

Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for 2016
Winebrook Hills Water District
PO Box 405, Newcomb NY 12852
(Public Water Supply ID# 1500305)

INTRODUCTION

To comply with State and Federal regulations, the Winebrook Hills Water District will be annually issuing a report describing the quality of your drinking water. The purpose of this report is to raise your understanding of drinking water and awareness of the need to protect our drinking water sources. Last year, we conducted tests for over 80 contaminants. We detected some of those contaminants, and we found Total Trihalomethanes and Haloacetic Acids at a level higher than the State allows. Over the past year, we have sent out public notifications of these water quality violations. We are currently working to eliminate these violations and improve water quality by drilling wells that will replace the Hudson River as a source of water for the Village. We anticipate that the new water system will be operational by the end of 2017.

This report provides an overview of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to State standards. If you have any questions about this report or concerning your drinking water, please contact Wester Miga, Town Supervisor at 582-3211. We want you to be informed about your drinking water. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled town board meetings held at 7:00 pm on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

WHERE DOES OUR WATER COME FROM?

In general, 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 activities. Contaminants that may be present in source water include: microbial contaminants; inorganic contaminants; pesticides and herbicides; organic chemical contaminants; and radioactive contaminants. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the State and the EPA prescribe regulations, which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The State Health Department's and the FDA's regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health. Our water source is the Hudson River. The water is filtered by diatomaceous earth filters, disinfected with chlorine and treated with an orthophosphate for corrosion control prior to distribution. Our water system serves 250 people through 130 service connections.

The NYS Dept. of Health completed a source water assessment for this system based on available information. This assessment found no noteworthy risks to drinking water quality. While some potential contaminant sources were found, their density is low enough that impacts on water quality are unlikely. It should be noted that rivers in general are highly sensitive to microbial contaminants. The health department will use this information to direct future source water protection activities. These may include water quality monitoring, resource management, planning, and education programs. A copy of the assessment, including a map of the assessment area, can be obtained by contacting us as noted below.

ARE THERE CONTAMINANTS IN OUR DRINKING WATER?

As the State regulations require, we routinely test your drinking water for numerous contaminants. These contaminants include: total coliform, turbidity, inorganic compounds, nitrate, nitrite, lead and copper, volatile organic compounds, disinfection byproducts, radiological and synthetic organic compounds. The table presented below depicts which compounds were detected in your drinking water. The State allows us to test for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Some of our data, though representative, are more than one year old. It should be noted that all drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably 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 (800-426-4791) or the New York State Health Department at (518) 891-1800.

Table of Detected Contaminants							
Contaminant	Violation Yes/No	Date of Sample	Level Detected	Unit Measurement	MCLG	Regulatory Limit (MCL, TT or AL)	Likely Source of Contamination
Microbiological Contaminants							
Turbidity ¹	no	2/18/2016	0.74	NTU	n/a	5 (TT)	Soil runoff
Turbidity ¹	no	2016	100%	NTU	n/a	95% of samples <1.0(TT)	Soil runoff
Inorganic Contaminants							
Barium	no	2016	0	mg/l	2	2(MCL)	Erosion of natural deposits
Copper	no	2014	0.18 ² .048 – 0.253 ³	mg/l	1.3	1.3 (AL)	Corrosion of household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead	no	2014	0.002 ² ND – 0.002 ³	mg/l	0	.015 (AL)	Corrosion of household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits
Nitrate	no	2016	0.33	mg/l	10	10 (MCL)	Erosion of natural deposits
Radioactive Contaminants							
Radium 228	no	2008	0	pCi/L	0	5 (MCL)	Erosion of natural deposits
Gross Alpha	no	2008	0	pCi/L	0	15 (MCL)	Erosion of natural deposits.
Gross Beta	no	2008	0	pCi/L	0	50 (MCL)	Decay of natural deposits and man-made emissions.
Disinfection Byproducts – Stage 2							
Trihalomethanes (TTHMs)	yes	2016	194 ⁴ 152 - 235 ⁵	ug/l	n/a	80 (MCL)	By-product of drinking water chlorination needed to kill harmful organisms. TTHMs are formed when source water contains large amounts of organic matter.
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5s)	yes	2016	85 ⁴ 21 - 15 ⁵	ug/l	n/a	60 (MCL)	By-product of drinking water chlorination

