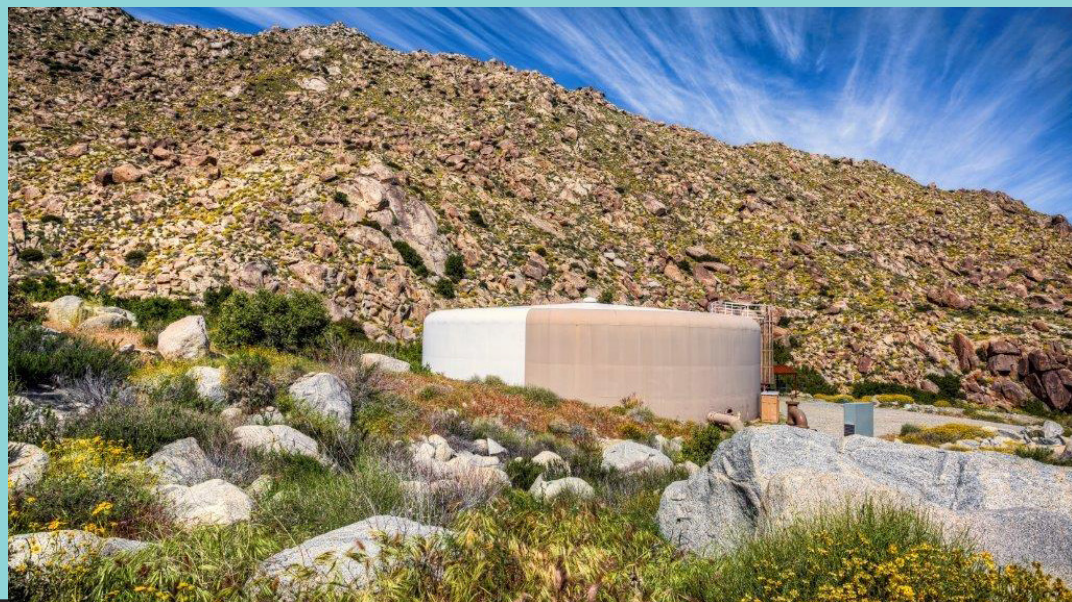
WATER QUALITY REPORT

DELIVERED JUNE 2020 (Based on 2019 data)

DESERT WATER



A LETTER FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER

We're Here for You

With so many critical items in short supply in these past few months due to COVID-19, the quality and the availability of your tap water has not been one of them. Your tap water is a safe and reliable choice for drinking, cooking, cleaning and more. The chlorine we use to treat the water is effective at killing viruses. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control has not found any instances of the coronavirus being transmitted by tap water.

Desert Water Agency works hard to keep safe tap water flowing no matter the circumstances. I'm so proud of our team for rising to this challenge and doing all they can to support our community during these uncertain times. As a local government agency, the people we serve and our team will always be our top priorities.

We're taking care of the big things of course, but we're also doing our best to make sure we're there for the small things because we know it isn't small to those that it affects. Our crews have been continuing essential work, which includes everything from lab tests and emergency water leak repairs to processing water conservation incentive checks and helping customers with their bills.

Early on during this crisis, our Board of Directors took steps to help our customers by stopping water shutoffs, removing all late fees and absorbing credit card payment processing fees. The Agency, our employees and our vendors have also been contributing to a fund to help our customers with their water bills during this time of economic catastrophe. (www.dwa.org/h2o)

We're working tirelessly to serve this community that we love as it endures unprecedented difficulty. A reliable water supply is something you can count on. We'll be here making sure the water is safe and available. We are dedicated to providing quality water and we are proud to share the result of this year's water quality report.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to our team if you have any questions about what you see.

Yours in service,

Mark S. Krause

MARK S. KRAUSE
General Manager & Chief Engineer

OUR WATER SUPPLY

DESERT WATER AGENCY

Established in 1961, Desert Water Agency (DWA) is a public nonprofit agency and State Water Contractor serving residents and visitors in a 325-square-mile area that includes parts of Cathedral City, Palm Springs, and Desert Hot Springs, as well as some unincorporated areas of Riverside County. The Agency's responsibility is to provide a safe, reliable water supply to its retail customers while protecting its interests in the State Water Project. DWA is guided by an elected board of five community members. Board members make policy decisions as public representatives.

