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City of Vancouver
2020 Annual

**WATER
QUALITY
REPORT**

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VANCOUVER CITY COUNCIL: Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle

Bart Hansen • Ty Stober • Linda Glover

Laurie Lebowsky • Erik Paulsen • Sarah J. Fox

Vancouver City Manager Eric Holmes

Important Information for Non-English Speaking Customers/Requesting Other Formats

Please note: This report contains important information about your drinking water. Have someone translate it for you, or speak with someone who understands it. Call 360-487-8177 for help.

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.



To request other formats, contact:
Vancouver Public Works Operations
360-487-8177 | WA Relay: 711

Tài liệu này có tin tức quan trọng về nước uống của quý vị. Hãy nhờ người dịch cho quý vị, hoặc hỏi người nào hiểu tài liệu này.

Message to Customers: Improving Our Water Infrastructure

The City of Vancouver is pleased to present its annual Water Quality Report, with results of rigorous testing of our drinking water done by an independent lab that meets state and federal approvals. Test results conducted in 2020 show Vancouver's water meets all state and federal standards, and in many cases, is better than Safe Drinking Water regulations require.

All of Vancouver's drinking water comes from underground aquifers and is delivered through a closed, protected and monitored system. In keeping with federal and state requirements, our water is treated with a trace amount of chlorine – a safe level that meets health standards for municipal water systems – as an extra precaution to guard against any potential contaminants, including viruses.

Vancouver's Water Utility is the third largest municipal water provider in Washington State, covering a 72-square-mile service area with more than 1,000 miles of water pipe and 40 wells at nine water stations. In 2020, the Utility provided 9.5 billion gallons of water to our more than 250,000 customers. Rates paid by water customers support around-the-clock operations and maintenance, as well as ongoing improvements to infrastructure and to the security of our water system.

Ongoing replacement of aging water pipes as well as the installation of new transmission mains continues throughout the Utility's service area, improving efficiency and reliability. This includes neighborhood water main improvements, such as at Daniels Street in Carter Park Neighborhood, and major water main projects, such as Broadway Street, where existing lines that are more than 100 years old are being replaced from 13th Street to McLoughlin Boulevard.

One of the Utility's most significant projects in recent times is currently underway at Water Station 1, the 25-acre Utility property in the Central Park Neighborhood. This multi-phase project is increasing security, reliability and performance of the City's most vital water station, which supplies more than a quarter

of all of Vancouver's drinking water. The second phase of this project, anticipated to be completed in late 2021, will provide two new ground-level reservoirs, new elevated tank, and new security fencing. Multi-modal path modifications and added lighting have already been completed on the public-access portion of the Water Station 1 site at Fourth Plain Boulevard and Fort Vancouver Way.

Construction of a new Water Station 5 water transmission main, which will allow the Utility to better move water from the westside of Vancouver to its eastside to meet demands, began in 2020 and was completed in 2021.

Construction on a significant treatment system improvement project was also recently completed at Water Station 9, located in the Burnt Bridge Creek Neighborhood.

Federal regulations require Vancouver to make its annual drinking water report available to all customers. This year's report is being provided to you electronically. To announce the availability of the electronic report, inserts are being included in bills to all customers within our Water Utility service area. Please take time to read about your water.



Water Quality Summary for 2020

The City of Vancouver reaches beyond state and federal requirements and has its water analyzed for more than 238 different substances, some regulated and some not regulated. The substances listed below are regulated and were detected in Vancouver's water during 2020. All samples taken are from treated water delivered to the distribution system. Chemical analysis of organics is measured in parts per billion (ppb). Analysis of inorganics is measured in parts per million (ppm). Highest measured values represent an exception to the overall average concentrations in water delivered in the system. All results are below levels allowed by federal and state agencies.

