



# 2024 OREGON CITY Water QUALITY REPORT



## welcome...

We are pleased to provide you with Oregon City's 2024 Water Quality Report. Our drinking water continues to meet or surpass all state and federal standards and regulations.

### Committed to:

- **Protecting public health –**  
Providing clean, safe drinking water that complies with all state and federal regulations.
- **Protecting public safety –**  
Ensuring reliable, plentiful water for fire suppression.
- **Protecting the environment –**  
Providing a safe and reliable stormwater system and implementing watershed protection and restoration actions that consistently promote surface water quality and stream health.

[www.orcity.org/1514/Water-Quality-Report](http://www.orcity.org/1514/Water-Quality-Report)

For questions about this report or if you have a water quality concern please contact Mallory Ott:  
971-204-4674 or [mott@orcity.org](mailto:mott@orcity.org)

Oregon City provides high-quality drinking water to approximately 35,000 people. Our distribution system consists of 5 water storage reservoirs, 5 pumping stations, and 167 miles of water pipes ranging from 2 inches to 24 inches in diameter. Our staff are responsible for maintaining over 1,500 fire hydrants and over 5,000 water valves. In addition to maintaining the current distribution system, water department staff assist with capital improvement projects to improve water quality and service, as well as adding system capacity to accommodate our growing population.

## JOIN US!

You are encouraged to participate in City decisions that may affect water quality. City Commission meetings are held at Libke Public Safety Facility, 1234 Linn Ave, the first and third Wednesday of each month, starting at 7:00 pm. Find meeting agenda information or watch archived videos of public meetings at <https://www.orcity.org/1709/Agendas-Videos-and-Minutes>

**Household water leaks  
waste more than one  
trillion gallons of water  
nationwide each year**



Promptly finding and fixing leaks helps prevent water damage, conserve water, and save you money! Learn what to look for and how to use your water meter to detect leaks with this how-to video (video at bottom of webpage):

<https://bit.ly/h2o-leaks>

# Our Water Treatment Process

Oregon City's drinking water comes from the Clackamas River. Water from the Clackamas River is made safe to drink by conventional treatment at the South Fork Water Board (SFWB) Treatment Plant, located in the Park Place area of Oregon City. Oregon City purchases treated drinking water from SFWB and distributes it to Oregon City Water customers. The basic steps to the treatment process are:

- **Coagulation** – adding chemicals (alumn & polymers) to help very small suspended particles attract one another and form larger particles.
- **Flocculation** – gently stirring the water to bring the suspended particles together so they will form larger clumps called floc.
- **Sedimentation** – the velocity of the water is reduced allowing gravity to settle out the floc.



- **Filtration** – any remaining particles not settled out earlier are removed as water flows through filters made up of sand and anthracite coal.
- **Corrosion Control** – adding soda ash in order to increase the pH of the water, making it less likely to deteriorate piping material and plumbing fixtures.

- **Disinfection** – adding sodium hypochlorite (a liquid form of chlorine that is similar to household bleach) to kill any disease-causing organisms in the water. It is important to have a small amount of chlorine remain in the water as it travels throughout the distribution system.



SFWB, and by extension, Oregon City, is a member of the Regional Water Providers Consortium. The Consortium provides leadership in the planning, management, stewardship, and resiliency of drinking water in the greater Portland, OR metropolitan region. Learn more at: [regionalH2O.org](https://www.regionalh2o.org).

Check out our how-to videos and other resources that show how to store, access, and treat drinking water in an emergency at [regionalH2O.org/emergency-preparedness](https://www.regionalh2o.org/emergency-preparedness).

To learn more about SFWB visit their website at: [www.sfwb.org](https://www.sfwb.org).



## Protecting Our Drinking Water Source

The Clackamas River supplies high-quality drinking water to over 300,000 people, including those in Oregon City.

The Clackamas River watershed begins on the slopes of Olallie Butte near Mount Hood and flows nearly 83 miles from its headwaters (elevation 6,000 feet) to its confluence with the Willamette River near Clackamette Park (elevation 12 feet); it encompasses 940 square miles.