WATER SOURCES

Desert Water Agency's groundwater comes from the Indio Subbasin of the Coachella Valley Groundwater Basin, a natural reservoir storing water beneath the valley floor. Mountain streams also bring water by way of Chino Creek, Falls Creek, Snow Creek and the Whitewater River. DWA operates these surface sources in accordance with filtration avoidance criteria.

Natural groundwater replenishment is supplemented with Colorado River water, which is imported through the Colorado River Aqueduct and percolated into the groundwater basin via recharge ponds near Windy Point.

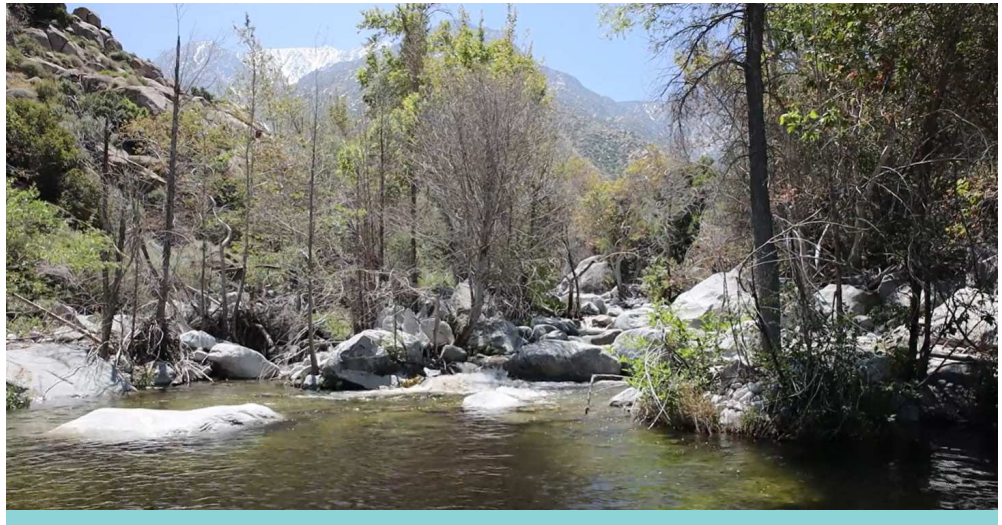
WATER QUALITY MONITORING

Unless otherwise noted, data presented in this report was obtained between January 1, 2019, and December 31, 2019. Water quality monitoring was performed in accordance with regulations established by the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In some cases, the State Water Resources Control Board allows DWA to test for certain contaminants less than once a year, because the Agency's system is not susceptible to these contaminants, or because the levels recorded are expected to vary little from year to year.

WATER SOURCE INFORMATION

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.



SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT

• A Source Water Assessment Plan (SWAP), last updated in 2014, is available at our office. This plan is an assessment of the delineated area around our listed sources through which contaminants, if present, could migrate and reach our source water. It also includes an inventory of potential sources of contamination within the delineated area and a determination of the water supply's susceptibility to contamination by the identified potential sources.

• These sources are considered vulnerable to activities normally associated with residential, commercial and industrial development. However, all water provided by Desert Water Agency meets all U.S. EPA and SWRCB guidelines. To review the SWAP, please contact our office during regular business hours.

Questions? For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Paul Monroy, laboratory director, at (760) 323-4971 ext. 169.

GLOSSARY

Aggressive Index: A calculation used to determine the corrosivity of water in our pipes. Numbers ≤ 10 are considered very aggressive, between 10-12 are moderately aggressive and ≥12 are non-aggressive.

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.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water, below, which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLG's are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): 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.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): 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. MRDLGs are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Microsiemens Per Centimeter (µS/cm): A measurement of the electrolytes in the water, which determines the ability of the water to conduct electrical current.