Notes:

- ¹ Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We test it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system. Our highest single turbidity measurement for the year occurred on 2/18/16 (0.74 NTU). State regulations require that turbidity must always be below 5 NTU. The regulations require that 95% of the turbidity samples collected have measurements below 1.0 NTU. 100% of our turbidity measurements were within the acceptable range allowed and did not constitute a treatment technique violation.
- ² The level presented represents the 90th percentile of the 5 sites tested. The 90th percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of the lead and copper values detected at your water system. The 90th percentile is the average of the highest and second highest values of the 5 samples collected.
- ³ The level presented represents the range of the five samples collected. The action level was not exceeded at any site for lead or copper
- ⁴ The value represents the highest Locational Running Annual Average of the quarterly samples collected.
- ⁵ These values represent the range of samples collected.

Definitions:

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.

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 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 contamination.

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

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

Non-Detects (ND): Laboratory analysis indicates that the constituent is not present.

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU): A measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

Milligrams per liter (mg/l): Corresponds to one part of liquid in one million parts of liquid (parts per million - ppm).

Micrograms per liter (ug/l): Corresponds to one part of liquid in one billion parts of liquid (parts per billion - ppb).

WHAT DOES THIS INFORMATION MEAN?

Last year the Winebrook Hills WD received violations for exceeding the MCLs for Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) and Haloacetic Acids (HAA5). TTHM and HAA5 are disinfection byproducts. Compliance is based on a locational running annual average (LRAA). In other words, the sample result for the most recent calendar quarter is averaged with the three prior quarterly sample results for each sampling location. The LRAA is compared with the maximum contaminant level (MCL) allowed per regulations. A violation exists if the LRAA exceeds the MCL. The MCL for TTHM is 80 mcg/l (micrograms per liter). The MCL for HAA5 is 60 ug/l (micrograms per liter).

Total Trihalomethanes are a group of chemicals that are formed in drinking water during disinfection when chlorine reacts with naturally occurring organic material (e.g., decomposing vegetation such as tree leaves, algae or other aquatic plants) in surface water sources such as rivers and lakes. They are disinfection byproducts and include the individual chemicals chloroform, bromoform, bromodichloromethane, and chlorodibromomethane. The amount of trihalomethanes formed in drinking water during disinfection can change from day to day, depending on the temperature, the amount of organic material in the water, the amount of chlorine added, and a variety of other factors.

Disinfection of drinking water by chlorination is beneficial to public health. Drinking water is disinfected by public water suppliers to kill bacteria and viruses that could cause serious illnesses, and chlorine is the most commonly used disinfectant in New York State. All public water systems that use chlorine as a disinfectant contain trihalomethanes to some degree.

Some studies suggest that people who drank water containing trihalomethanes for long periods of time (e.g., 20 to 30 years) have an increased risk of certain health effects. These include an increased risk for cancer and for low birth weights, miscarriages and birth defects. The methods used by these studies could not rule out the role of other factors that could have resulted in the observed increased risks. In addition, other similar studies do not show an increased risk for these health effects. Therefore, the evidence from these studies is not strong enough to conclude that trihalomethanes were a major factor contributing to the observed increased risks for these health effects. Studies of laboratory animals show that some trihalomethanes can cause cancer and adverse reproductive and developmental effects, but at exposures much higher than exposures that could result through normal use of the water. The United States Environmental Protection Agency reviewed the information from the human and animal studies and concluded that while there is no causal link between disinfection byproducts (including trihalomethanes) and human health effects, the balance of the information warranted stronger regulations that limit the amount of trihalomethanes in drinking water, while still allowing for adequate disinfection. The risks for adverse health effects from trihalomethanes in drinking water are small compared to the risks for illness from drinking inadequately disinfected water.