Unlike the City of Portland's Bull Run watershed, the Clackamas River watershed is completely unprotected.

The watershed crosses two counties and is occupied by a wide range of land uses. It is 72% publicly owned, 25% privately owned, and 3% tribally owned.

In 2019, an updated Source Water Assessment was completed, which identified over 3,000 potential sources of pollution for the lower Clackamas River intakes. Many of these potential sources of pollution pose a moderate to high risk to the drinking water. To learn about contamination risks to our drinking water source go to the updated Source Water Assessment Report (May 2019) at:

<https://www.orcity.org/DocumentCenter/View/5823/Updated-Source-Water-Assessment---2019-PDF>

In 2021, the Clackamas River Water Providers (CRWP) updated their Drinking Water Protection Plan for the Clackamas River. The purpose of this plan is to provide a road map of potential strategies and programs to implement over the next decade, and beyond, to preserve the Clackamas River as a high-quality drinking water source. You can read the plan and learn more about the CRWP by going to:

<https://www.clackamasproviders.org/drinking-water-protection-plan/>.



# Common 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, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- **Inorganic contaminants**, such as salts and metals, which 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, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, 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 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

## Important MESSAGE FROM The EPA

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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at **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. EPA/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 at **1.800.426.4791**.

## Monitoring for Contaminants

Our most recent test results can be seen in the data table on Page 4 of this report. This table includes data collected by Oregon City and South Fork Water Board in 2023. We are required to report only those substances that were present at detectable levels. Additionally, we are only required to monitor lead & copper every three years; therefore, the lead and copper data is from 2021. The next round of lead & copper sampling is scheduled for 2024.

You may view all monitoring results and compliance records by visiting the Oregon Health Authority Data Online website at <https://yourwater.oregon.gov/>.

Search by water system name or ID number:

**Oregon City** – OR4101511

**South Fork Water Board** – OR4100591



# 2023 Monitoring Data

Substance/Contaminant (Unit of Measure)	MCL (MRDL)	MCLG (MRDLG)	Oregon City Measurement or Average (Range)	Major Sources in Drinking Water	Violation?
DISINFECTANT RESIDUAL, DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS, AND BY-PRODUCT PRECURSORS					
Chlorine (ppm)	(4)	(4)	0.91 (0.05 - 1.43)	Water additive used to control microbes	No
Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	60	N/A	39 <sup>1</sup> (18.3 - 52.0)	By-product of disinfection when chlorine combines with organic matter	No
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	80	N/A	55 <sup>1</sup> (26.6 - 76.0)		
Total Organic Carbon Raw Water (ppm)	TT	-	1.26 (ND - 2.06)	Naturally present in the environment	No
Total Organic Carbon Finish Water (ppm)	TT	-	0.67 (ND - 0.89)	Total Organic Carbon has no health effects; however, it provides a medium for the formation of disinfection by-products	No
Turbidity (NTU)	Less than or equal to 0.3 in 95% of samples		0.08 (Highest) 100% of samples met Turbidity standards	Soil runoff - Turbidity is a measure of cloudiness caused by suspended particles in the water. Turbidity is monitored every 4 hours during treatment plant operation.	No
MICROBIOLOGICAL CONTAMINANTS					
Total Coliform Bacteria (presence/absence)	***	0	0	Naturally present in the environment	No
E. coli (presence/absence)	***	0	0	Human and animal fecal waste	No
METALS & INORGANIC CONTAMINANTS					
Barium (ppm)	2	2	0.00376	Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from drilling waste/metal refineries	No
Nitrate (ppm)	10	10	0.285	Run-off from fertilizer use; Septic leaching; Sew- age; Erosion of natural deposits	No
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	ND	Erosion; Discharge fertilizer/aluminum factories	No
Lead (ppb) (Tier 1 homes)	AL = 15	0	90th% = ND	Corrosion of Household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits	No
Copper (ppm) (Tier 1 homes)	AL = 1.3	1.3	90th% = ND	Lead and Copper samples are collected every 3 years - These most recent results are from 2021. Next sampling is in 2024.	No
SECONDARY STANDARDS					
Chloride (ppm)	250	-	6.2	Secondary standards are non-enforceable guidelines regarding contaminants that may cause cosmetic and/or aesthetic effects such as taste, odor, or color. EPA recommends secondary standards, but does not require water systems to comply.	-
Sulfate (ppm)	250	-	6.0		
Hardness (ppm) <sup>2</sup>	250	-	32.0		
Total Dissolved Solids (ppm)	500	-	43.0		
UNREGULATED CONTAMINANTS					
Sodium (ppm)	-	-	8.8	Erosion of natural deposits	-
Alkalinity (ppm)	-	-	28.2 (20.2 - 38)	Alkalinity is a measure of water's ability to neutralize acids. There are no health concerns with alkalinity.	-