Micrograms Per Liter (µg/L): A measure of a contaminant in a known quantity of water. 1 µg/L equals 1 part per billion (see parts per billion).

Milligrams Per Liter (mg/L): A measure of a contaminant in a known quantity of water. 1 mg/L equals 1 part per million (see parts per million).

NA: Not applicable.

Nanograms per Liter (ng/L): A measurement of a contaminant in a known quantity of water. 1ng/L equals 1 part per trillion. (see parts per trillion).

ND: Not detected or below the reporting detection limit

Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU): A measure of cloudiness due to undissolved solids in the water. We measure turbidity because it is a good indication of the effectiveness of our filtration system and/or water quality.

Notification Level (NL): Health-based advisory levels established by the State for chemicals in drinking water that lack maximum caontaminant levels (MCLs). When chemicals are found at concentrations greater than their notification levels, certain requirements and recommendations apply.

SAMPLING RESULTS

During the past year we have taken more than 2,600 water samples in order to determine the presence of any radioactive, biological, inorganic, volatile organic, or synthetic organic contaminants. **The tables below show only those contaminants that were detected in the water.** The State allows us to monitor for certain substances less often than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. Some of our data, although representative, are more than one year old. 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	MCL (MRDL)	PHG (MCLG) [MRDLG]	Groundwater wells and surface water			Violation		Likely source of contamination
				Year Sampled	Amount Detected	Range (Low-High)	Yes	No	
Chlorine	mg/L	(4.0 as Cl_2)	[4 as Cl_2]	2019	0.49	ND-2.20		★	Drinking water disinfectant added for treatment
Fluoride	mg/L	2.0	1	2018-2019	0.4[1]	ND-0.64[1]		★	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Gross Alpha Particle Activity	pCi/L	15	(0)	2013-2019	0.5	ND-3.8		★	Erosion of natural deposits
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)*	ug/L	60	NONE	2019	15.5[2]	ND-41		★	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (NO_3-N)	mg/L	10	10	2019	0.76	ND-2.7		★	Runoff and leaching from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks and sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Tetrachloroethylene (PCE)	ug/L	5	0.06	2016-2019	<0.5	ND-0.70[3]		★	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) *	ug/L	80	NONE	2019	19.8[2]	ND-49		★	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Turbidity[4]	NTU	5	NONE	2018-2019	0.21	ND-0.72		★	Soil runoff
Surface Water Turbidity[4]	NTU	5	NONE	2019	0.77	0.14-0.77		★	Soil runoff
Uranium	pCi/L	20	0.43	2014-2019	5.9	2.5-17		★	Erosion of natural deposits

Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community.

Substance	Unit of Measure	AL	PHG	Distribution System			Number of schools sampled	School samples above AL/Total Samples	Violation		Likely source of contamination
				Year Sampled	Amount Detected (90th Percentile)	Sites Above AL/ Total Sites			Yes	No	
Copper	mg/L	1.3	0.3	2018	0.13	0/30	NA	NA		★	Internal corrosion of household/business water plumbing systems; discharges from industrial manufacturers; erosion of natural deposits
Lead	ug/L	15	0.2	2019	0	0/30	5	0/15		★	Internal corrosion of household/business water plumbing systems; discharges from industrial manufacturers; erosion of natural deposits

Substance	MCL	MCLG	Highest % positive samples in any month	Total # of routine positive samples	Total # of repeat[5] positive samples	Violation		Likely source of contamination
						Yes	No	
Total Coliform Bacteria (State Total Coliform Rule)	5.0% of monthly samples are positive	0	1.2	2	0		★	Naturally present in the environment
Fecal Coliform and *E. coli* (State Total Coliform Rule)	See Footnote 6	0	0	0	0		★	Human and animal fecal waste
E. coli (Federal Revised Total Coliform Rule	See Footnote 7	0	0	0	0		★	Human and animal fecal waste

Parts Per Billion (PPB): One part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years or one penny in $10,000,000. (Ten million dollars).

Parts Per Million (PPM): One part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or one penny in $10,000. (Ten thousand dollars).

pH: An expression of the intensity of the basic or acidcondition of a liquid. The pH may range from 0 to 14, where 0 is most acid, 14 most basic and 7 neutral.

