



City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

Water Resources Division

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# 2021 Annual Water Quality Report

Conserving Our Most  
Precious Resource...Water.

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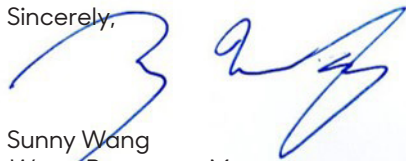
## Dear Community Members,

The City of Santa Monica is committed to providing safe and clean drinking water to our residents. On behalf of the City, I am pleased to present this Annual Drinking Water Quality Report which provides a summary of water quality data for 2020, and report that Santa Monica water once again met or exceeded all state and federal drinking water standards.

The City's Water Resources Division objective is to continue providing sustainable, clean and healthy drinking water for its residents today and for the future. Throughout the year, our staff works to provide and maintain high-quality drinking water and continues to ensure that the community has reliable service even in difficult times, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Reliable water supply and maintaining service continuity are critical during this pandemic. Therefore, we are committed to continuing to take additional precautionary measures in response to the pandemic to ensure that the city's water supply is not affected.

In addition to ensuring safe and clean water, we are also devoted to meeting your water needs in the face of climate change. Water conservation has been a priority for the city and has done an amazing job conserving water and decreasing our reliance on imported water. To ensure reliable water delivery to our residents, we continue to invest in the City's water system to prevent infrastructure failures and have a diversified drought resilient water supply portfolio. On behalf of the City of Santa Monica Public Works Department and the employees of the Water Resources Division, thank you for allowing us to serve you.

Sincerely,



Sunny Wang  
Water Resources Manager

*The City of Santa Monica Water Resources Division values transparency, we hope that you find this report clear and easy to understand. If you have any questions, please call us at (310) 434-2672.*

*El Departamento de Recursos de Agua de la ciudad de Santa Monica valora una gestión transparente; por consiguiente, esperamos que encuentre este informe claro y fácil de entender. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta, por favor comuníquese al (310) 434-2672.*

## Santa Monica's Water Source And Treatment System

The City of Santa Monica currently obtains up to 75% of its water from local groundwater wells within the City and in West Los Angeles. The City extracts its water from three sub-basins within the Santa Monica Basin (Charnock, Olympic, and Arcadia Sub-basins), with the Charnock Sub-basin being a local supply since 1924.



Charnock Well Field and Charnock Treatment Plant

Over 20 years ago, Methyl tert-Butyl Ether (MTBE and Tert-Butyl Alcohol (TBA), compounds once used as gasoline additives, were detected in three of the Charnock Sub-basin wells. These contaminants found their way into the groundwater via Leaking Underground Storage Tanks from various gasoline stations within the Charnock Sub-basin. In response, the City of Santa Monica established the Charnock Well Field Restoration Project. The treatment from this project uses virgin Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) filtration, from coconut shells, to successfully treat MTBE and TBA concentrations to levels well below the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 5 ppb.

### TO PUT THESE UNITS INTO CONTEXT:

- One part per billion (ppb) = 1 second in 31.7 years  
= 1 teaspoon in 1.3 million gallons
- One part per million (ppm) = 1 second in 11.6 days  
= 1 teaspoon in 1,302 gallons

The treated water from the Charnock Well Field is then sent to the Arcadia Treatment Plant, and along the way it blends with water from the Olympic and Arcadia Sub-basin wells. Once the water arrives at the Arcadia Treatment Plant, it undergoes a treatment process that includes Iron/Manganese removal, filtration, Reverse Osmosis (RO) softening, aeration, disinfection, and fluoridation.

Softening is the process of removing scale-forming calcium and magnesium from hard water.

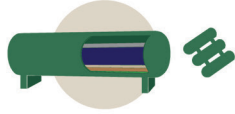


## SANTA MONICA WATER TREATMENT PROCESS



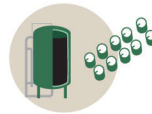
### Charnock Well Field

Charnock Wells Groundwater contaminated with the gasoline additive MTBE is pumped up from 400 feet below ground surface.