<sup>1</sup> **Highest Locational Running Annual Average** is the highest calculated annual average at a single location. Oregon City samples for disinfection by-products quarterly, at 4 locations.

**\*\*\* Total coliform/E. coli** - No more than 5% total coliform positive in a month. Every total coliform positive sample must be analyzed for E. coli. If any routine or repeat samples are E. coli positive, the system has an acute MCL violation.

<sup>2</sup> **Hardness.** 10-50 ppm is considered soft water.

**DEFINITIONS** on next page

# Cross Connection/ Backflow Prevention Program

Oregon City water customers play a big role in helping to keep our drinking water safe by complying with the Cross Connection/Backflow Prevention Program. Most modern water-using fixtures and appliances such as sinks, toilets, and clothes washers have built-in backflow prevention features. However,

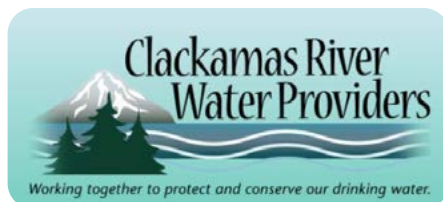


sometimes installation of a separate backflow prevention assembly is required to comply with plumbing code and to protect against a potential backflow incident. If your home has a landscape irrigation system, fire sprinkler system, or boiler you will most likely have a backflow assembly. Backflow assemblies must be tested annually to ensure they are working properly and providing adequate protection for your drinking water. Over time, the internal parts can wear out or get clogged with dirt and debris causing the assembly to fail. A failing backflow assembly will not protect your drinking

water properly and could put you and your family at risk. Find a list of state-certified backflow assembly testers, and much more information at:

<https://www.orcity.org/1494/Cross-Connection-Control>

## Water Conservation Rebates



Here in the rainy Pacific Northwest, it is sometimes difficult to understand why we need to conserve water. As our community has grown, our water needs have also grown. Did you know Oregon City's water use nearly triples in the summer months! Oregon City's drinking water comes from the Clackamas River and the increased demand for water along with lower river levels in summer means finding ways to conserve water is crucial. By using less water, we can leave more water in the river for aquatic life and recreation.

Oregon City offers a variety of water conservation rebates through our partner Clackamas River Water Providers. Currently there are eight different water conservation rebates available. These rebates are available each fiscal year (July 1st – June 30th) on a first-come, first-served basis until annual funds are depleted. Current rebate opportunities include washing machines, toilets, leak detectors, hose bib timers, weather-based irrigation controllers, and more. For a list of rebate eligible items please visit: <https://www.clackamasproviders.org/conservation-rebates/>



## Definitions

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

**MCL:** *Maximum Contaminant Level.* The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

**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 allow for a margin of safety.

**MRDL:** *Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level.* 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.* 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.

**N/A:** *Not Applicable.*

**N/D:** *Not Detected.* The results were below the laboratory reporting limit.

**NTU:** *Nephelometric Turbidity Unit.* A measurement of the water turbidity. Turbidity greater than 5 NTU is noticeable to the average person.

**ppb:** *Parts per billion.* A measure of the concentration of a substance in a given volume of water. One part per billion corresponds to one penny in \$10,000,000.

**ppm:** *Parts per million.* A measure of the concentration of a substance in a given volume of water. One part per million corresponds to one penny in \$10,000.

