

FULTON COUNTY Annual Water Quality Report

2009



Water Testing performed from January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2008



FULTON COUNTY

WSID GA 1210005



A Report to the Community

Fulton County Department of Public Works is proud to share the annual monitoring results for our drinking water system with our valued customers. This report, also known as the Water Quality Report or the Consumer Confidence Report, covers all testing completed from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008. We are especially happy to be able to report that the quality of our water is excellent, having met or exceeding the standards and requirements set by the EPA. Working with our customers, Fulton County implements programs and projects that strengthen our drinking water system.

Where Do We Get Our Water?

The source of our drinking water is the Chattahoochee River which is closely monitored by the State of Georgia, Fulton County and several environmental groups. This surface water supply is processed at the Atlanta-Fulton County Water Resources Commission treatment plant located in Alpharetta. The facility produces drinking water of the highest quality and has won numerous awards given by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and the Georgia Association of Water Professionals.



Working for Water Quality

Fulton County has over 250 water professionals that are committed to delivering you drinking water that is safe, pleasing and dependable. Providing water of this quality is no easy task and requires extensive monitoring. Last year the County collected over 1,800 samples and performed over 9,600 analyses on those samples. An undertaking of this measure requires a laboratory that is equal to the task. The North Fulton Drinking Water Laboratory is such a lab, one that is accredited by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation to an international quality standard and one that is a State certified drinking water laboratory.

Source Water Assessment Program

The Fulton County Department of Public Works received a source water assessment study and report for our source of drinking water (the Chattahoochee River) for the Atlanta-Fulton County Water Resources Commission Water Treatment Facility which supplies drinking water to the majority of north Fulton County. This assessment reviewed the adjacent land uses that may pose a potential risk to the Chattahoochee River, which included, but are not limited to, gas stations, landfills, junk yards, agricultural fields, waste water treatment plants, and mining activities. The assessment has ranked the Chattahoochee River watershed to have a medium risk of potential pollutant loads. This information can help communities understand the potential for contamination of their drinking water supplies and can also be used to prioritize the need for protecting the Chattahoochee River. The complete report is available for review on our website at www.fultoncountyga.gov/county/dpw.

Partners in Conservation

As the metro Atlanta region continues to recover from an extended period of drought, water conservation becomes more important than ever. The success of water conservation requires a partnership between Fulton County and our water customers. Here is some information to help you conserve water enabling us to manage our resources more efficiently.

How can I keep my landscape healthy without using water?

- Place a generous layer of mulch such as tree bark or wood chips around root bases of trees and in and around flower beds to help the soil retain moisture.
- Raise the mower blade during dry weather. Cutting the grass higher encourages deep rooting, increases turf survival during drought and reduces water demand.
- Design turf areas in practical shapes that can be easily maintained.

What is a rain barrel and where can I get one?

- A rain barrel is a rainwater harvesting system that is connected to a downspout from a house or building. By collecting rainwater you will be able to water your landscape whenever you need, regardless of current water restrictions. For more information on rain barrel workshops please call 404-612-8745.

I see someone violating water use restrictions.

Who should I call?

- Please call (770) 640-3040 or
- (404) 612-TELL (8355)

Where do I find current water restriction information?

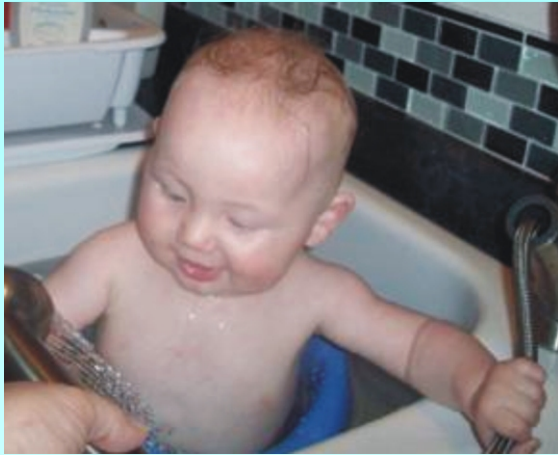
Please visit our home page at

- www.fultoncountyga.gov and look under County Alerts
- or call (404) 612-7400

Do I qualify for the Toilet Rebate Program?

To find out if your home qualifies for Fulton County's Toilet Rebate Program or questions about the program

- call (404) 463-8645
- or e-mail at toiletrebate@northgeorgiawater.org
- or www.fultoncountyga.gov/county/dpw



Total Coliform, Don't Be Bugged

Coliforms are a broad class of bacteria that live in the digestive tracts of humans and many animals. So, why are coliform and E. Coli such a big deal? Well, when coliform bacteria are present in drinking water, it suggests that there may be a problem with the water.

Some forms of coliform are harmless and some like E. coli (Escherichia Coli) can cause health problems which include diarrhea, cramps, nausea and vomiting. These symptoms together comprise a category called gastroenteritis. Normally it is not serious, but for people with weakened immune systems, the very young, or elderly citizens, it can lead to serious problems. That's why coliforms, especially E. coli that is a member of the coliform family, are a big deal.

So how did we do? Fulton County is proud to report that no positives were detected for total coliform or E. Coli in the distribution system for 2008. So, don't be bugged. Fulton County Government is on the job, governing, serving and protecting its citizens.

(Portions of information in this article were taken from an article on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Website [www.epa.gov]: Total Coliform Rule Basic Information)

What's in our water?