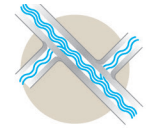
### Greensand Filtration

The well water is filtered through greensand media to remove iron and manganese which would foul the carbon filters.



### GAC Filtration

The MTBE is removed by filtering through Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) filters.



### Pump to Treatment Plant

The filtered water is combined with the flow of other wells and pumped to the Santa Monica Water Treatment Plant.

## Santa Monica Water Treatment Plant

### Pretreatment

To protect the sensitive Reverse Osmosis (RO) filters, the combined well flow is filtered again through greensand and cartridge filters to remove more iron, manganese and any remaining sediment.



### REVERSE OSMOSIS FILTRATION

### Reverse Osmosis Filtration

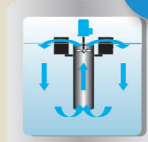
Filtration through a three-stage Reverse Osmosis (RO) membrane system softens the water by removing minerals (calcium and magnesium). Reverse Osmosis uses pressure to force water through membranes with pores so small the minerals can't pass through.

### Water Quality Adjustments

The mineral content is adjusted to the desired softness. The pH is adjusted, fluoride is added and the water undergoes final disinfection with chloramine.

### Aeration and Storage

The final step, aeration, uses the existing air stripping technology in the five million gallon reservoir to remove any remaining volatile groundwater contaminants such as trichloroethene.



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### Final Delivery

Santa Monica residents and businesses receive water for everyday use. Water conservation by end users is key to ensuring water reliability and sustainability.



City of  
**Santa  
Monica**



Reverse Osmosis performs softening by forcing hard water through membranes with very small pores, sized from 0.0001 - 0.001 micrometers. The complete treatment process is further outlined on the following pages.

The remaining 25% of Santa Monica's drinking water is purchased from Metropolitan Water District (MWD). Treated MWD water is blended with our locally produced water, and then distributed to our residents. MWD imports water from two separate sources. One is the Colorado River water, which is delivered from Lake Havasu through a 242-mile-long aqueduct and originates as snowmelt from mountainous regions in Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado. The second is from the State Water Project, which is delivered through the 441-mile-long California Aqueduct and originates in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. MWD water is filtered at their treatment plants and undergoes extensive treatment before entering Santa Monica's water system. For more information about the City's treatment facilities, please call the Water Resources Division (see back cover for contact information).

## Background on Drinking Water 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 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 application, and septic systems.
- Radioactive contaminants, that can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.



*Photo of the California Aqueduct by the Department of Water Resources.*

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the California State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) prescribe regulations that limit the concentration of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. State Board regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that 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 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 U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (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 people, and infants can be particularly at risk of infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. U.S. EPA and 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 (800) 426-4791.

*You can help protect source water purity by controlling what enters storm drains. The following sites provide guides on how you can protect Drinking Water Sources: [www.epa.gov/sourcewaterprotection/easy-things-you-can-do-protect-drinking-water-sources](http://www.epa.gov/sourcewaterprotection/easy-things-you-can-do-protect-drinking-water-sources)*

*Information on environmentally friendly products is available at [www.sustainableism.org/buygreen](http://www.sustainableism.org/buygreen)*

*To report storm drain pollution, please contact the City's Wastewater Department. See back cover for contact information.*

## Source Water Vulnerability Assessments

Between 2000 and 2012, the California State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (DDW) completed Source Water Vulnerability Assessments for all the City's groundwater wells. The assessments are required for all water utilities nationwide to evaluate the vulnerability of drinking water sources for "possible contaminating activities." Vulnerabilities most commonly associated with contamination include commercial, industrial, urban runoff and municipal activities. Based on the vulnerability assessments, Santa Monica Wells #3 and #4 located mid-city, Arcadia Wells #4 and #5, and Charnock Wells #13, #16, #18, #19 and #20, located in West L.A. are considered most vulnerable to commercial, industrial, residential, and municipal activities. Santa Monica Well #1, located on the north side of the city, Wells #3 and #4, and the Arcadia Wells are considered most vulnerable by their proximity to sewer collection systems, although monthly analyses have detected no related contamination. For more information, please contact the Water Resources Division.