PicoCuries per Liter (pCi/L): A measure of the radioactivity in the water. Primary Drinking Water Standard (PDWS): MCLs and MRDLs for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements and water treatment requirements.

Public Health Goal (PHG): 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.

Regulatory Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant, which if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements, such as public notification, that a water system must follow.

Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA): The average of sample analytical results for samples taken during the previous four calendar quarters.

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

UCMR: Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule

Variances and Exemptions: SWRCB permission to exceed an MCL or not comply with a treatment technique under certain conditions.

< Means "less than": For example <0.2 means the lowest detectable levels is 0.2 and that the contaminant was less than 0.2 and therefore not detected.

***** This number is not the average annual amount detected, but the highest quarterly average.
1. DWA does not add flouride to drinking water.
2. Highest LRAA for 2019.
3. Of 22 wellheads in the system, 21 tested nondetect.
4.Turbidity is regulated as a TT for the surface sources (as a condition for filtration avoidance) and is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of water quality. High turbidity can hinder the effectiveness of disinfectants.
5. These repeat sample results validate no violation occurred.
6. If a routine and repeat sample are total coliform-positive and either is E. coli positive, or system fails to take repeat samples following E. coli-positive routine sample or a system fails to analyze total coliform positive repeat sample for E. coli, then a violation occurs.
7. If a routine sample is fecal coliform positive and a repeat sample is total coliform positive, then a violation has occurred.

SECONDARY SUBSTANCES

Substance	Unit of Measure	MCL (MRDL)	PHG (MCLG) [MRDLG]	Groundwater wells and surface water			Violation		Likely source of contamination
				Year Sampled	Amount Detected	Range (Low-High)	Yes	No	
Chloride	mg/L	500	NONE	2018-2019	43	8.5-92		★	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits; seawater influence
Color	Units	15	NONE	2018-2019	ND	ND		★	Naturally occurring organic materials
Odor-Threshold	TON	3	NONE	2019	1	NA		★	Naturally occurring organic materials
Specific Conductance	uS/cm	1600	NONE	2018-2019	588	77-960		★	Substances that form ions when in water; seawater influence
Sulfate	mg/L	500	45	2018-2019	107	23-220		★	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits; industrial wastes
Total Dissolved Solids	mg/L	1000	NONE	2018-2019	376	54-640		★	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits

OTHER SUBSTANCES

Aggressive Index	AI	Non-aggressive	NONE	2018-2019	12.3	10.8-12.7		★	Influenced by hydrogen, carbon, oxygen and temperature
Alkalinity	mg/L	NONE	NONE	2018-2019	133	46-180		★	Function of carbonate, hydroxide and bicarbonate; naturally occurring
Bicarbonate	mg/L	NONE	NONE	2018-2019	133	46-180		★	Naturally occurring
Barium	mg/L	1	2	2018-2019	0.056	ND-0.110		★	Naturally occurring
Calcium	mg/L	NONE	NONE	2018-2019	70	29-100		★	Contributes to water hardness; naturally occuring
Chromium (total)	ug/L	50	100	2019	2.6	1.2-4.8		★	Discharge from steel and pulp mills and chrome plating; erosion of natural deposits
Hardness	mg/L	NONE	NONE	2018-2019	219	26-330		★	Naturally occurring
Iron	ug/L	300	NONE	2018-2019	7.5	ND-120		★	Leaching from natural deposits; industrial wastes
Magnesium	mg/L	NONE	NONE	2018-2019	12.7	3.2-21		★	Contributes to water hardness; naturally occuring
Potassium	mg/L	NONE	NONE	2018-2019	4.3	2.7-8.9		★	Leaching from water softeners, fertilizers and natural deposits
pH	pH Unit	NONE	NONE	2018-2019	8.1	8.0-8.2		★	Naturally occurring
Sodium	mg/L	NONE	NONE	2018-2019	35	18-69		★	Naturally occurring