Required Testing at Groundwater Sources

Contaminant (unit)	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	Highest Level Detected	Lowest Level Detected	Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Potential Sources of Contaminant
Fluoride (ppm)	4.0	0.92	0.42	4.0	Erosion of natural deposits; additive for strong teeth
Nitrate (ppm)	10	3.9	ND	10	Fertilizer, animal waste, septic systems, sewage

Radionuclides

Gross Alpha (pCi/L)*	15	ND	ND	0	Naturally occurring
Radium-228 (pCi/L)*	5	ND	ND	0	Naturally occurring

Required Testing Within the Distribution System

Contaminant (unit)	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	Highest Level Detected	Lowest Level Detected	Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Potential Sources of Contaminant
Total Coliform Bacteria	Less than 5% positive/mo	0.7%	0%	0%	Naturally present in environment, contamination by mammals
Chlorine (ppm)	4.0	1.30	0.78	1.0	Additive for disinfectant residual

Contaminant (unit)	Highest Running Annual Average Allowed	Running Annual Average	MCLG	Range of Level Detected	Regulation Met?	Potential Sources of Contaminant
Total Trihalomethane (ppb)	80	8.4	N/A	0.6-10	Yes	Byproduct of disinfection
Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	60	0.6	N/A	ND	Yes	Byproduct of disinfection

Secondary (Aesthetic) Standards and Other Characteristics

Please note: These are additional substances, tested at groundwater sources, that relate to aesthetic qualities and may be of interest to customers..

Contaminant (unit)	Secondary (MCL)	Highest Level Detected	Lowest Level Detected	Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Potential Sources of Contaminant
Copper (ppb)	1000	51	ND	N/A	Naturally occurring
pH	6.5-8.5	8.3	6.8	N/A	Naturally occurring or treatment adjustment

Additional Frequently Requested Information

The following results are not required by law, but are provided by the City of Vancouver Water Utility to keep you informed about your water.

Contaminant (unit)	Highest Level Detected	Lowest Level Detected
Alkalinity (ppm)	130	68
Calcium (ppm)	36	12
Hardness (ppm)	125	55
Magnesium (ppm)	9.8	5.9
Potassium (ppm)	3.9	1.8
Sodium* (ppm)	35**	6.8

*EPA guidance level for sodium in drinking water is 20 mg/L for those on diets with daily sodium restrictions.

**Elevated level is from one water station and a byproduct of pH adjustment for EPA-required corrosion control.

Terms and Definitions in This Report: **AL:** Action Level - Concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements a water system must follow. **EPA:** United States Environmental Protection Agency, which enforces the Safe Drinking Water Act. **WSDOH:** Washington Department of Health, which enforces the Safe Drinking Water Act within the State of Washington. **<:** Less than. **MCL:** Maximum Contaminant Level. Highest level of a contaminant allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to ideal levels as current treatment technology allows. **ppb:** Parts per billion. One ppb = one milligram per 1000 liters. **ppm:** Parts per million. One ppm = one milligram per liter. **mg/L:** One milligram per liter. See ppm. **ND:** Non Detect. **THM:** Trihalomethanes. Total concentration of a series of chlorinated organic compounds, disinfection byproducts that are unavoidable and caused by a chemical reaction between chlorine and naturally occurring organic matter in water. **MCLG:** Maximum Contaminant Level Goal. Level of contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected health risk. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety. Only Primary Standards have MCLGs because Secondary Standards are not set for health reasons. **pCi/L:** picocuries per liter. Unit of measurement for radionuclides. **Hardness:** To convert ppm to grains per gallon, divide by 17.12.

EPA Mandatory Safe Drinking Water Statements for All Community Water Systems

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 (1-800-426-4791).

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised 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 (1-800-426-4791).

Throughout the country, sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs and wells. The City of Vancouver relies 100% on groundwater. As water travels through aquifers, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and can pick up inorganic contaminants, which are naturally occurring, and organic contaminants, such as byproducts of industrial processes. To ensure safe tap water, the EPA and Washington Board of Health regulate certain contaminants in public drinking water. Vancouver's water is tested for more substances than required. All results, shown in this report, meet or are better than required by EPA and Washington Department of Health.