In March and June 2012, MWD completed a source water assessment of its Colorado and State Project supplies. Based upon the vulnerability assessments, the Colorado River and State Project supplies are most vulnerable to contamination resulting from recreation, urban/storm water runoff, increasing urbanization in the watershed, and wastewater. A copy of the assessment can be obtained by contacting MWD (see back cover for contact information).

## Ensuring the Quality of Santa Monica's Water Supply

Permission and oversight to operate a community water system is granted annually by the DDW and the US EPA. Santa Monica's water supply undergoes constant field and laboratory testing to ensure the highest water quality before reaching your tap. The water is sampled and analyzed daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, annual, and triennial. In addition, our water quality management practice includes operating and maintaining optimum performance of the source wells, treatment plants, distribution system; managing reservoirs to meet demand; and testing the water at over 100 locations throughout City's distribution system monthly.

We look for more than 100 substances including microorganisms, pesticides, herbicides, asbestos, lead, copper, petroleum-based products, and by-products of industrial and water treatment processes. As a result, we conduct more than 10,000 laboratory tests each year.



*Using atomic absorption spectrometry (AAS) technology, chemists routinely monitor the water quality of the City's drinking water.*

## Water Quality Data Tables

We are pleased to report that this year, Santa Monica Water continues to meet and exceed all U.S. EPA and State Drinking Water Health Standards. The following data tables compare our water quality with Drinking Water Health Standards. The data is organized by source of water in two categories, each with two sub-parts:

- LOCAL GROUNDWATER
  - Arcadia Treatment Plant: Collects water from 9 wells, completes treatment, and sends to distribution.
  - Santa Monica Well #1: Treats supply at the source and pumps directly into distribution.
- METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT (MWD)
  - Weymouth Plant
  - Jensen Plant

The results are presented in two tables: Primary Drinking Water Quality Results and Secondary Drinking Water Quality Results. The primary results cover contaminants that may affect the public's health. These contaminants include hazardous chemicals, metals, bacteria, and radioactivity. The secondary results cover parameters that may affect the aesthetics of the water, such as taste, appearance, and odor. These parameters include turbidity, minerals, and pH among others. For questions regarding water quality, call the Water Resources Division.

