppb) Haloacetic Acids	Distribution System	2024	7.5	5-10	60	N/A	A by-product of drinking water chlorination.

TABLE 4 - DETECTION OF CONTAMINANTS WITH A SECONDARY DRINKING WATER STANDARD

Constituent (reporting units)	Sample Source	Year Sampled	Average	Range	Secondary MCL	Typical Source of Contaminant
Chloride (ppm)	Distribution System	2016	3.9	N/A	500	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits; seawater influence.
Color (color units)	HBMWD	2016	5.0	N/A	15	Naturally-occurring organic materials.
Specific Conductance ($\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$)	HBMWD	2018	130	N/A	1,600	Substances that form ions when in water; seawater influence.
Sulfate (ppm)	Distribution System	2016	10.0	N/A	500	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits; industrial wastes.
Total Dissolved Solids (ppm)	Distribution System	2016	90	N/A	1,000	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits.
Turbidity (NTU)	Distribution System	2024	0.08	0.02 – 0.5	5	Soil runoff. See Footnote (b).

(b) Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water and is a good indicator of water quality. Turbidity has no health effects. However, high levels of turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms.

TABLE 5 - SAMPLE RESULTS OF NON-REGULATED TESTING

Constituent (reporting units)	Sample Source/Location	Year Sampled	Average	Range	Additional Information
Alkalinity (ppm as CaCO_3)	Distribution System	2016	79	N/A	Alkalinity is a measure of the buffering capacity of water or its ability to resist change in pH.
Corrosivity (Langlier Units)	Distribution System	2016	-0.50	N/A	This corrosivity value indicates that the water is slightly corrosive on the Langlier Index.
Sodium (ppm)	Distribution System	2016	3.9	N/A	The salt present in the water is generally naturally occurring.
Hardness (ppm as CaCO_3)	Distribution System	2016	100	N/A	The sum of polyvalent cations present in the water, generally magnesium and calcium, is usually naturally occurring.

Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR)

As part of the federal drinking water program, USEPA issues a list of currently unregulated contaminants to be tested by public water systems throughout the nation. This process occurs every five years under the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR). The purpose of the UCMR program is to determine the prevalence of unregulated contaminants in drinking water. The results of this testing help USEPA determine whether to regulate new contaminants for the protection of public health. There have been four cycles of monitoring: UCMR 1 (2001-2003), UCMR 2 (2008-2010), UCMR 3 (2013-2015), and UCMR4 (2018-2020). UCMR1 through UCMR3 tested for 65 constituents. UCMR4 consisted of testing for 10 cyanotoxins, 20 additional contaminants, and 2 indicator constituents. Table 6 summarizes constituents detected during UCMR4 monitoring.

TABLE 6 - SAMPLE RESULTS OF UCMR4 - DETECTED CHEMICALS

Constituent (reporting units)	Sample Source/Location	Year Sampled	Average	Range	Health Effect Language
HAA6 (µg/L) [sum of 6 Haloacetic Acids]	Distribution System	2020	4.21	2.36 - 6.25	Some people who drink water containing haloacetic acids in excess over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
HAA9 (µg/L) [sum of 9 Haloacetic Acids]	Distribution System	2020	6.80	2.87 - 10.1	Some people who drink water containing haloacetic acids in excess over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
Total Organic Carbon (ppb)	HBMWD	2019	600	100 - 1100	Indicator of the potential to form haloacetic acids during water treatment. Total Organic Carbon has no known health effect.

Lead Water Service Line Inventory

The City of Arcata is conducting a water service line inventory.

Under the "Lead Service Line Replacement & Notification Act" implemented by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, all communities are required to prepare a comprehensive water service line material inventory and report their findings to the State. This Act includes revised rules to better protect our community from the impacts of lead exposure. The new rule revisions will get the lead out of our nation's drinking water and empower communities through information.

You can help the City of Arcata identify your service line material by completing a short survey. You can find the survey at <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/d51e16adbdb4934a1f4a17a9b875b38>. Click on the preceding link, type the URL into your web browser or scan the QR Code with your phone.



Additional Information

The City strives to provide excellent quality water and service to our customers. If you have any questions about your drinking water or this report call Rachel Hernandez, Wastewater Operations and Compliance Manager at (707) 822-8184. You may also attend a regularly scheduled Arcata City Council meeting held the first and third Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 736 F Street, Arcata, CA, to hear, discuss, or deliberate upon any item or subject within the City's jurisdiction.

Landlords. Tenants may not receive this report since they may not be direct customers of the City. You should make this report available to such people by posting it in a conspicuous place, distributing copies to all tenants, or directing tenants to <http://www.cityofarcata.org/327/Water-Quality-Reports>.

Visit <https://www.cityofarcata.org/326/Drinking-Water> to view past water quality reports and to find more information on drinking water programs such as water management, water service line inventory, and cross-connection and backflow protection.