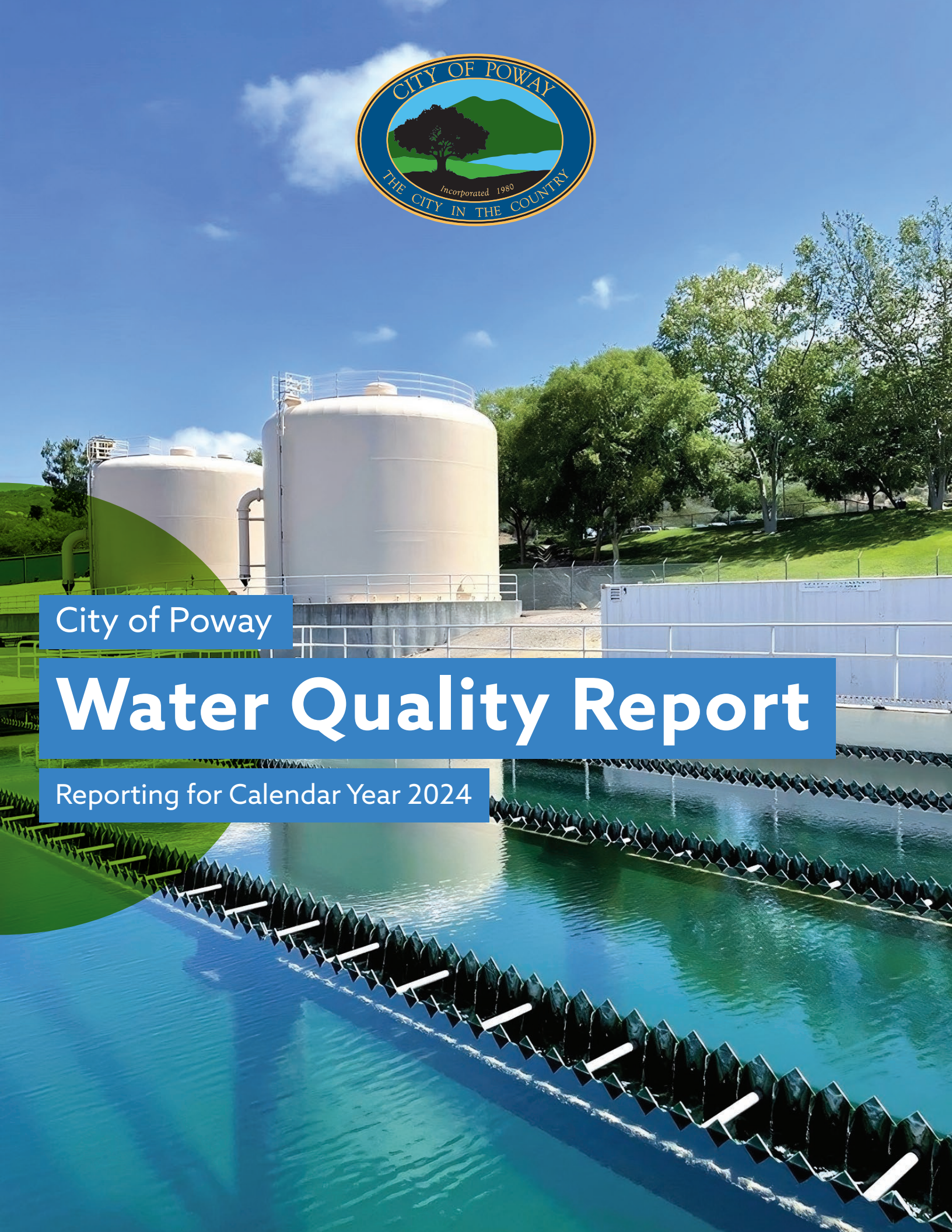

City of Poway

Water Quality Report

Reporting for Calendar Year 2024

This annual water quality report explains how drinking water provided by the City of Poway meets or exceeds all state and federal water quality standards for your drinking water. We conduct approximately 65,000 tests annually on the drinking water quality; many of the tests go beyond what is required by regulations. This report includes results of water quality tests performed between January 1, and December 31, 2024. It also includes notes, background information and definitions helpful for interpreting the data, as well as an explanation of where your water comes from.