# SUMMARY OF RESULTS FOR PRIMARY DRINKING WATER STANDARDS FOR 2020

Parameter	PHG/ [MCLG]/ {MRDLG}	State MCL/ {MRDL}	LOCAL WELL WATER Arcadia Plant		SM WELL #1(a)		IMPORTED SURFACE WATER Jensen Plant		IMPORTED SURFACE WATER Weymouth Plant		Dates Sampled if other than 2020(b)	Meets Std	MAJOR SOURCES IN DRINKING WATER
			Average	Range	Average	Range	Average	Range	Average	Range			
<b>PRIMARY DRINKING WATER STANDARDS (MANDATORY HEALTH-RELATED STANDARDS)</b>													
<b>Clarity</b>													
Maximum Turbidity (NTU)	NS	95% < 0.3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.04	100% ≤ 0.3	0.04	100% ≤ 0.3		Y	Soil runoff
<b>Microbiological</b>													
Total Coliform Bacteria (% positive samples/month)	[0]	5%	City-wide Highest Monthly: 1.60%				Range: ND - 1.60%		No violations			Y	Naturally present in the environment
Fecal Coliform/E. Coli	[0]	(c)	City-wide Maximum:				0 Positive Samples					Y	Human and animal fecal waste
<b>Organic Chemical</b>													
Methyl tert-Butyl Ether (MTBE) (ppb)	13	13(5*)	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Leaking underground storage tanks
Trichloroethylene (ppb)	1.7	5	0.3	ND - 0.6	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Discharge from metal degreasing sites
<b>Disinfection</b>													
<b>Byproducts &amp; Residuals</b>													
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	NS	80	City-wide LRAA: 15.9				Range: 4.6 - 33.9					Y	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	NS	60	City-wide LRAA: 2.0				Range: ND - 7.8					Y	
Total Chlorine/Chloramines (ppm)	{4}	{4}	City-wide Average: 2.30				Range: ND - 2.9					Y	Drinking water disinfectant added for treatment
Bromate (ppb)	0.1	10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	4.4	1.4 - 6.0	2	ND - 4.2		Y	By-product of drinking water ozonation
Total Organic Carbon	N/A	TT	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.2	1.8 - 2.3	2.4	2.1 - 2.6			
<b>Inorganic Chemicals</b>													
Aluminum (ppm)	0.6	1 (0.2*)	ND	ND	0.02	0.02	0.116**	ND - 0.220	0.149**	0.008 - 0.210		Y	Erosion of natural deposits; used in water treatment process
Arsenic (ppb)	0.004	10	ND	ND	1.4	1.4	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Erosion of natural deposits
Barium (ppm)	2	1	0.02	0.02	0.06	0.06	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Discharge from oil and metal industries; Erosion of natural deposits
Chromium (ppb)	[100]	50	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; natural deposits erosion
Chromium 6 (ppb)	0.02	NS	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.5	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Naturally occurring; industrial waste discharge
Copper (d) (ppm)	0.3	AL=1.3 (1.0*)	City-wide, 90th percentile: 0.30				0 sites out of 30 exceeded the AL				2019	Y	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Fluoride After Treatment (ppm)	1	2	Control Range: 0.6 - 1.2				City-wide Range: 0.6 - 1.0					Y	Water additive for dental health
Lead (d) (ppb)	0.2	AL=15	City-wide, 90th percentile: 2.30				0 sites out of 30 exceeded the AL (d)				2019	Y	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Nitrate (as N) (ppm)	10	10	0.6	0.4 - 0.7	3.8	3.7 - 4.0	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Perchlorate (ppb)	1	6	ND	ND	1.9	1.9	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Industrial waste discharge
<b>Radionuclides</b>													
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	[0]	15	2.9	ND - 5.8	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Erosion of natural deposits
Beta/photon emitters (pCi/L)	[0]	50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Combined Radium (pCi/L)	[0]	5	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Erosion of natural deposits
Uranium (pCi/L)	0.43	20	2.3	1.5 - 3.3	1.1	1.1	ND	ND - 3	2	1 - 3		Y	Erosion of natural deposits

## KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

**PDWS** = Primary Drinking Water Standards are MCLs and MRDLs for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements, and water treatment requirements.

**PHG** = Public Health Goal. The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHGs are set by the California Environmental Protection Agency.

**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 are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**MCL** = Maximum Contaminant Level. 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.

**MRDL** = Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level is 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 is 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.

## FOR ADDITIONAL WATER QUALITY QUESTIONS, CONTACT JACK MIYAMOTO, LEAD CHEMIST AT (310) 434-2672

**LRAA** = Locational Running Annual Average. The running annual average is based on monitoring location.

**AL** = Regulatory Action Level is the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

**N/A** = Not Applicable

**NS** = No Standard

**ND** = Monitored for but Not Detected

**NTU** = Nephelometric Turbidity Units - used to measure cloudiness of drinking water.

**TT** = Treatment Technique is a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**ppb** = parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (µg/l)

**ppm** = parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)

**pCi/L** = picocuries per liter

\* = secondary standard

\*\* = Highest Running Annual Average (RAA)

(a) = SM Well#1 is pumped into a transmission line, is blended with Imported Surface Water and enters the system at 19th St. & Idaho Ave.

(b) = The City is not required to test for every parameter each year. If indicated, data is from a previous year.