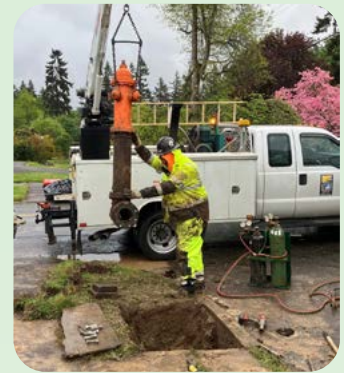
**TT:** *Treatment Technique.* A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**90th Percentile:** The highest result found in 90% of the samples when listed in order from the lowest to the highest results.

# 2023 System Improvement Projects

Like most cities across the nation, Oregon City has aging infrastructure. In order to continue providing reliable, high quality water to our customers, a percentage of water system revenue is used to fund capital improvement projects. These investments allow us to:

- **Replace old cast iron pipe** with ductile iron pipe. Cast iron pipe tends to corrode over time. This corrosion builds up on the inside of the pipe, reducing the effective diameter and capacity of the pipe. The corrosion also contributes to discolored water that, while being safe to drink, is aesthetically unpleasing.
- **Ensure reliability** by replacing older, smaller diameter piping with larger diameter piping to improve fire flow and help meet the increasing demand of our growing population.
- **Loop sections of pipeline whenever possible.** Eliminating dead-end lines improves water circulation so water quality and fire flow are enhanced.



Replacement of aging components in the drinking water distribution system is necessary to maintain good water quality and system reliability.

New Water Lines Installed In 2023						
Project Name	Pipe Diameter	Ductile Iron Pipe (Length in Feet)				
		4"	8"	12"	18"	24"
Clackamas County Courthouse			258	1180		
Randall St			650			
Henrici Reservoir Project				150	22	10
Holmes Ln Condos			670			
Maplelane North Apartments			28	1240		
Maplelane South Apartments			867	573		
Latourette St		275	517			
Main St			495	1320		
Totals		275	3485	4463	22	10

Amount of New Pipe (in Feet) = 8,255

## Frequently Asked Questions About Drinking Water

### I can taste and smell chlorine in the water. Why?

Oregon City is required to keep a small amount of chlorine in the water to provide proper disinfection of the drinking water supply. We try to keep the chlorine level as low as possible to prevent unpleasant taste & odor issues; however, some people are more sensitive to the taste and smell of this chlorine than others. The chlorine residual varies throughout the distribution system, but is generally around 1 part per million (ppm). This is well below the maximum level of 4 ppm set by EPA.

### Does Oregon City add fluoride to the drinking water?

No, Oregon City does not add fluoride to the drinking water. You may want to check with your dentist to see if supplemental fluoride is recommended for your family.

### Sometimes the water coming out of the faucet looks dirty. Why?

These events are typically caused by the buildings internal plumbing. If your home or business has galvanized pipes, they can give water a reddish-brown or yellow appearance. It is most noticeable if the water has been sitting in the pipes for an extended period of time, such as overnight or when returning home in the evening. Iron is the cause of this discoloration. Discolored water rarely causes health problems. Turning on all your cold water faucets and letting them run for a few minutes usually clears the discoloration. Occasionally water system maintenance or firefighting activities can result in customers receiving discolored water. Again, flushing the plumbing in your home is the best way to get the water to clear up.



# LEAD & Drinking Water

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. South Fork Water Board and Oregon City are 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: [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

The main source of lead in drinking water is typically from household plumbing. This is usually lead solder that was used in homes built or plumbed with copper pipes before 1985. Lead was banned for use in household plumbing in 1985. Lead can also be found in brass plumbing fixtures and components. Oregon City has no known lead service lines in the distribution system. The water treatment plant increases the pH of the water, making it less likely to deteriorate piping materials and plumbing fixtures. Oregon City is in compliance with all state and federal standards for both lead and copper.