The City of Poway routinely monitors the water supplies for a range of elements that could potentially impact the quality of your water. If a potential problem is detected, our water treatment personnel take measures to restore the quality of the water.

The City of Poway is committed in continuing investments for planned replacements and upgrades to our water treatment and distribution systems. With the goal of increasing the reliability of drinking water for our customers now and generations to come, the City of Poway is undertaking the largest capital improvement program (CIP) in the city's 45-year history. The CIP will include replacing the 10 million gallon clearwell (water storage reservoir) at the water treatment plant and obtaining a new San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA) treated water connection.

Learn more about these projects at poway.org/water-projects. For additional information on the water quality testing results in this report, please call Aaron Huff, Water Treatment Plant Manager at the City of Poway Lester J. Berglund Water Treatment Plant at (858) 668-4751.

ESPANOL: Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable. Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

Coagulation, Flocculation & Sedimentation

Filtration

Chlorine & Chloramines

Storage

LEARN MORE

The Treatment Process

To ensure a safe drinking water supply, the raw water undergoes a series of treatment processes including: coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, taste/odor control, corrosion control, and disinfection.

These treatment processes ensure that water of the highest quality is available to all our customers.

Surface Water Sources

The City of Poway relies on two surface water sources: water that is imported from the San Diego County Water Authority and local rainfall captured by Lake Poway. The imported water comprises the majority of the water needs of the community, accounting for 99.5% of the raw water supply.

The raw water is received from the Northern California Aqueduct and Colorado River Systems. These sources of water are pumped to the Lester J. Berglund Water Treatment Plant and to Lake Poway for storage.

The Disinfection Process

The City of Poway employs two methods of disinfection. The first, chlorine, effectively eliminates water-borne diseases from the public water supply. The second, chloramines, a combination of chlorine and ammonia, further improves the quality of our water supply and reduces the formation of disinfection byproducts. This disinfection process chemically deactivates and physically removes bacteria, viruses and other contaminants.

Water Quality Monitoring

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is responsible for enforcing Drinking Water Quality Regulations, as set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

The USEPA regulations are composed of primary and secondary standards: Primary standards relate to the protection of public health. These standards specify limits for substances in water that may be harmful to humans if consumed in excess of those limits.

Secondary standards relate to aesthetic qualities of water such as taste, odor, or clarity. These standards specify limits for substances that may influence consumer acceptance of the water.

Quick Facts on Water Use

Save up to 8 gallons per week.
Spend only five minutes in the shower.

Save up to 35 gallons per week.
Wash only full loads of laundry and dishes.

Save up to 500 gallons per month.
Check sprinkler system for leaks, overspray and broken sprinkler heads.

Save up to 2.5 gallons per minute.
Turn off water while you brush your teeth.

Save up to 100 gallons each time.
Use a broom (not hose) to clean driveways, sidewalks.

Up to 60% of your annual water use is outside your home.

ABBREVIATIONS:

AL = Action Level
NA = Not Applicable
NC = Not Collected
ND = None Detected
NL = Notification Level
NS = No Standard
NTU = Nephelometric Turbidity Units
pCi/L = picocuries per liter
ppb = parts per billion (ug/L)
ppm = parts per million (mg/L)
TT = Treatment Technique
umhos/cm = micromhos/ centimeter

FOOTNOTES TO TABLE:

(a) TURBIDITY: A measure of the cloudiness of water; indicates effectiveness of the filtration system. Must be less than 0.3 NTU in 95% of monthly readings, and always less than 5.0 NTU.

(b) MICROBIOLOGICAL: No more than 5.0% of monthly samples may be total coliform-positive. Two consecutive positives, one being E-coli, is a violation. No MCL violations in 2024 occurred.

(c) TTHM, HAA, and Chlorine Residual averages are for the highest running annual average (RAA) for 2024. RAA is the average of the four most recent quarters results.

(d) SWRCB considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for beta particles.

(e) Lead and copper testing is performed on a triennial basis. The 2022 sampling results are based on the 90th percentile as required by the Lead and Copper Rule. The next sampling is due in 2025.

DEFINITIONS AND NOTES:

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

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.

Primary Drinking Water Standard (PDWS): MCLs, MRDLs and treatment techniques (TTs) for contaminants that affect health, along with their monitoring and reporting requirements.

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

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

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.

