Your Cobb County Water System ... did you know?

Safe drinking water and wastewater collection and treatment services are provided to nearly 600,000 people. Operations are supported through revenues from the sale of services - not from tax dollars. Triple AAA rated!

Annually more than 6000 miles of major lines are tapped during peak demand times. These sources are located entirely in Georgia. The Cobb County Water System is committed to its important role of protecting the environment through its Adopt-A-Stream, Backflow Prevention, Grease & Oil Recovery and Stormwater Management programs. Additionally, we support our community through emphasis on water conservation and providing our free Xeriscape Consultations offering waterSmart landscape guidance.

Why does my water come from?

Water comes from one of three sources. Most of the water is drawn from the Chattahoochee River and Lake Allatoona. The Cobb County Water System is committed to delivering to you, our customer, water that meets or exceeds federal and state quality standards. This 2001 Water Quality Report shows we are doing that.

How is my water treated?

The process begins by pumping untreated water from the river or lake into sedimentation basins where large particles are removed and the water is disinfected. The water is directed to a process called "fouling" which is a gentle mixing of the water with a coagulant. This allows particles, called "floc," to form and settle, clarifying the water. Next the water is put through a filtration system where water flows through sand filters trapping even smaller particles. After filtration, chemicals are added for final disinfection. Except for chlorine and fluoride, every chemical used in the treatment process is removed before the finished water is distributed to you.

Who are there contaminants?

The sources of drinking water (both tap 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 human activity. There are contaminants that may be present in raw (untreated) water including microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.

Concerning Lead in our water

Infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead poisoning.Regarding lead testing of your water for a nominal fee. Contact the Cobb Extension Office at (770) 528-4070 for information available from the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.
inorganic compounds such as salts and metals which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban storm runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming, pesticides and herbicides which may come from sources such as agriculture; storm water runoff and residential uses; organic chemical contaminants including synthetic and volatile organics, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, or waste from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems; and radioactive contaminants which are coming from gas and oil production and mining activities.

When there are contaminants, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set treatment methods to reduce them to levels that protect human health. CCMAW’s laboratory continuously monitors water quality to be sure it is properly treated to EPA standards. In addition, over 200 water samples throughout the Cobb County distribution system are taken randomly each month and tested.

Tap water is regulated by the EPA, which sets limits for the compounds that can be present in drinking water. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 (800) 426-4791.

How to read this report

The table shows the results of the Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority’s laboratory analysis of your water during the period of January through December 2001. The table lists the name of each substance tested, the maximum level allowed in drinking water (MCL), the ideal goals for public health (MCLG), the amounts detected, and the range of these levels detected. Also noted are the usual sources of such contamination and an explanation of our findings.

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division has determined that the concentration of certain water quality monitoring parameters does not change frequently within our system, therefore some of the data presented in this report are greater than one year old.

Definitions

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

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

**Maximum Contaminant Level Goal or MCLG:** 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.

**Not detected (ND):** Measurable amount units (measures the cloudiness of water). ppm parts per million (or microgram per liter which corresponds to one penny in $10,000).

**ppb parts per billion (microgram per liter) which corresponds to one penny in $10,000,000.**

**range highest to the lowest level detected.**

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

**Violations:**

- Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth.
- Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
- Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits.

Notice to People with Health Concerns

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised 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 EPA’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 (800) 426-4791.

What exactly are Cryptosporidium and Giardia?

*Cryptosporidium* ([krip′.to.spor.id´.ê.um]) and *Giardia* ([gê.är´dê.e,jär´]) are microscopic parasites found in surface waters (rivers, lakes, streams or ponds) especially when these waters contain a high amount of sewage or animal waste. If ingested through food or drink, they can cause symptoms including diarrhea, nausea or stomach cramps. As other conditions can cause these same symptoms, a special laboratory test is needed to confirm the presence of Cryptosporidium and Giardia in drinking water.

*Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia* have never been found in our treated drinking water.

During testing of raw (untreated) water at the intake area on Lake Allatoona in 1999 and 2000, no Cryptosporidium or *Giardia* were detected. However, during testing of raw (untreated) water at the intake area on the Chattahoochee River north of Johnson Ferry Road, *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia* were present in samples from several months during 1999.

The levels detected were not a violation and a cause of no health threat to the population. CCMAW’s treatment process removes this contamination, so there was no need for precaution with our drinking water.

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