UNREGULATED SUBSTANCES

Substance	Unit of Measure	Notification Level	Groundwater Source			Violation		Likely source of contamination
			Year Sampled	Amount Detected	Range (Low-High)	Yes	No	
Boron	ug/L	1000	2016-2018	6.5	ND-160		★	Naturally occurring
Vanadium	ug/L	50	2016-2018	6.7	ND-17		★	Erosion of natural deposits
Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)	ng/L	14	2019	ND	ND		★	Runoff from chemical manufacturing and usage
Perfluorooctanesulfonic Acid (PFOS)	ng/L	13	2019	ND	ND		★	Runoff from chemical manufacturing and usage

Effective April 1, 2016, all water systems are required to comply with the state Total Coliform Rule and the federal Revised Total Coliform Rule. The new federal rule maintains the purpose to protect public health by ensuring the integrity of the drinking water distribution system and monitoring for the presence of microbials (total coliform and E. coli bacteria). U.S. EPA anticipates greater public health protection as the new rule requires water systems vulnerable to microbial contamination to identify and fix problems. Water systems that exceed a specified frequency of total coliform occurrences are required to do an assessment to determine if any sanitary defects exist. If found, the water system must take corrective action.

COMMON WATER QUALITY QUESTIONS

WHY DOES TAP WATER SOMETIMES SMELL FUNNY?

When your water tastes or smells funny, the problem may or may not be in the water. Odors might actually be coming from your sink drain, where bacteria grow on hair, soap, food, and other things that get trapped. Odorous gases get stirred up when water pours into the drain. Odor can also come from bacteria growing on devices such as water heaters.

WHY DOES TAP WATER HAVE A FAINT CHLORINE SMELL?

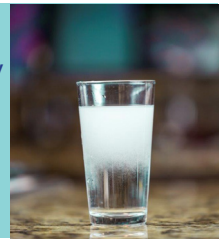
A small amount of chlorine is added to meet drinking water regulations. It is a disinfectant used to provide continuous protection against possible microbial contamination. Regulations limit the amount of chlorine added to tap water so that the water is safe to drink. A slight smell or taste of chlorine is normal.

WHY DOES MY WATER HAVE A ROTTEN EGG OR SULFUR SMELL?

This smell can occur under some conditions when sulfate is present in the water supply. Improperly maintained water heaters or lack of water circulation within a residence during warmer months are circumstances that may contribute to this odor.

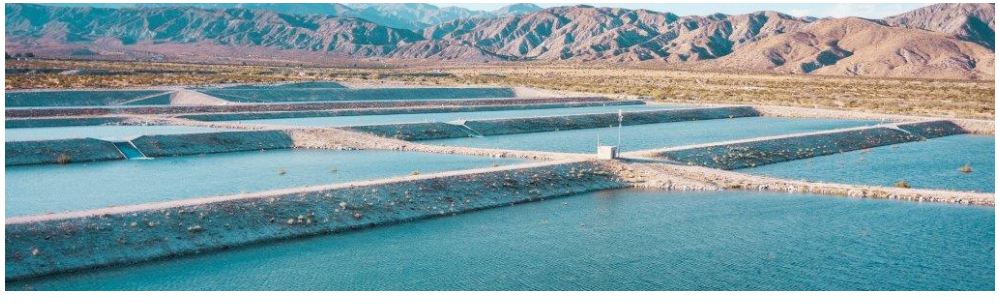
WHY DOES MY WATER LOOK CLOUDY?

Occasionally, tiny air bubbles in tap water cause a cloudy appearance. Air dissolves into water when pressurized, which occurs in the groundwater basin and in the water pipes that deliver water to your tap. These bubbles dissipate after a few moments in a glass.



DO I NEED A SOFTENER?