(c) = Two consecutive Total Coliform-positive samples, one of which contains Fecal Coliform / E. Coli constitutes an acute MCL violation. No violations occurred for 2020.

(d) = The MCL has been replaced with a treatment technique requiring agencies to optimize corrosion control. Results given are from first draw, at-the-tap monitoring performed every three years.

## Summary of Results for Secondary Drinking Water Standards for 2020

Parameter	PHG/ [MCLG]	State MCL	LOCAL WELL WATER Arcadia Plant		SM WELL #1(a)		IMPORTED SURFACE WATER Jensen Plant		IMPORTED SURFACE WATER Weymouth Plant		Dates Sampled if other than 2020(b)	Meets Std	MAJOR SOURCES IN DRINKING WATER
			Average	Range	Average	Range	Average	Range	Average	Range			
<b>SECONDARY DRINKING WATER STANDARDS (AESTHETIC STANDARDS)</b>													
<u>Chemical Parameters</u>													
Chloride (ppm)	NS	500	42	37 - 46	105	105	52	51 - 54	93	93		Y	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits; industrial wastes
Color (units)	NS	15	<5	<5	<5	<5 - 5	2	1 - 3	1	1		Y	Naturally-occurring organic materials
Iron (ppb)	NS	300	53	23 - 145	22	22	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Leaching from natural deposits; industrial wastes
Manganese (ppb)	NS	50	4.3	2.4 - 6.6	9.2	9.2	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Leaching from natural deposits
Odor- Threshold (units)	NS	3	<1	<1	<1	<1	2	2	2	2		Y	Naturally-occurring organic materials; chlorine
Specific Conductance (µmho/cm)	NS	1600	516	451 - 595	1316	1298 - 1336	460	451 - 468	966	963 - 968		Y	Substances that form ions when in water; seawater influence
Sulfate (ppm)	NS	500	76	64 - 84	247	247	54	53 - 56	213	211 - 215		Y	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits; industrial wastes
Total Dissolved Solids (ppm)	NS	1000	303	255 - 336	977	961 - 989	260	255 - 264	590	587 - 593		Y	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits
Turbidity (NTU)	-	5	0.14	0.07 - 0.42	0.35	0.15 - 1.00	ND	ND	ND	ND		Y	Soil runoff

<b>ADDITIONAL PARAMETERS</b>													
Alkalinity (ppm)	NS	NS	108	99 - 125	327	319 - 334	82	79 - 86	118	118 - 119			
Boron (ppb)	NS	NL=1000	170	170	120	120	170	170	130	130			
Calcium (ppm)	NS	NS	39	32 - 44	122	121 - 125	27	26 - 28	25	23 - 27			
Hardness (as CaCO3) (ppm)	NS	NS	163	137 - 193	567	549 - 585	108	107 - 110	262	256 - 268			
Magnesium (ppm)	NS	NS	17	16 - 18	62	62	12	11 - 12	26	25 - 26			
pH (units)	NS	NS	8.1	7.9 - 8.4	7.1	6.8 - 7.3	8.4	8.4	8.1	8.1			
Potassium (ppm)	NS	NS	1.4	1.2 - 1.5	3.8	3.8	2.6	2.5 - 2.6	4.6	4.5 - 4.6			
Radon (pCi/L)	NS	NS	ND	ND	400	400	ND	ND	ND	ND			
Sodium (ppm)	NS	NS	45	43 - 47	84	84	47	46 - 48	95	93 - 97			
1, 4-Dioxane (ppb)	NS	NL=1	0.4	ND - 1.5	ND	ND	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			
N-Nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) (ppt)	3	NL=10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2	ND	ND			
tert-Butyl Alcohol (TBA) (ppb)	NS	NL=12	ND	ND	N/A	N/A	ND	ND	ND	ND			