PARAMETER	UNITS	STATE MCL [MRDL]	PHG (MCLG) [MRDLG]	TREATMENT PLANT EFFLUENT		DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM		LAKE POWAY WATER		IMPORTED WATER		MAJOR SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION IN DRINKING WATER
				AVERAGE	RANGE	AVERAGE	RANGE	AVERAGE	RANGE	AVERAGE	RANGE	
PRIMARY STANDARDS- Mandatory Health Related Standards Established by the State of California, State Water Resources Control Board - Division of Drinking Water.												
CLARITY												
Filter Effluent Turbidity (a)	NTU	0.3 (TT)	NA	Highest Reading = 0.08		0.053	<0.1 - 0.25	0.25	NA	0.07	NA	Soil runoff
	%	95	NA	% < 0.3: 100%		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
INORGANIC CHEMICALS												
Aluminum	ppm	1	0.6	0.113	ND<0.025 - 0.189	NA	NA	<0.02	<0.02	0.074	ND - 0.160	Residue from treatment processes
Arsenic	ppb	10	0.004	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.91	1.91	<2	<2	Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (naturally-occurring)	ppm	2.0	1	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.313	0.313	0.7	0.6 - 0.8	Erosion of natural deposits
Nitrate (as Nitrogen)	ppm	10	10	NA	NA	0.345	<0.10 - 0.676	< 0.110	< 0.110	<0.4	<0.4	Run-off & leaching from fertilizer use
RADIOACTIVITY												
Gross Alpha	pCi/L	15	(0)	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.19±1.70	1.19±1.70	<3	<3 - 4	Erosion of natural deposits
Gross Beta (d)	pCi/L	50	(0)	NA	NA	NA	NA	5.99±1.52	5.99±1.52	4	< 4 - 5	Decay of natural deposits
Uranium	pCi/L	20	0.43	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.67	1.67	2	ND - 3	Erosion of natural deposits
MICROBIOLOGICAL												
Total Coliform Bacteria	(b)	5.0%	(0)	1.89%	<1 - 84	Highest % positive = 0%		207	<1 - 2420	NA	NA	Naturally present in environment
E. coli	(b)	(b)	(0)	# positives = 0		# positives = 0		8.5	<1 - 20	NA	NA	Human and animal fecal waste
Heterotrophic Plate Count (HPC)	CFU/mL	TT	NA	0.075	<1 - 4	<1	<1	105	<1 - 1190	<1	<1	Naturally present in environment
DISINFECTION BYPRODUCTS AND DISINFECTANT RESIDUALS												
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM's) (c)	ppb	80	NA	NA	NA	46	23.9 - 65.1	NA	NA	34	15 - 48	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Haloacetic acids (HAA5) (c)	ppb	60	NA	NA	NA	21.7	16 - 32	NA	NA	12	1.2 - 23	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chlorine Residual as Chloramine (c)	ppm	[4]	[4]	NA	NA	2.39	0.24 - 3.71	NA	NA	NA	NA	Disinfectant added for treatment
SECONDARY STANDARDS- Aesthetic Standards Established by the State of California, State Water Resources Control Board - Division of Drinking Water.												
Aluminum	ppb	200	NA	113	ND<25 - 189	NA	NA	<20	<20	74	ND - 160	Residue from treatment processes
Chloride	ppm	500	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	104	104	96	92 - 100	Runoff / leaching of natural deposits
Color	units	15	NA	NA	NA	0.103	<1 - 2	5	5	2	1-2	Naturally occurring organic materials
Odor Threshold	TON	3	NA	NA	NA	<1	<1	<1	<1	1	1	
Specific Conductance	umhos/cm	1600	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	884	884	910	903 - 917	Substances that form ions in water
Sulfate	ppm	500	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	185	185	199	195 - 203	Runoff / leaching of natural deposits
Total Dissolved Solids	ppm	1000	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	536	536	566	560 - 572	
Turbidity	NTU	5	NA	0.04	0.02 - 0.08	0.053	<0.1 - 0.25	0.25	0.25	ND	ND	Soil runoff
UNREGULATED CONTAMINANTS - May become regulated in the future												
Boron	ppb	NA	NL=1000	NA	NA	NA	NA	163	163	130	130	Erosion of natural deposits
Vanadium	ppb	NA	NL=50	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.78	3.78	<3	<3	Erosion of natural deposits
OTHER PARAMETERS												
Alkalinity	ppm	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	111	111	105	103 - 107	Runoff / leaching of natural deposits
Calcium	ppm	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	53.8	53.8	62	61 - 62	
Hardness as Calcium Carbonate	ppm	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	236	236	242	242 - 243	Leaching from natural deposits
Magnesium	ppm	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	24.7	24.7	22	22 - 23	Runoff / leaching of natural deposits
Potassium	ppm	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	4.72	4.72	4.8	4.6 - 4.9	Salt present in water; naturally-occurring
Sodium	ppm	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	94.6	94.6	93	91 - 95	Runoff / leaching of natural deposits
Total Organic Carbon	ppm	TT	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.61	3.18 - 3.87	2.6	2.3 - 3.0	Natural and manmade deposits