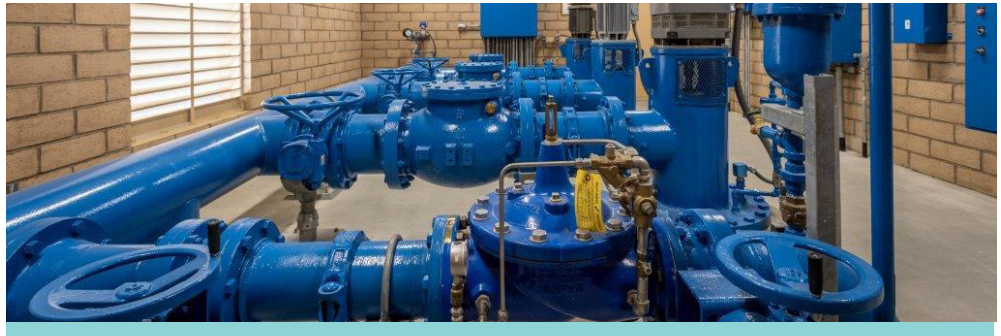
No. Desert Water Agency tap water meets all drinking water standards and does not need to be conditioned or filtered. DWA does not prohibit the use of water softeners, but Agency ordinance does prohibit the discharge of excess salt down the drain. Discharged salt can harm the groundwater and may require additional treatment, which would increase the future costs of providing sewer and water services.



REGULATORY INFORMATION

CONTAMINANTS THAT MAY BE PRESENT IN SOURCE WATER INCLUDE:

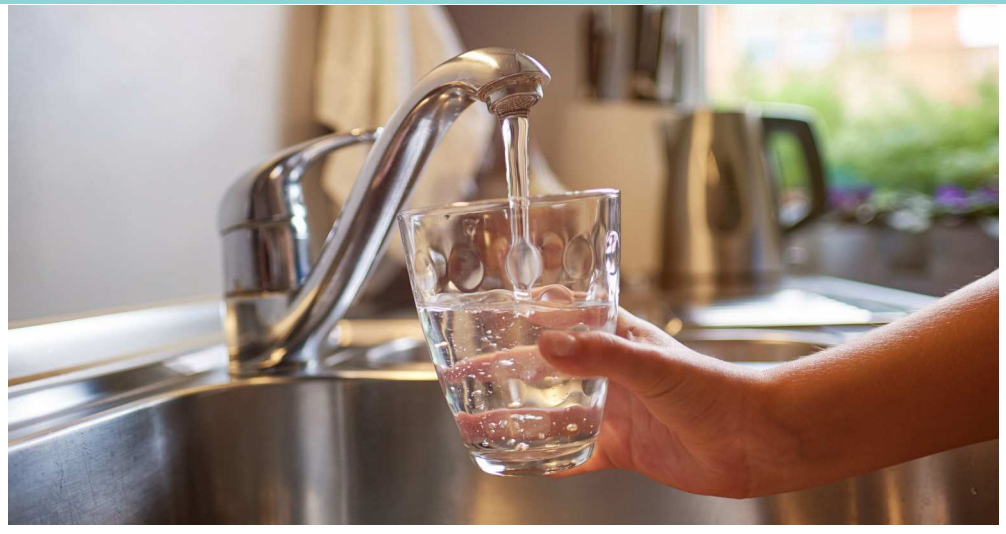
- **Microbial contaminants,** such as viruses and bacteria, that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- **Inorganic contaminants,** such as salts and metals, that can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial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



In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. USEPA regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that provide 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 is available through the USEPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

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 can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care 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).

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. Desert Water Agency is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water but cannot control the variety of materials used in your property's plumbing. 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 exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