Information About Lead and Copper in Water

EPA rules require all public drinking water systems to regularly test a sample of potentially high-risk homes for lead and copper at an inside tap. Vancouver’s Utility conducted lead and copper tests in July 2020, in keeping with federal Safe Drinking Water Act and Washington Department of Health regulations. The Utility worked closely with residents to test water at the taps at a sampling of 54 homes most likely to be at risk, generally built between 1981 and 1989. All results showed lead and copper concentrations below EPA action levels that require additional treatment. Visit www.cityofvancouver.us/water for details.

More Information: Lead is not present in Vancouver Water Utility’s source water. In Washington State, lead in drinking water comes primarily from materials and components used in household plumbing. The more time water is sitting in pipes, the more dissolved metals, such as lead, it may contain. Exposure to lead can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children who drink water containing lead could have decreases in IQ and attention span and increases in learning and behavior problems. Lead exposure among pregnant women increases prenatal risks. Lead exposure among women who later become pregnant has similar risks if lead stored in the mother’s bones is released during pregnancy. Recent science suggests that adults who drink water containing lead have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. More information is available from EPA’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

	MCLG	Action Level*	Results**	Levels Tested	Homes Above Action Level	Source
Lead (ppb)	0	15	1.7	ND – 6.2	0	Corrosion of home plumbing systems
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.12	ND – 0.85	0	Natural deposits/Corrosion of home plumbing systems

Note: Table above shows results of 2020 testing

*Concentration of contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements

**Represents 90th Percentile, or 90 percent of the samples were less than the values shown

Small steps can make a big difference! Here’s how you can reduce potential exposure to lead from plumbing:

- Only use fresh, cold tap water for drinking, cooking, or preparing baby formula.
- Let the cold water tap run until the water is cold to flush out any potential lead from private plumbing.
- Do not use the hot water tap for drinking or cooking water as lead dissolves more easily in hot water. Boiling water will NOT reduce lead.
- Clean faucet aerators or screens frequently to remove the potential for particles.
- Be informed. Get the facts about your water. Learn more at www.cityofvancouver.us/water.



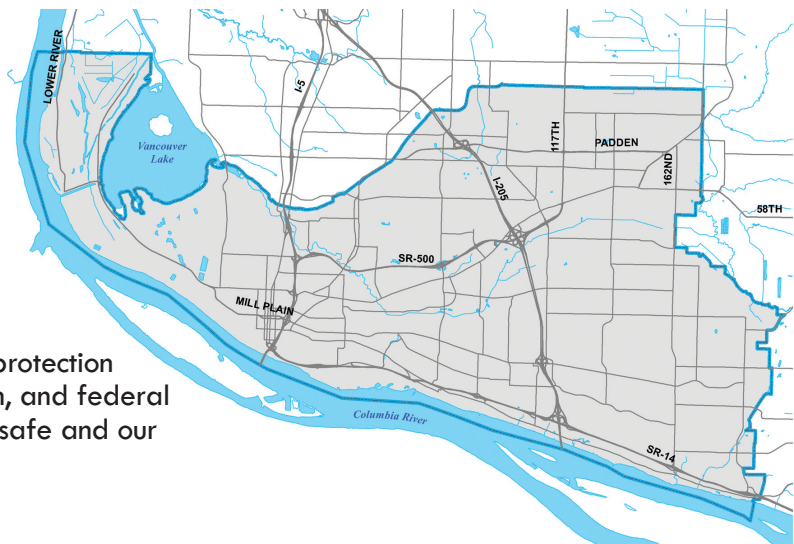
Aquifers - Source of 100% of Vancouver's Water Supply

The City of Vancouver gets all of the water supplied throughout our service area from wells tapping three underground aquifers – Orchards, Troutdale and the Sand-and-Gravel aquifers.

An aquifer is an underground layer of unconsolidated rock or sand that is saturated with usable amounts of water. Aquifers, which store and carry water, form significant natural water supplies. Recharge areas are important to a healthy aquifer. In a recharge area, water is able to seep into the earth and down to the aquifer, helping recharge these vital natural resources.

To keep tap water safe, EPA prescribes regulations that limit contaminants. The City's Water Resources Protection Program actively inspects and assists businesses in special well protection areas. Together, the City, State of Washington, and federal regulations are working to keep our aquifers safe and our drinking water clean.