FOR ADDITIONAL WATER QUALITY QUESTIONS, CONTACT JACK MIYAMOTO, LEAD CHEMIST AT (310) 434-2672

### KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

- PHG** = Public Health Goal is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHGs are set by the California Environmental Protection Agency.
  - MCLG** = Maximum Contaminant Level Goal is 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.
  - MCL** = Maximum Contaminant Level is 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.
  - MRDLG** = Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal is 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.
  - NL** = Notification Level, or the concentration of a contaminant that the California Department of Public Health has determined does not pose a significant health risk, but warrants notification.
  - N/A** = Not Applicable
  - NS** = No Standard
  - ND** = Monitored for, but Not Detected
  - NTU** = Nephelometric Turbidity Units - used to measure cloudiness of drinking water.
- 
- ppb** = parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (ug/l)
  - ppm** = parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)
  - ppt** = parts per trillion, or nanograms per liter (ng/l)
  - umho/cm** = micromhos per centimeter
  - <** = less than
- 
- (a)** = SM Well#1 is pumped into a transmission line, is blended with Imported Surface Water and enters the system at 19th St. & Idaho Ave.
  - (b)** = We are not required to test for each parameter every year. If indicated, data is from a previous year.
  - (c)** = MWD has developed a flavor-profile analysis method that can more accurately identify odor occurrences.



## COVID-19 and Drinking Water

According to the U.S. EPA and CDC, the COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking water supplies. Current research shows no evidence that COVID-19 virus can be spread to people by consuming treated drinking water. Filtration and disinfection methods used in water treatment plants remove and kill viruses, bacteria and pathogens.

The Santa Monica Water Treatment Plant carries out multi-step treatment processes and complies with all federal and state regulations under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). Compliance with these regulations has been established for many years to protect the public health from disease or illness caused by pathogenic organisms. Santa Monica water treatment uses chlorine / chloramine disinfection that inactivates pathogens in the water and then physically removes them through advance technology, reverse osmosis (RO). Imported water from the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) undergoes numerous treatment processes and complies with the same federal and state regulations. Their treatment process is effective in killing bacteria and viruses.

The Santa Monica community can continue to use and drink water from their tap as usual.

Additional information on COVID-19 and drinking water can be found on the Water Research Foundation website:

[www.epa.gov/coronavirus/frequent-questions-related-coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/frequent-questions-related-coronavirus-covid-19)

and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website:

[www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/index.html)



*The Arcadia Water Treatment Plant provides multi-barrier treatment to provide safe and high-quality drinking water to the City.*

## Facts about Radon

Radon is a radioactive gas that you cannot see, taste, or smell. It is found throughout the U.S. Radon can move up through the ground and into a home through cracks and holes in the foundation. Radon can build up to high levels in all types of homes. Radon can also get into indoor air when released from tap water from showering, washing dishes, and other household activities. Compared to radon entering the home through soil, radon entering the home through tap water will in most cases be a small source of radon in indoor air. Radon is a known human carcinogen. Breathing air containing radon can lead to lung cancer. Drinking water containing radon may also cause increased risk of stomach cancer. If you are concerned about radon in your home, test the air in your home. Testing is inexpensive and easy. You should pursue radon removal for your home if the level of radon in your air is 4 picocuries per liter of air (pCi/L) or higher. There are simple ways to fix a radon problem that are not too costly. For additional information, call your state radon program (800) 745-7236, the U.S EPA Safe Drinking Water Act Hotline (800) 426-4791, or the National Safety Council Radon Hotline (800) 767-7236.

Information is also available at the California EPA website: [www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DRSEM/Pages/EMB/Radon/Radon.aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DRSEM/Pages/EMB/Radon/Radon.aspx)

## Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

PFAS are a group of compounds containing carbon to fluorine chemical bonds, one of the strongest in organic chemistry. They are manufactured and used to enhance repellency of water, grease, and soil in consumer products; thus, they are very stable and resistant to environmental degradation. If exposed, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonate (PFOS) are readily absorbed but not readily eliminated from the human body. According to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) potential health concerns, long-term exposure can cause harmful health effects to a developing fetus or infant; suppress the immune system; disrupt the thyroid function, increased liver weight; and can lead to cancer.