Haloacetic Acids are formed in drinking water during treatment by chlorine (the most commonly used disinfectant in New York State), which reacts with certain acids that are in naturally-occurring organic material (e.g., decomposing vegetation such as tree leaves, algae, or other aquatic plants) in surface water sources such as rivers and lakes. The amount of HAAs in drinking water can change from day to day, depending on the temperature, the amount of organic material in the water, the amount of chlorine added, and a variety of other factors. Drinking water is disinfected by public water suppliers to kill bacteria and viruses that could cause serious illnesses. For this reason, disinfection of drinking water by chlorination is beneficial to public health.

Some studies suggest that people who drank chlorinated drinking water containing disinfection by-products (possibly including HAAs) for long periods of time (e.g., 20 to 30 years) have an increased risk for certain health effects. These include an increased risk for cancer. However, how long and how frequently people actually drank the water as well as how much HAAs the water contained is not known for certain. Therefore, the evidence from these studies is not strong enough to conclude that the observed increased risk for cancer is due to HAAs, other disinfection by-products, or some other factor. Studies of laboratory animals show that the individual HAAs, dichloroacetic acid and trichloroacetic acid, can cause cancer following exposure to high levels over their lifetimes. Dichloroacetic acid and trichloroacetic acid are also known to cause other effects in laboratory animals after high levels of exposure, primarily on the liver, kidney, and nervous system and on their ability to bear healthy offspring. The effects reported in studies of laboratory animals occur at exposures much higher than exposures that could result through normal use of the water. The risks for adverse health effects from HAAs in drinking water are small compared to the risk for illness from drinking inadequately disinfected water.

Lead concentrations in our water system are very low and all measured concentrations are well below the Action Levels set by the State. However, we are required to present the following information on 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. The Town of Newcomb is responsible for providing high quality drinking water to the Winebrook Hills Water District, 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>.

IS OUR WATER SYSTEM MEETING OTHER RULES THAT GOVERN OPERATIONS?

Last year our system was in compliance with all monitoring and reporting requirements.

DO I NEED TO TAKE SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS?

Some people may be more vulnerable to disease causing microorganisms or pathogens 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 from their health care provider about their drinking water. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium, Giardia and other microbial pathogens are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

WHY SAVE WATER AND HOW TO AVOID WASTING IT?

Although our system has an adequate amount of water to meet present and future demands, there are a number of reasons why it is important to conserve water: Saving water saves energy and some of the costs associated with both of these necessities of life;

- ◆ Saving water reduces the cost of energy required to pump water and the need to construct costly new wells, pumping systems and water towers; and
- ◆ Saving water lessens the strain on the water system during a dry spell or drought, helping to avoid severe water use restrictions so that essential firefighting needs are met.

You can play a role in conserving water by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using, and by looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It is not hard to conserve water. Conservation tips include:

- ◆ Automatic dishwashers use 15 gallons for every cycle, regardless of how many dishes are loaded. So get a run for your money and load it to capacity.
- ◆ Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.
- ◆ Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day. Fix it up and you can save almost 6,000 gallons per year.
- ◆ Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank, watch for a few minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons a day from one of these otherwise invisible toilet leaks. Fix it and you save more than 30,000 gallons a year.

CLOSING

We are working on a project to replace our filtration plant and surface water source with a groundwater system, this will resolve all of our water quality violations. Our project will be complete in 2017. Thank you for allowing us to continue to provide your family with quality drinking water this year. In order to maintain a safe and dependable water supply we sometimes need to make improvements that will benefit all of our customers. The costs of these improvements may be reflected in the rate structure. Rate adjustments may be necessary in order to address these improvements. We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community. Please call our office if you have questions.