



# SFO Consumer Confidence Report 2021

This report contains important information about our drinking water.  
Please contact SFO Water Services at (650) 821-7874 or [sfoenv.ops@flysfo.com](mailto:sfoenv.ops@flysfo.com) for assistance.

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua para beber.  
Favor de comunicarse SFPUC a (415) 554-3211 para asistirlo en español con alguien que lo entienda bien.

此份水質報告，內有重要資訊。請找他人為你翻譯和解說清楚。

California is in a drought. Please use water wisely. For water saving tips, please visit <https://www.flysfo.com/community-environment/sfh2o>

## SFRWS Drinking Water Sources & Treatment

Most of our drinking water supply comes from the San Francisco Regional Water System (SFRWS), which is a wholesaler owned and managed by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC). The supply consists of surface water and groundwater that are well protected and carefully managed by the SFPUC. These sources are diverse in both the origin and the location with the surface water stored in reservoirs located in the Sierra Nevada, Alameda County and San Mateo County, and groundwater stored in a deep aquifer located in the northern part of San Mateo County. Maintaining this variety of sources is an important component of the SFPUC's near- and long-term water supply management strategy. A diverse mix of sources protects SFO from potential disruptions due to emergencies or natural disasters, provides resiliency during periods of drought, and helps us ensure a long-term, sustainable water supply as SFO address issues such as climate uncertainty, regulatory changes, and population growth.

To meet drinking water standards for consumption, all surface water supplies including the upcountry non-Hetch Hetchy sources (UNHHS) undergo treatment by the SFRWS before it is delivered. Water from Hetch Hetchy Reservoir is exempt from federal and State filtration requirements but receives the following treatment: disinfection using ultraviolet light and chlorine, pH adjustment for optimum corrosion control, fluoridation for dental health protection, and chloramination for maintaining disinfectant residual and minimizing the formation of regulated disinfection byproducts. Water from local Bay Area reservoirs in Alameda County and UNHHS is delivered to Sunol Valley Water Treatment Plant (SVWTP); whereas water from local reservoirs in San Mateo County is delivered to Harry Tracy Water Treatment Plant (HTWTP). Water treatment at these plants consist of filtration, disinfection, fluoridation, optimum corrosion control, and taste and odor removal.

In 2021, no UNHHS water was used. However, a small amount of groundwater from four wells was added to the SFRWS's surface water supply through blending in the transmission pipelines.

## Watersheds Protection

SFRWS conducts watershed sanitary surveys for the Hetch Hetchy source annually and for non-Hetch Hetchy surface water sources every five years. The latest sanitary surveys for the non-Hetch Hetchy watersheds were completed in 2021 for the period of 2016-2020. All these surveys together with our stringent watershed protection management activities were completed with support from partner agencies including National Park Service and US Forest Service. The purposes of the surveys are to evaluate the sanitary conditions and water quality of the watersheds and to review results of watershed management activities conducted in the preceding years. Wildlife, stock, and human activities continue to be the potential contamination sources. You may contact the San Francisco District office of the State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water (SWRCB-DDW) at **(510) 620-3474** for the review of these reports.



## Water Quality

SFRWS regularly collects and tests water samples from reservoirs and designated sampling points throughout the sources and the transmission system to ensure the water delivered to you meets or exceeds federal and State drinking water standards. In 2020, SFRWS conducted more than 47,200 drinking water tests in the sources and the transmission system. This is in addition to the extensive treatment process control monitoring performed by SFRWS's certified operators and online instruments.

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. To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the SWRCB-DDW 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.

## Fluoridation & Dental Fluorosis

Mandated by State law, water fluoridation is a widely accepted practice proven to be safe and effective for preventing and controlling tooth decay. The fluoride target level in the water is 0.7 milligram per liter (mg/L, or part per million, ppm), consistent with the May 2015 State regulatory guidance on optimal fluoride level. Infants fed formula mixed with water containing fluoride at this level may still have a chance of developing tiny white lines or streaks in their teeth. These marks are referred to as mild to very mild fluorosis and are often only visible under a microscope. Even in cases where the marks are visible, they do not pose any health risk. The Centers of Disease Control (CDC) considers it safe to use optimally fluoridated water for preparing infant formula. To lessen this chance of dental fluorosis, you may choose to use low fluoride bottled water to prepare infant formula. Nevertheless, children may still develop dental fluorosis due to fluoride intake from other sources such as food, toothpaste, and dental products.

Contact your healthcare provider or SWRCB-DDW if you have concerns about dental fluorosis. For additional information about fluoridation or oral health, visit the SWRCB-DDW website [www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Fluoridation.html](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Fluoridation.html), or the CDC website [www.cdc.gov/fluoridation](http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation).

## Special Health Needs

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons, such as those 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 from infections.

These people should seek advice about drinking water from their healthcare providers. USEPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the USEPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-479 or at [www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater).

## Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

PFAS is a group of approximately 5,000 man-made, persistent chemicals used in a variety of industries and consumer products. In 2021, our wholesaler conducted a second round of voluntary monitoring using a newer analytical method adopted by the USEPA for some other PFAS contaminants. No PFAS were detected above the SWRCB's Consumer Confidence Report Detection Levels in surface water and groundwater sources. For additional information about PFAS, you may visit SWRCB website [waterboards.ca.gov/pfas](http://waterboards.ca.gov/pfas), SFPUC website [PFAS factsheet.pdf](http://PFAS_factsheet.pdf) ([sfpuc.org](http://sfpuc.org)), and/or USEPA website [epa.gov/pfas](http://epa.gov/pfas).

## Groundwater Storage and Recovery (GSR) Project

Groundwater is a renewable source of naturally-occurring fresh water that is found in underground and is replenished primarily by rainfall. The use of groundwater helps diversify water sources and makes drinking water supply even more reliable. The SFRWS completed installation of eight deep-water wells in its GSR project Phase 1. In 2021, some of these wells intermittently delivered water during the startup test to blend with the surface water supply in the north San Mateo County. For the past decade, the SFRWS has collected water quality and quantity data from the Westside Basin aquifer, from which the groundwater is extracted. With extensive monitoring and testing, the SFRWS knows that after adding groundwater to its water supplies, it will continue providing us with high-quality drinking water that meets or exceeds the federal and State regulatory health-based and aesthetic standards.

## Contaminants & Regulations

Generally, the sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, oceans, 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. Such substances are called contaminants, and may be present in source water as:

- **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, which 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.

More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the USEPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-4791, or at [www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater).

## Drinking Water & Lead

Exposure to lead, if present, can cause serious health effects in all age groups, especially for pregnant women and young children. Infants and children who drink water containing lead could have decreases in IQ and attention span and increases in learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney, or nervous system problems.

Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. There are no known lead service lines in our water distribution system. We are responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes, but we cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in your home. You share the responsibility for protecting yourself and your family from the lead in your home plumbing. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Before drinking tap water, flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. You can also use a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to remove lead from drinking water. If you are concerned about lead in your water and may wish to have your water tested, call your city phone number for lead test. Information about lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at USEPA website [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).



## Lead and Copper Tap Sampling Results

We conducted Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) monitoring in 2019, and these tap sampling results are accessible at our Website [www.flysfo.com](http://www.flysfo.com). The next round of LCR monitoring will be conducted this year, July 2022.

## State Revised Total Coliform Rule

This report reflects changes in drinking water regulatory requirements during 2021, in which the SWRCB adopted California version of the federal Revised Total Coliform Rule. The revised rule, effective on July 1, 2021, maintains the purpose to protect public health by ensuring the integrity of the drinking water distribution system and monitoring for the presence of microbials (i.e., total coliform and E. coli bacteria). Greater public health protection is anticipated, as the revised rule requires water systems that are vulnerable to microbial contamination to identify and fix problems. Water systems that exceed a specified frequency of total coliform occurrences are required to conduct an assessment to determine if any sanitary defects exist. If found, these must be corrected by the water system.

## Key Water Quality Terms

The following are definitions of key terms referring to standards and goals of water quality noted on the data table.

- **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.
- **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 USEPA.
- **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 (SMCLs) are set to protect the odor, taste, and appearance of drinking water.
- **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.
- **Primary Drinking Water Standard (PDWS):** MCLs and MRDLs for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements, and water treatment requirements.
- **Regulatory Action Level:** The concentration of a contaminant which, 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.
- **Turbidity:** A water clarity indicator that measures cloudiness of the water, and is also used to indicate the effectiveness of the filtration system. High turbidity can hinder the effectiveness of disinfectants.

## San Francisco International Airport-Water Quality Data for 2021

This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality. The tables below list detected contaminants in our drinking water in 2021 and the information about their typical sources. Contaminants below detection limits for reporting are not shown, in accord with regulatory guidance. The wholesaler holds a SWRCB monitoring waiver for some contaminants in the surface water supply and therefore their monitoring frequencies are less than annual.



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San Francisco International Airport Water Quality Data for Year 2021 <sup>(1)</sup>