California State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (DDW) has issued drinking water notification levels (NLs) and response levels (RLs) for PFAS. According to OEHHA recommendations, these levels provide some health risk protection in sensitive populations and demonstrate low cancer risk with 70-year lifetime exposure.

If a utility exceeds the RL(s), regulations require the water source be taken out of service, provide treatment, or notify customers.





Plant operators perform routine maintenance on the cartridge filters and make sure the system is working properly.

## Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances

PFAS Compound	Notification Level (ppt)	Response Level (ppt)
Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)	5.1ppt	10 ppt
Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS)	6.5 ppt	40 ppt

*Parts per trillion (ppt) = 1 second in 31,709.8 years*

Apart from drinking water, PFOA and PFOS exposure can occur from other sources: firefighting foaming/fire preventing agents; products that repel water, grease, and soil.

In April 2019, the SWRCB investigated source water wells in California most vulnerable to PFAS contamination. This included those near airports and landfills, and later those near secondary sources of PFAS activities. SWRCB did not require Santa Monica to sample its sources. However, City staff proactively sampled the City's Drinking Water sources in August/September of 2019, and PFAS was not detected in our drinking water supply. All PFAS samples analyzed by an outside laboratory were Non-Detect (ND).

Additionally, Granular activated carbon (GAC) and reverse osmosis (RO), both part of the City's treatment process, are effective at removing many PFAS compounds.

# Answers to the Most Commonly Asked Questions About Your Tap Water

## What affects the taste of my water?

The taste of drinking water is affected by its mineral content as well as the presence of chloramine, which is used to protect against potential bacterial contamination. Sometimes plumbing can cause a metallic flavor, especially if the water has been sitting in the pipes for many hours.

## How hard is my water?

The water delivered to our customers has an average hardness of 163 ppm. To convert to grains per gallon, divide the hardness in ppm by 17.1. The average hardness in our water is 9.47 grains per gallon.

## What type of disinfectant is in my water?

A low level of chloramine disinfectant is added to your tap water to protect from waterborne pathogens. Chloramine is formed when a small amount of ammonia is added to chlorinated water. This type of disinfectant is very stable and reduces the formation of disinfection by-products in your water. These by-products are an unintended consequence of the disinfection process but are far below the allowable limit in Santa Monica water. We carefully monitor the amount of the chloramine disinfectant to protect the quality of your water.

## Is the City's water fluoridated?

The City of Santa Monica is required by state law to add fluoride to drinking water to help prevent dental decay in consumers. Current regulations require fluoride levels in the treated water be maintained between 0.6 to 1.2 ppm with an optimum dose of 0.7 ppm. Our monitoring showed that fluoride levels in the treated water distribution system averaged 0.74 ppm.

According to the American Dental Association and CDC, it is safe to use optimally fluoridated water for preparing infant formula. If an infant is primarily fed infant formula prepared with fluoridated water, there may be an increased chance for mild enamel fluorosis, but enamel fluorosis does not affect the health of the infant or the health of the infant's teeth. To lessen this chance, deionized, purified, distilled or demineralized bottled water can be used. If you have additional questions about fluoride, contact your health provider.

Additional information can be found at the State Board website: [www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Fluoridation.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Fluoridation.shtml)

or the CDC website: [www.cdc.gov/fluoridation](http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation)

## What about lead from my plumbing?

The lead contamination that made the news in Flint, Michigan is highly unlikely in Santa Monica. The quality of

our source water is much different than Flint's, and our corrosion control processes comply with state drinking water regulations. A pool of "high risk" homes, which were plumbed before the ban on lead in solder, have been tested every three years since 1992 and has continually indicated there is little tendency of our water to leach lead out of plumbing. The next round of testing is scheduled this year in 2022.