Vancouver's Water Service Area



City of Vancouver PWS Water System ID 91200L

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Does my drinking water contain chlorine?

Yes. While Vancouver's high quality water meets all federal and state standards, a trace amount of chlorine (not chloramine) residual has been added as a precaution against any potential contaminants, including viruses, that might somehow enter the system. To reduce chlorine taste, fill a pitcher with water and let it sit a bit. The chlorine will react with the air and evaporate from the water. Some customers prefer to use a filter. Keep in mind that your home plumbing can affect water taste, too.

Does my drinking water contain fluoride?

Yes. Vancouver's water is fluoridated with sodium fluoride – not fluoride byproducts from other processes – to about 0.6-0.8 milligrams per liter in compliance with federal and state regulations and guidelines. Most water supplies contain some naturally occurring fluoride, and many communities add fluoride to drinking water to promote dental health. Fluoridation in the City of Vancouver dates back to a 1961 Council ordinance, backed by a citizens' referendum in early 1962. The EPA's drinking water standard and maximum amount for fluoride is 4.0 mg/L. Washington State Board of Health's 2016 rule on fluoridation of drinking water incorporates the new single optimal fluoride level of 0.7 mg/L recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and reduces the current operating range to 0.5 to 0.9 mg/L. For more information, please visit the EPA website at epa.gov/safewater. Information is also available from the state Department of Health at doh.wa.gov and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website at cdc.gov/Fluoridation.

What should I know when setting new appliances for water hardness?

Many new dishwashers and other appliances have settings that are determined by water hardness. In 2020 water testing, high and low hardness levels found in our water, as figured in grains per gallon (gpg), ranged from 7.3 to a low of 3.2. Information about hardness is also listed in this report under other characteristics.

Annual Checkup Required: Backflow and Cross Connection Prevention



If you are a property owner with an in-ground sprinkler system or private well, state and local laws require that you maintain backflow prevention assemblies on your water service. You are also required to have these inspected annually by a certified tester. Results of your annual inspection must be reported to the City of Vancouver Utility.

Backflow occurs when water flows in the opposite direction than intended, which could allow contaminants to enter plumbing and/or the public water system. Annual inspections of backflow prevention assemblies protect your community.

Need to schedule an inspection? You will find a list of certified backflow water testers available online at: www.cityofvancouver.us/backflow. Email test results to backflowtestreports@cityofvancouver.us. Questions? Email backflowtestreports@cityofvancouver.us or call 360-487-8276.

Advances in Science | Emerging Issues: PFAS

The assurance of a safe water supply and environment are of primary importance to the City of Vancouver. Protection of our citizens is of the utmost concern. Through recent advances in science, an emerging issue of concern that the Utility is closely watching is PFAS.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of nearly 5,000 different human-created chemicals. PFAS have been manufactured and used in a variety of industries around the globe since the 1940s. They can be found in commercial household products, carpet, plastics, firefighting foam, and food packaging products, just to name a few. The most extensively studied and produced PFAS include PFOA and PFOS. The fact is that most people have been exposed to PFAS at some time. Scientists are working to learn more about the effects, but much is still unknown.

In 2016, the EPA established a health advisory level (HAL) of 70 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFOA and PFOS combined in drinking water. Health Advisory Levels are non-enforceable, non-regulatory, and are intended to provide Americans, including the most sensitive populations, with a margin of protection from a lifetime of exposure to PFOA and PFOS from drinking water. Since then, the EPA has continued to develop new methods to test for PFAS in drinking water at lower levels than were previously possible. With these advances in science, the agency has begun a multi-year process of establishing a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for PFOA and PFOS. Meanwhile, the Washington State Board of Health has established a process to develop a State Action Level for PFAS, a regulatory effort that is expected to be finalized in late 2021.

Your City of Vancouver Utility is actively seeking information and following developments to provide our customers with sound, scientific information. The Utility, which maintains a vigorous water testing and analysis protocol that exceeds state and federal requirements, is committed to testing wells throughout 2021 to get a better understanding of the prevalence of PFAS in our water supply.