PFAS: THE FOREVER CHEMICALS

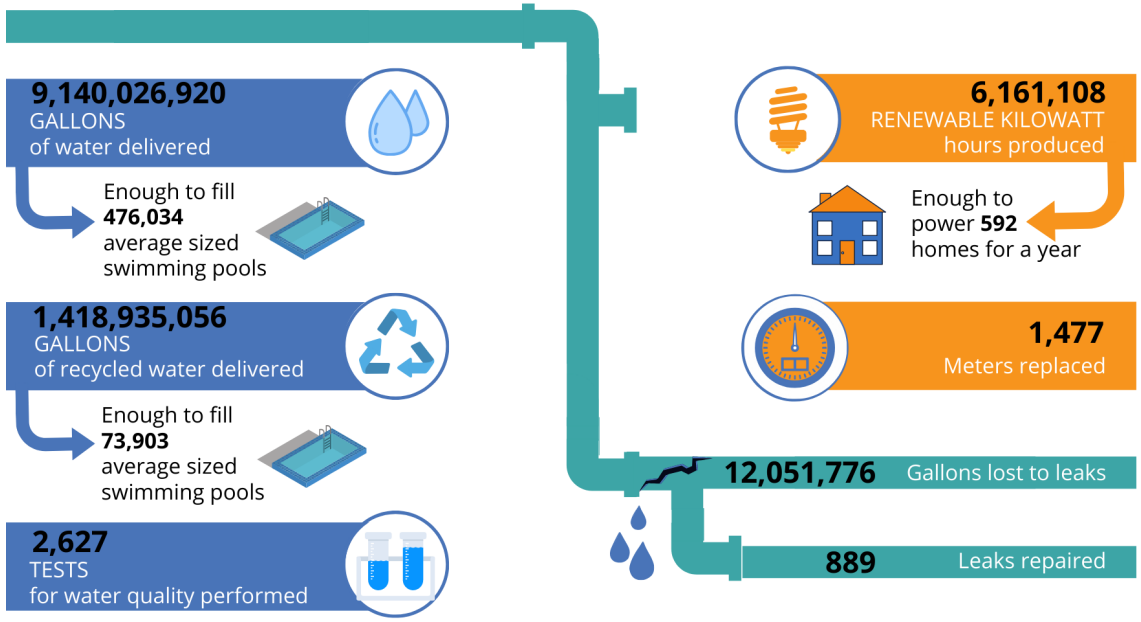
One new addition you'll see in the report this year is PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) sampling. It is a mouthful to be sure but these chemicals have made big waves in the water industry in the past year. The chemicals have been around for decades – and research shows they will be around for centuries to come because they do not break down easily.

These chemicals can be found in everything from weatherproof jackets and carpet fibers to food wrappers and Teflon pans. They were initially manufactured by DuPont and 3M in the 1940s. Exposure to the man-made chemicals are so widespread it is coming up in blood samples of people around the globe. They're so ubiquitous that some water agencies are also finding small traces of them in tap water.

In 2019, hundreds of California public water systems, including drinking water supply wells were required to test for PFOA (Perfluorooctanoate) and PFOA (perfluorooctanesulfonate) based on their proximity to airports. These PFAS chemicals are also found in fire-fighting foam at airfields. Desert Water Agency tested 13 of our wells because of their proximity to Palm Springs International Airport.

Thankfully, Desert Water Agency has not detected PFAS in our area. We continue to monitor for the substance, which is important because in large amounts it has been found to have some serious health impacts. We'll report our findings to the community if we see that it has found its way into our groundwater or streams.

DESERT WATER AGENCY 2019 YEAR AT A GLANCE



Your Water Quality

Desert Water Agency is committed to serving healthy, safe drinking water and to keeping you informed about the quality of the water that is delivered to your tap. Our dedicated staff samples water daily to ensure that it meets all standards. As fluctuating conditions in California continue to affect water supply, it is important for us to support our customers and work together to protect this precious local resource.

By explaining the sources of our water and defining the constituents in the water, this report is our way of providing clear, transparent information to our customers. The board and staff take their responsibility to provide high-quality water very seriously and we're proud to report that our water meets and beats the strictest standards in the nation. If you have any questions when reviewing this report, please contact Paul Monroy, laboratory director, at (760) 323-4971 ext. 169.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JOSEPH K. STUART	KRISTIN BLOOMER	CRAIG EWING	PATRICIA G. OYGAR	JAMES CIOFFI
President	Vice President	Secretary - Treasurer	Director	Director

Board Meetings are held the first and third Tuesdays of each month at 8 a.m.

DESERT WATER

1200 Gene Autry Trail South, Palm Springs, CA 92264 | (760) 323-4971
www.dwa.org

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable. Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.
Para alguna pregunta o inquietud, llame al 760-323-4971