Detected Contaminants	Unit	MCL	PHG or (MCLG)	Range or Level Found	Average or [Max]	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Turbidity						
Unfiltered Hetch Hetchy Water	NTU	5	N/A	0.2 - 0.4 <sup>(2)</sup>	[3.3]	Soil runoff
Filtered Water from Sunol Valley Water Treatment Plant (SVWTP)	NTU -	1 <sup>(3)</sup> Min 95% of samples ≤ 0.3 NTU <sup>(3)</sup>	N/A N/A	- 99.8%-100%	[0.4] -	Soil runoff Soil runoff
Filtered Water from Harry Tracy Water Treatment Plant (HTWTP)	NTU -	1 <sup>(3)</sup> Min 95% of samples ≤ 0.3 NTU <sup>(3)</sup>	N/A N/A	- 100%	[0.2] -	Soil runoff Soil runoff
Disinfection Byproducts & Precursor						
Total Trihalomethanes	ppb	80	N/A	5.7 - 48.5	[38] <sup>(4)</sup>	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Five Haloacetic Acids	ppb	60	N/A	0.0 - 39.7	[29] <sup>(4)</sup>	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Bromate	ppb	10	0.1	ND - 1.9	[2.1] <sup>(4)</sup>	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Total Organic Carbon <sup>(5)</sup>	ppm	TT	N/A	1.2 - 2.2	1.8	Various natural and man-made sources
Microbiological						
Total Coliform <sup>(7)</sup>	-	NoP ≤ 5.0% of monthly samples	(0)	0 - 0	0%	Naturally present in the environment
Fecal coliform and E. coli <sup>(8)</sup>	-	0 Positive Sample	(0)	-	0	Human or animal fecal waste
<i>Giardia lamblia</i>	cyst/L	TT	(0)	0 - 0.04	0.01	Naturally present in the environment
Inorganics						
Fluoride (source water) <sup>(7)</sup>	ppm	2.0	1	ND - 0.8	0.4 <sup>(10)</sup>	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive to promote strong teeth
Chloramine (as chlorine)	ppm	MRDL = 4.0	MRDLG = 4	1.53 - 3.50	[3.10] <sup>(5)</sup>	Drinking water disinfectant added for treatment
Constituents with Secondary Standards	Unit	SMCL	PHG	Range	Average	Major Sources of Contaminant
Chloride	ppm	500	N/A	<3 - 11	6.7	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits
Specific Conductance	µS/cm	1600	N/A	34 - 217	135	Substances that form ions when in water
Sulfate	ppm	500	N/A	1.1 - 34	13	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits
Total Dissolved Solids	ppm	1000	N/A	<20 - 96	52	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits
Turbidity	NTU	5	N/A	ND - 0.2	ND	Soil runoff
Lead and Copper	Unit	AL	PHG	Range	90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Copper	ppb	1300	300	2 - 248 <sup>(11)</sup>	112	Internal corrosion of household water plumbing systems
Lead	ppb	15	0.2	>1 - 2.8 <sup>(12)</sup>	<1	Internal corrosion of household water plumbing systems

Other Water Quality Parameters	Unit	ORL	Range	Average	Key:			
Alkalinity (as CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	ppm	N/A	4.5 - 79	37	< / ≤	less than / less than or equal to	NoP	Number of Coliform - Positive Sample
Boron	ppb	1000 (NL)	ND - 123	ND	AL	Action Level	NTU	Nephelometric Turbidity Unit
Calcium (as Ca)	ppm	N/A	3 - 17	9.5	Max	Maximum	ORL	Other Regulatory Level
Chlorate <sup>(12)</sup>	ppb	800 (NL)	28 - 420	162	Min	Minimum	ppb	part per billion
Hardness (as CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	ppm	N/A	7.7 - 60	34	N/A	Not Available	ppm	part per million
Magnesium	ppm	N/A	<0.2 - 5.5	2.9	ND	Non-Detect	µS/cm	microSiemens/centimeter
pH	-	N/A	8.6 - 9.7	9.2	NL	Notification Level		
Potassium	ppm	N/A	0.3 - 0.3	<0.3				
Silica	ppm	N/A	3 - 5.9	4.8				
Sodium	ppm	N/A	3.1 - 17	12				
Strontium	ppb	N/A	14 - 181	83				

*Cryptosporidium* is a parasitic microbe found in most surface water. The SFRWS regularly tests for this waterborne pathogen and found it at very low levels in source water and treated water in 2021. However, current test methods approved by the USEPA do not distinguish between dead organisms and those capable of causing disease. Ingestion of *Cryptosporidium* may produce symptoms of nausea, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches. *Cryptosporidium* must be ingested to cause disease, and it may be spread through means other than drinking water.

Footnotes

- (1) All results met State and Federal drinking water health standards.

(2) These are monthly average turbidity values measured every 4 hours daily.

(3) There is no turbidity MCL for filtered water. The limits are based on the TT requirements for filtration systems.

(4) This is the highest locational running annual average value.

(5) Total organic carbon is a precursor for disinfection byproduct formation. The TT requirement applies to the filtered water from the SVWTP only.

(6) The SWRCB recommended an optimal fluoride level of 0.7 ppm be maintained in the treated water. In 2020, the range and average of the fluoride levels were 0.6 ppm - 0.9 ppm and 0.7 ppm, respectively.
- (7) Natural fluoride in the Hetch Hetchy source was ND. Elevated fluoride levels in raw water for the SVWTP and HTWTP were attributed to the transfer of fluoridated Hetch Hetchy water into the local reservoirs.

(8) This is the highest running annual average value.

(9) The most recent Lead and Copper Rule monitoring was in 2019. 0 of 37 site samples collected at consumer taps had copper concentrations above the AL.

(10) The most recent Lead and Copper Rule monitoring was in 2019. 0 of 37 site samples collected at consumer taps had lead concentrations above the AL.

(11) The detected chlorate in the treated water is a degradation product of sodium hypochlorite used by the SFRWS for water disinfection.

Note: Additional water quality data including UCMR4 may be obtained by calling the San Francisco International Airport phone number at (650) 821-7874.