PARAMETER	UNITS	STATE MCL [MRDL]	PHG (MCLG) [MRDLG]	90TH PERCENTILE	NO. OF SITES SAMPLED	NO. OF SITES EXCEEDING AL	SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION IN DRINKING WATER
LEAD AND COPPER RULE (e) (Sampled in 2022)							
Copper	ppm	AL=1.3	0.3	0.076	34	0.00	Internal corrosion of household plumping systems
Lead	ppb	AL=15	0.2	1.86	34	2	

Additional Public Information:

In accordance with the mandate of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has developed the Drinking Water Source Assessment and Protection (DWSAP) Program to evaluate watershed vulnerability to potential contamination sources. The City of Poway completed its Watershed Sanitary Survey (WSS) update in February 2025. The WSS includes an updated assessment of potential contamination sources and source protection activities. The 2025 WSS can be viewed upon request from the Poway City Clerk's Office (858) 668-4530.

Metropolitan Water District (MWD) Source Water Assessment:

MWD of Southern California completed its source water assessments - watershed sanitary surveys of the Colorado River in December 2020, and the State Water Project in 2021. Colorado River supplies are considered to be most vulnerable to recreation, urban/stormwater run-off, increasing urbanization in the watershed, and wastewater. State Water Project supplies are considered to be most vulnerable to urban/stormwater run-off, wildlife, agriculture, recreation, and wastewater. A copy of the assessment can be obtained by contacting MWD at (800) 354-4420.

Unreported Water Quality Parameters:

Only "detected" parameters are included in this report, as required by the State. Over 75 additional water quality parameters were investigated, and not detected at the detection limits required by the State of California.

Lead and Copper Rule:

Mandated by the EPA effective in 1992, the Rule monitors for lead and copper contamination after the water has left the distribution system. Water is collected from selected representative household faucets every three years. The most recent sampling was in 2022, and the next sampling is due in August, 2025. Poway has completed a lead service line inventory. For a copy of the information, please contact Public Works, Utilities at 858-668-4700.

Methyl Tert-Butyl Ether (MTBE):

Not detected in Poway water supply. MTBE has been found in some groundwater wells in California. The source is most likely from leaking underground gasoline storage tanks. Poway relies on surface water sources which are less vulnerable to MTBE contamination.

Water Conservation Tips:

- Fix leaking faucets, hoses, pipes, toilets, sprinklers, etc.
- Wash full loads only of laundry and dishes.
- Install water-saving devices in faucets, toilets, showers, and appliances.
- Use mulch around plants, shrubs, and trees.

Opportunity For Public Participation:

The City welcomes and encourages your continued interest and involvement in the City's decision-making process.

The City Council meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 13325 Civic Center Drive.

Informative Web Sites:

EPA Drinking Water Website: http://water.epa.gov/drink/index.cfm

EPA Drinking Water Website:
https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/drinking-water-regulations

State Water Rescources Control Board: http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/NotificationLevels.html

Important Phone Numbers:

City of Poway Water Treatment Plant.(858) 668-4751

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

SWRCB, Office of Drinking Water .....(916) 341-5254

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 run-off, 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 run-off, and residential uses.
- Radioactive contaminants, that can be naturally occurring or a result of oil and gas production and mining activities.
- Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater run-off, agricultural application, and septic systems.

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 compounds associated with service lines and home plumbing. The City of Poway 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 exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The SWRCB regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.

Required Health Information

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain 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 (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 health care providers. U.S. EPA/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).