



2011 Water Quality Report

Onslow Water and Sewer Authority

04-67-035

Introduction

We're pleased to present to you this year's Annual Water Quality Report. This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the effort we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water and to providing you with this information because informed customers are our best allies. ONWASA is pleased to report there have been no violations this past year.

What EPA Wants You to Know

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).

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. ONWASA 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>

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 micro-biological contaminants are available from the 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 land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Contaminants that may be present include microbial contaminants, inorganic contaminants, pesticides and herbicides, organic chemicals and radioactive contaminants.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which provide the same protection for public health.

When You Turn on Your Tap, Consider the Source

Our source water is groundwater. ONWASA has 14 wells located throughout the county, which draw from the Black Creek Aquifer. The water provided by the treatment plants in Hubert and Dixon draw water from 22 wells in the Castle Hayne Aquifer.

Our Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) was updated in 2009 and assigned a Susceptibility Rating of Higher, Moderate or Lower. Some wells have yet to be rated and are not included in the report. The Susceptibility Rating is the well's potential for contamination. Of the wells rated in the update 14 have a Lower rating, 9 a Moderate rating, and 1 a Higher rating. ONWASA's report may be viewed in entirety by accessing the following site: http://www.deh.enr.state.nc.us/pws/SWAP_susceptibility_results.HTM

It is important to understand that a susceptibility rating of "higher" does not imply poor water quality, only the systems' potential to become contaminated by PCS's (Potential Contaminant Sources) in the assessment area.

Questions concerning the SWAP report can be addressed by phone to the Source Water Assessment staff at 919-715-2633.

Summary

Please understand in our continuing efforts to maintain a safe and dependable water supply, it may be necessary to make improvements in your water system for the benefit of all customers. The costs of these improvements may be reflected in the rate structure. Rate adjustments may be necessary in order to address these improvements. Periodically, we will conduct planned outages which allow us to perform maintenance on the water system. When an outage occurs, a precautionary boil water advisory will follow due to periods of low or no pressure in the distribution system which increases the potential for back siphonage and introduction of bacteria into the water system. Customers who are under a precautionary boil water advisory are encouraged to boil all water used for human consumption for a minimum of 1 minute which should kill any disease causing organisms that may have been introduced into the system.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this report or concerning your water utility, please contact Karen Wallace at (910) 937-7520. We want our customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled Board of Director's meetings held on the third Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m. We would also like to encourage our customers to visit our web site at <http://www.onwasa.com> for more information on water audits, the conservation plan and public education.

Glossary of Terms

As you examine the tables, you may find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. We've provided the following definitions to help you better understand these terms.

Not-Applicable (N/A) – Information not applicable/not required for that particular water system or for that particular rule.

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

Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l) - one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years.

Action Level - the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

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

Maximum Contaminant Level - The "Maximum Allowed" (MCL) is 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 - The "Goal"(MCLG) is 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.

Possible Health Effects Associated With Contaminants Found in the Tables

Microbiological Contaminants

Total Coliform. Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful bacteria may be present.

Inorganic Contaminants:

Copper. Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with

Wilson's Disease should consult their personal doctor.

Lead. Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.

Asbestos. Some people who drink water containing asbestos in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of developing benign intestinal polyps.

Secondary Inorganic Contaminants:

Fluoride. Some people who drink water containing fluoride in excess of the MCL over many years could get bone disease, including pain and tenderness of the bones. Children may get mottled teeth. Many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure. *Iron*. Rusty color, sediment, metallic taste, reddish or orange staining.

Manganese. Black to brown color, black staining, bitter metallic taste.

Sodium. Salty taste in the drinking water.

Disinfection By-Products:

TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes]. Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous systems, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

Nitrate. Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue-baby syndrome.

Consumer Confidence

Report Tables

ONWASA routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The amount and frequency of sampling conducted is dictated by the population served and ONWASA's sampling history. This means that because certain contaminants have not been found or are unlikely to be found in your drinking water, monitoring is not required to be conducted every year for those contaminants. ONWASA routinely conducts one hundred (100) bacteriological samples throughout the service area monthly to ensure the safety of your drinking water. The Consumer Confidence Report Tables included in this report show the results of all required monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2011. Contaminants listed in the Regulated Contaminant Table only list contaminants that were detected above the required reporting limit. Many samples routinely conducted are below this limit and are reported as Non-Detects (N/D). For a list of all the sampling conducted in 2011 that had Non-Detects, you may access ONWASA's Drinking Water Watch web site at: https://www.pwss.enr.state.nc.us/NCDDWW/JSP/Fact.jsp?tinwsys_is_number=5991&tinwsys_st_code=NC&begin_date=&end_date=&counter=.

The purpose of unregulated contaminant monitoring is to assist EPA in determining the occurrence of unregulated contaminants in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted. If you would like more information on unregulated chemicals you may call the EPA Hot Line at 1-800-426-4791.

Contamination levels are measured using Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs), which are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink 2 liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.