Included in this report are tables depicting contaminants that have been detected in our water. They are, in all cases, below the levels prescribed by the EPA but, nevertheless, are present. They pose no known health risk at these levels. We have listed a few definitions to help you understand the information in the tables.

90th Percentile: Calculation that determines compliance with the regulation for copper and lead. If this number is less than the action level then the system is compliant.

Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow. Exemptions: A State or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): 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.

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 allow for a margin of safety.

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 microbiological 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.

NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Unit): The unit used to express a measurement of turbidity. Parts per billion (ppb): One part per billion is the same as one penny in 10 million dollars. Parts per million (ppm): One part per million is the same as one penny in 10 thousand dollars.

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

Turbidity: Measurement of the cloudiness of the water. It is a good indicator of water quality and effectiveness of disinfectants.

Lead in 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. AFCWRC 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>.



Important Health Information

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immune-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/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 (800-426-4791)**.

Contaminants in Drinking Water

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 Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

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:

- 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, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water run-off, 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 storm water run-off, 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 storm water run-off, 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, EPA prescribes regulations that 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.

EPA Regulated Substances or Contaminants Monitored in the Water Plant

Substance (units)	Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)	Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)	Highest Level Detected	Range Detected (lowest to highest)	Does Water Meet EPA Standards?	Typical Source
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.88	0.85 - 0.88	YES	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth
Nitrate (ppm) (measured as Nitrate-Nitrite)	10	10	0.32	N/A	YES	Run-off from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Substance (units)	EPA Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	Treatment Technique (TT)	Amount Detected	Range Detected (lowest to highest amount)	Does Water Meet EPA Standards?	Typical Source
Total Organic Carbon [TOC] (ratio)	TT	TT ≥ 1	1.01	1.00 - 1.09	YES	Naturally present in the environment
Turbidity (NTU)	TT	TT = 1 NTU	0.04	N/A	YES	Soil runoff
	N/A	TT = % samples less than 0.3 NTU	(Lowest monthly percentage) 100%	N/A	YES	Soil runoff

EPA Regulated Substances or Contaminants Monitored in the Distribution System

Substance (units)	Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL)	Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MCLG)	Highest Amount Detected	Range Detected (lowest to highest)	Does Water Meet EPA Standards?	Typical Source
Chlorine (ppm)	4	4	1.70	0.00 - 1.70	YES	Water additive used to control microbes
Substance (units)	Action Level (AL) or MCL (90% of the samples collected must be at or below the AL)	Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)	90th percentile (90% of samples taken were below this amount)	# of samples above action level (AL) (No more than 5 samples above AL allowed)	Does Water Meet EPA Standards?	Typical Source
*Copper (ppm) (collected in September 2006)	1.3	1.3	0.73	0 out of 50 samples taken	YES	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
*Lead (ppb) (collected in September 2006)	15	0	6.7	2 out of 50 samples taken	YES	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Substance (units)	Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)	Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)	Highest Average Reported	Range Detected (lowest to highest)	Does Water Meet EPA Standards?	Typical Source
Haloacetic Acid HAA5 (ppb)	60	N/A	27	12 - 58	YES	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Trihalomethane TTHM (ppb)	80	N/A	38	18 - 120	YES	By-product of drinking water chlorination

Note:

Waivers (exemptions) were extended to Fulton County by the State of Georgia from 2007 through 2010 for the following contaminants: Arsenic, Asbestos, Cyanide, and Synthetic Organic Compounds. Synthetic Organic Compounds (SOC's) are man-made products such as: pesticides, gasoline components, PCB, phenols and di...

*Due to the low levels of Copper and Lead detected in previous years, the State requires the County to perform testing once every three years. Sampling will occur in...

Additional copies of this report are available at your public library.



October is "Rivers Alive" Month

That means this is your opportunity to join your friends and neighbors in the fun of helping remove trash and debris from a stream to protect our precious water resources!

Stream clean-ups are an excellent opportunity to bring your community together to make a difference in water quality in your neighborhood. Volunteers of all ages enjoy splashing through the creek while discovering some of the strange trash that ends up there, either from illegal dumping or run-off after a rain.

Why should you get involved? Our waterways provide us with fresh drinking water, great recreational opportunities like canoeing and fishing, and they serve as a pleasant respite from our busy day to day lives. Everyone contributes to pollution in our streams. This is your opportunity to help by giving something back to the environment! Planning for your October event should start soon! For more information contact Sharon Smith at:

sharon.smith@fultoncountyga.gov or
404-612-8006.

Help Wanted!

Copper and Lead in drinking water can affect the health of our children. Want to do something to protect them? Apply to participate in the Fulton County Copper-Lead testing program. The process is easy and free.

**Call 404-612-9429 or 9424 for details.
We are counting on you!**



You're Invited

Fulton County Public Works believes that informed customers are our best allies, and we are dedicated to giving you the information you need to make knowledgeable decisions. You can participate through public meetings, programs, and volunteer opportunities. Notice of upcoming meetings and events is posted at the Government Center and posted on our web site at www.fultoncountyga.gov.

Need More Information?

Water quality and safety are increasingly complex and the information in this brief summary may not answer all of your questions. For additional information, questions, or concerns please contact Corlette Banks at (404) 612-8097 during normal business hours. An online version of this report is available at

www.fultoncountyga.gov.

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Important information about your drinking water.

Este informe contiene informacion muy importante sobre la calidad de su agua beber. Traduscalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.