## Reduce YOUR EXPOSURE to Lead

- **Run the cold water faucet to flush out lead.** If water has not been used for several hours, run the cold water for 30 seconds to 2 minutes, or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature, before using it for drinking or cooking.
- **Use only cold water for cooking, drinking, and preparing baby formula.** Do not use hot water from the tap to cook, drink, or make baby formula. Lead dissolves more easily into hot water.
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead levels.
- **Consider using a filter.** Confirm the filter is approved to reduce lead. Always maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality. Contact NSF International at **1.800.673.8010** or [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) for information on performance standards for water filters.
- **Consider buying low-lead fixtures.** As of January 4, 2014 all pipes, fittings, and fixtures are required to contain less than 0.25% lead. When buying new fixtures, consumers should seek out those with the lowest lead content. Visit [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) to learn more about lead content in plumbing fixtures.
- **Regularly clean your faucet aerator.** Particles containing lead from solder or household plumbing can become trapped in your faucet aerator. Regular cleaning every few months will remove these particles and reduce your exposure to lead.

For more information visit <http://www.drinktap.org/water-info/whats-in-my-water/lead-in-water.aspx>.

## Lead Service Line Inventory

In December 2021, the EPA published the revised Lead and Copper Rule including a requirement for water suppliers to create an inventory of all service line pipe materials in the City's service area, including the private lines between the water meter and building. This inventory is due October 2024. The City of Oregon City has over 13,000 water services in our distribution system. To help save time and resources, the City is asking the community to help comply with the new rule by identifying and reporting their service line material where it enters their home. Together we can comply with the new rule and provide an accurate service line inventory. Learn how to check your home's pipe material and fill out the online form here: <https://www.oregoncity.org/publicworks/lead-drinking-water>



# Stormwater MANAGEMENT

Oregon City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit issued by Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) lists numerous programs and tasks required of the city as we work to prevent stormwater pollution and improve stream and river health.

Learn more about our ongoing stormwater programs and read our annual reports, submitted to DEQ each year, by going here: [www.oregoncity.org/1166/National-Pollutant-Discharge-Elimination](http://www.oregoncity.org/1166/National-Pollutant-Discharge-Elimination)



## 2024 OREGON CITY Water QUALITY REPORT

## Resources

City of Oregon City: [www.oregoncity.org](http://www.oregoncity.org)  
City Hall (625 Center Street): **503.657.0891**  
Public Works Operations (13895 Fir St.): **971.204.4600**  
Questions about your utility bill: **503.657.8151**  
To report a water leak: **971.204.4600**  
OC Request!: <https://www.oregoncity.org/community/my-oregon-city-my-oc-faq-and-requests>  
South Fork Water Board: [www.sfwb.org](http://www.sfwb.org)  
Clackamas River Water Providers: **503.723.3511**, [www.clackamasproviders.org](http://www.clackamasproviders.org)  
Oregon Health Authority, Drinking Water Program: <http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/Pages/index.aspx>  
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality: [www.oregon.gov/DEQ](http://www.oregon.gov/DEQ)  
Environmental Protection Agency: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)  
EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline: **1.800.426.4791**  
Greater Oregon City Watershed Council: **503.427.0439**, [www.gocwc.org/](http://www.gocwc.org/)  
Clackamas River Basin Council: **503.303.4372**, [www.clackamasriver.org](http://www.clackamasriver.org)  
Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District: [www.conservationsdistrict.org](http://www.conservationsdistrict.org)  
Metro: [www.oregonmetro.gov](http://www.oregonmetro.gov)  
OSU Extension Service: [www.extension.oregonstate.edu](http://www.extension.oregonstate.edu)  
Regional Water Providers Consortium: [www.regionalh2o.org](http://www.regionalh2o.org)  
**Drinking water questions or concerns:** Kevin Hanks - **971.204.4662**, [khanks@oregoncity.org](mailto:khanks@oregoncity.org)  
**Stormwater questions or concerns:** Eric Hand - **971.204.4661**, [ehand@oregoncity.org](mailto:ehand@oregoncity.org)

Este informe contiene información importante acerca de su agua potable. Haga que alguien lo traduzca para usted, o hable con alguien que lo entienda.

В этом сообщении содержится важная информация о воде, которую вы пьёте. Попросите кого-нибудь перевести для вас это сообщение или поговорите с человеком, который понимает его содержание.

<http://theriverstartshere.org>