2011 Analytical Results for Regulated Substances

Microbiological Contaminants

Substance	Violation Y/N	MCL	Number of sites testing positive	Likely Source
Total Coliform Bacteria	N	Presence in 5% of monthly samples	1 of 1,200	Naturally present in the environment.
Fecal Coliform and E.Coli	N	A routine sample and repeat sample are total coliform positive, and one is also fecal coliform or E. coli positive.	0 of 1,200	Human and animal fecal waste.

What the chart means: ONWASA samples 100 sites per month throughout the service area for bacteriological contaminants. 1 Sample out of the 1,200 routine samples tested positive for Total Coliform Contamination. Total Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful bacteria may be present. A repeat sample from the same site tested negative. None of the bacteriological samples were positive for fecal contamination. ONWASA is also in the process of installing sampling stations in the distribution system which not only allows us to sample in strategic areas but eliminates the need to sample directly from a customer's home. ONWASA received no violation because 5% of the samples did not test positive for Total and Fecal Bacteria.

The Marine Corps Air Station New River did receive a violation for Total Coliform Bacteria as 2 of the samples collected in one month were positive for Total Coliform. Repeats of these same sites were negative for both total Coliform and Fecal Coliform.

Inorganic Group

Substance	Violation Y/N	Action Level in MG/L	90th Percentile	Sites that exceeded MCL	Likely Source
Lead	N	AL=0.015	0.005mg/l	0	Occurs naturally in soil. Its presence in drinking water is almost entirely due to corrosion of private household plumbing.
Copper	N	AL=1.3	0.396 mg/L	0	Occurs naturally in soil, but can be present in drinking water due to corrosion of private household plumbing.

What the chart means: ONWASA samples 200 targeted homes yearly for lead and copper concentrations. As lead and copper are not naturally present in our ground water, we are sampling to detect if there is corrosion occurring in the plumbing of these targeted homes. Targeted homes are those with lead and copper plumbing built in a certain time frame. ONWASA reports the sample results to the home owner providing us the sample. The range of detection for lead was <0.003 mg/l to 0.010 mg/l. The range of detection for copper was <0.05 mg/l to 1.130 mg/l which is below the AL of 1.3 mg/l. The 90th percentile is a means of determining if ONWASA is in violation and makes the 90th sample in ascending order the reportable number. ONWASA received no violations for the lead and copper group. The Action Level (AL) is set as an indicator that when exceeded, forms of treatment must be implemented to lower the amount of concentration in the water.

Substance	Violation Y/N	MCL	Results in MFL	Sites that exceeded MCL	Likely Source
Total Asbestos	N	7 MFL	1.4	0	Decay of asbestos cement water mains; erosion of natural deposits.

What the chart means: ONWASA samples for Asbestos every 9 years from a part of the entire system that contains asbestos cement water lines. The sample result is 5 times lower than the maximum contaminant level of 7 MFL (Million Fibers per Liter).

Secondary Inorganic Group

Substance	Violation Y/N	Action Level in MG/L	Range of Detection in MG/L	Sites that exceeded AL	Likely Source
Iron	N	AL = 0.3	<0.06	0	Erosion of natural deposits.
Manganese	N	AL = 0.05	<0.01 to 0.033	0	Erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride	N	AL = 2.00	1.40 to 0.2	0	Erosion of natural deposits/addition to treated water at the Water Treatment Plants.
Sodium	N		66 to 209	0	Erosion of natural deposits.

What the chart means: Secondary Inorganics are naturally occurring elements in the water supply that are regulated for ascetic purposes rather than the health affects. Although ONWASA did not sample for Secondary Inorganics this year, the information has been provided to better inform you of the constituents of your water. The results in the table above are for compliance purposes but ONWASA samples daily for iron, manganese and fluoride to insure water quality. The actual MCL for fluoride in which ONWASA would be in violation is 4.00 mg/l.

Disinfection By-Products					
Substance	Violation Y/N	MCL in MG/L	4 Quarter Average	Range Detected in MG/L	Likely Source
TTHM (Total Trihalomethanes)	N	0.080	0.053	0.020-0.128	By-product of drinking water chlorination.
HAA5 (Total Haloacetic Acids)	N	0.060	0.019	0.005-0.049	By-product of drinking water chlorination.

Purchased Water from MCAS New River Disinfection By-Products within same range.

What the chart means: Disinfection By-Products are substances that can form when water is chlorinated for disinfection purposes. In 2011, ONWASA sampled 68 sites and the ranges of detection are reported above. The maximum level reported for Total Trihalomethanes was above the MCL for that substance but because the annual running average was not exceeded, which is the number used for compliance, ONWASA was not in violation. ONWASA takes every precaution to minimize the levels of Disinfection By-Products in the distribution system. ONWASA has placed automatic flushing devices at strategic points in the distribution system to pull fresh water into the outer ends of the system where Trihalomethanes are most likely to occur. We also perform daily chlorine monitoring to maintain levels sufficient for disinfection and to minimize creation of Disinfection By-Products. State mandates chlorine levels be maintained between 4.00 mg/l to 0.20 mg/l and ONWASA's average for the system is 0.80 mg/l.

Other sampling conducted in 2011 found no detection of Nitrates or Nitrites in all 17 water sources.

**Onslow Water and
Sewer Authority**

228 Georgetown Road

Jacksonville, North Carolina
28540

(910)455-0722

www.onwasa.com