If your home plumbing contains lead, there is a limited potential for lead to leach into your water. Fortunately, the minerals in our water help to protect against pipe corrosion, greatly reducing the potential of lead entering the water. These minerals form a film called "scale" that prevents water from coming into direct contact with home plumbing. The most common place to find lead in household plumbing is in chrome-plated brass faucets and fixtures. California enacted stricter regulations for plumbing fixtures in 2010 further reducing the potential for lead leaching from household plumbing.

If present, however, 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 of Santa Monica Water Resources Division 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 do so, you may wish to collect the flushed water and reuse it for another beneficial purpose, such as watering plants. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. To get your water tested, please call the Water Quality Office. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

#### [Do I really need to buy a water filter or home treatment system?](#)

The decision to buy a water filter or home treatment system is a matter of personal preference. Our water meets or exceeds rigid state and federal health standards. If you decide to buy a filter or system, be a smart shopper and do some homework. Any treatment device you buy should be registered with the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF). Contact NSF toll free at (800) 673-6275 or visit [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org).

#### [What about bottled water?](#)

Again, the decision is yours. You may find that keeping a pitcher of tap water in your refrigerator is a low-cost, water-thrifty alternative to buying more expensive bottled water, and it's far better for the environment. Even when the bottle is reused or recycled, the petrochemicals used in creating the bottle and the transportation of the water have a significant impact on the environment.



## Water Conservation

The City of Santa Monica has developed a sustainable water supply and taken responsible steps to improve water conservation in the midst of a changing climate. The City is actively seeking ways to conserve and improve the City's water supply for future generations. To continue meeting our water conservation goals, the City urges our residents to continue their conservation effort because small changes make a difference. For more information and water saving tips, please visit [www.smgov.net/Departments/OSE/categories/water.aspx](http://www.smgov.net/Departments/OSE/categories/water.aspx)

## Sustainability

The City of Santa Monica is still offering incentives for environmentally friendly measures taken by the community. For more information, please call or visit the Office of Sustainability website at [www.smgov.net/water](http://www.smgov.net/water).

## We need you!

Public involvement is fundamental to ensuring that we are meeting our water supply demand, water quality goals, and the highest customer service level. We welcome your feedback and invite you to get involved with the City of Santa Monica in the following ways:

- Participate in conservation events
- Attend City Council and community meetings
- Sign up for the newsletters and alerts
- Please let us know how we are doing

For information on these opportunities, please call Water Resources and the Office of Sustainability and the Environment. For a digital copy of this report, please visit: [waterquality.smgov.net](http://waterquality.smgov.net)

# Where Can I Get More Information?

## City of Santa Monica Public Works and Water Resources Division Offices:

Water Resources/Water Quality.....	(310) 434-2672
24-Hour Water Emergencies.....	(310) 434-2672
Wastewater.....	(310) 458-8532
Lead Chemist.....	(310) 434-2672
Billing Office.....	(310) 458-8224

Visit our website:

[www.smgov.net/departments/publicworks/water.aspx](http://www.smgov.net/departments/publicworks/water.aspx)

## Santa Monica City Council Meetings:

2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month  
Council Chamber  
1685 Main Street, Santa Monica

[www.smgov.net/cityclerk/agendas.aspx](http://www.smgov.net/cityclerk/agendas.aspx)

## City of Santa Monica Office of Sustainability and

the Environment ..... (310) 458-2213

Conservation Office ..... (310) 458-8972

[www.sustainable-sm.org](http://www.sustainable-sm.org)

## Metropolitan Water District (MWD)

of Southern California ..... (213) 217-6850

Toll Free ..... (800) 354-4420

[www.mwdh2o.com](http://www.mwdh2o.com)

## California State Water Resources Control Board

Division of Drinking Water ..... (818) 551-2004

[www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/)

## U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Office of Ground Water & Drinking Water

Safe Drinking Water Hotline ..... (800) 426-4791

[www.epa.gov/safewater/dwhealth.html](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwhealth.html)

[water.epa.gov/drink/guide](http://water.epa.gov/drink/guide)



City of  
**Santa  
Monica**

## Water Resources Division

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