To stay informed and learn more about PFAS, please visit www.cityofvancouver.us/LearnAboutPFAS.

H2O: Helping Neighbors in Need

A little help can go a long way for those who need it most. Whether it's financial impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic or a family emergency, many low-income residents in our community who are in financial crisis need help in paying for water and/or sewer utility services.

Help to Others, or H2O, is a City of Vancouver Utility program designed to assist qualifying low-income residents in crisis situations pay for vital water and/or sewer. The program is supported by donations from caring residents and businesses in our community. Donations are tax deductible under applicable IRS regulations.



Every dollar donated to the H2O program goes directly to helping people in our community. No matter how small or how big, your contribution to H2O can make a difference to others. Please consider joining us in helping our community by making a donation in 2020. To learn how you can help by making a one-time or recurring H2O donation by check or credit card, please call 360-487-7999 or visit www.cityofvancouver.us/AtYourService.

Reduce Moving Stress. Start, Stop or Transfer Your Water Service Online

Residents who are moving within the City of Vancouver's Water Utility service area and need to start or stop service can do so online. Visit www.cityofvancouver.us/AtYourService and click on Start or Stop service forms, as needed. Please note: Forms must be submitted a minimum of 2 business days prior to start date. Need help? Speak with a customer service representative by calling 360-487-7999 during regular Utility Services office hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday. Please note that the office is closed to phone calls from noon to 1 p.m. each day.



Less Paper. More Trees.

Are you still getting your Utility bill in the mailbox outside your home? Please consider this secure and quick delivery option: Getting your City of Vancouver Utility bill by email. Sign up today! Here's how: Visit www.cityofvancouver.us/AtYourService, sign into your account and click on the eBilling option. Follow all steps. Be sure to confirm your email address to complete the process.



Tree Bonus! When you switch from paper to electronic bills, you may qualify for up to \$100 back on the cost of a newly planted tree through the Urban Forestry TreeFund. You'll reduce mailbox clutter, get your bill securely, and help make your neighborhood and Vancouver a little more green. For more about our TreeFund Program, please visit www.cityofvancouver.us/urbanforestry.

Want to take more work out of bill paying? Enroll in AutoPay, a free service that lets City of Vancouver customers pay water, sewer and stormwater utility bills automatically using a banking or credit card account. Visit www.cityofvancouver.us/AtYourService.



Find and Fix Leaks Fast!

Water is a precious resource. Yet, too often leaks go unchecked, resulting in lost water and higher bills. Here's how to find leaks:

Start with your water meter. Make sure no water is being used in or outside of your home. Then check the meter's flow indicator, typically shown as a star, triangle or sweeping hand. If the flow indicator is spinning, you likely have a leak.

Outside, look for unusual vegetation growth or moist areas in the lawn or landscaping. Inside, check toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food color or a dye tablet into the upper water tanks. Wait 30 minutes and do not use or flush. If color appears in the bowl, there is a leak.

If needed, contact a license plumber for help with fixing leaks in your personal plumbing.

Questions? Please call 360-487-7999 to speak with a Utility customer service representative.

Helpful Contacts and Webpages to Keep You Informed

Drinking Water, Water Programs and Services

City of Vancouver Water Quality/Operations:
cityofvancouver.us/water or 360-487-8177

Vancouver Utility Customer Service (bills/service):
cityofvancouver.us/AtYourService or 360-487-7999

Backflow and Cross Connection Prevention:
www.cityofvancouver.us/backflow or 360-487-8276

Water Resources Education Center:
cityofvancouver.us/watercenter or 360-487-7111

Water Resources Protection Program:
cityofvancouver.us/waterprotection or 360-487-7130

EPA Safe Drinking Water:
epa.gov/safewater or 800-426-4791

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www.facebook.com/VancouverPublicWorks

Instagram:

www.instagram.com/vancouverpublicworksus

Twitter:

twitter.com/VanPubWorksUS

@VanPubWorksUS

All City of Vancouver Social Media:

www.cityofvancouver.us/socialmedia