



2009
WATER
QUALITY
REPORT

With 2008 Data

Water, Gas & Light Commission
Albany / Dougherty County
2008 Water-Quality Report

Water, Gas & Light commission is proud of the fine drinking water it provides. This annual water quality report shows the source of our water, lists and the results of our tests, and contains much more important information about water and health. The Water, Gas & Light Commission will notify you immediately if there is any reason for concern about your water. We are happy to show you how we have surpassed water-quality standards.

Overview: Water Source

The Albany Water System draws its water from four different aquifers. They are the Floridan, Tallahatta, Clayton, and the upper Cretaceous. We use 40 wells located throughout the City and County to supply an average of 16 million gallons of water a day to our customers. The Albany Water Treatment Plant continues daily to assist with our water production. This assures Albany with an adequate supply for the future. A Source Water Assessment has been performed for our area to provide baseline data about the quality of water before it is treated and distributed to our customers. This is important because it identifies the origins of contaminants within our area and indicates the susceptibility of our water to such contaminants. To complete your understanding of our water supply, request a copy of this information from The Georgia Environmental Protection Division or visit website: <http://www.gaepd.org/>.

How to Read This Table

The table shows the results of our water-quality analysis. Every regulated contaminant that **was detected** in our water, even in the most minute traces, is listed. The table contains the name of each substance, the highest level allowed by regulation (MCL), the ideal goals for public health, the amount detected, the usual sources of such contamination, footnotes explaining our findings, and a key to units of measurement. Definitions of MCL and MCLG are important.

2008 Albany Water Treatment Plant - Testing Results:

Contaminant	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Detected Level	Range	Major Sources	Violation
Total Organic Carbon (TOC)	ppm	TT	TT	0	0 - 0.49	Composed primarily of Non-specific humic materials	NO
Nitrates	ppm	10	10	6.8	5.8 - 6.78	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks; sewage; erosion of natural deposits	NO

2008 Albany Water System - Testing Results:

Contaminant	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Detected Level	Range	Major Sources	Violation
Lead	ppb	AL=15	0	5.8	0 - 9.9	Corrosion of household plumbing system; erosion of natural deposits	NO
Copper	ppm	AL=1.3	1.3	0.18	0 - 0.29	Corrosion of household plumbing system; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives	NO
TTHM (Total Trihalomethanes)	ppb	80 (Annual Average)	0	5.9 (Annual Average)	1.1 - 12.2	By - product of organics in drinking water and the chlorine disinfectant	NO
HAA5 (Haloacetic Acids)	ppb	60	0	.25 (Annual Average)	0 - .74	By - product of drinking water chlorination	NO
Nitrates	ppm	10	10	3.9	0 - 3.9	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks; sewage; erosion of natural deposits	NO
Voc's	ppb	70	70	3.8	0 - 3.8	Discharge from industrial chemical factories	NO

During June 2008 and August 2008, there were two Total Coliform MCL Violations. Laboratory analyses indicated the presence of Coliform bacteria in drinking water samples collected from the Albany Water System. There were a total of 25 sample that tested positive during these two months.

Fecal coliforms and E. coli are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Microbes in these wastes can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, some of the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems.

At this time, we have not determined what the problem was. However, we believe it to be a sampling/testing error. All samples that tested positive have been resampled, and all resamples were negative, concluding Coliform bacteria was not present and the water is safe to drink. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Charlie McBurnett at 229-883-8330, ext. 839.

“Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant, you should ask for advice from your health care provider.”

Key to Table:

AL: Action Level

MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level

MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level Goal

ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)

ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (ug/l)

TT: Treatment Technique

Definitions

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): *“The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL’s are set as close to the MCLG’s 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. MCLG’s allow for a margin of safety.”*

Treatment Technique

“A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.”

Additional Health Information

The Water Treatment Plant tested for and has not detected *Cryptosporidium*. To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes limits on the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water. Drinking water, including bottled 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 Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

The sources of drinking water (both tap and bottled) 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 radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

(A) Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

(B) Inorganic contaminants, 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.

(C) Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, stormwater runoff, and residential uses.

(D) Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organics, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas states, urban stormwater runoff and septic systems.

(E) 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 which limit the amount of certain contaminants in the water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

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. Water, Gas & Light 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 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>.

National Primary Drinking Water Regulations Compliance

Other Monitoring

In addition to testing we are required to perform, our water system voluntarily tests for hundreds of additional substances and microscopic organisms to make certain our water is safe and of high quality. Water is our most precious natural resource. Together we can preserve the quality of our water supply. If you notice a change in the look, smell or taste of your drinking water, please contact the Water, Gas & Light Commission. If you are interested in more information on the Water Quality Report, contact Charlie McBurnett, at (229) 883-8330, extension 839.

Water Quality data for community water systems throughout the U.S. is available at www.waterdata.com or www.albany.ga.us.

Other Helpful Ways Water, Gas & Light Commission Assists You

Operation Kids: Children may now go the Water, Gas & Light radio equipped white trucks if they have a problem. Our employees will be the vital link between a child (i.e. locked out of the house, bothered by a stranger, or a medical emergency) and safety. For additional information you may call The Water, Gas & Light Commission Information office at (229) 883-8330, extension 345.

The Gatekeeper Program: assists vulnerable older citizens. Water, Gas & Light workers in regular contact with the public, identify those who may be in need and make referrals to the Sowega Council on Aging - who connects the elderly with community services.

H.O.P.E.:

Helping Others Pay for Energy/Essentials

The **HOPE** program was developed in 1993 to assist & guide WG&L customers in paying their utility bills when they are unable. Hundreds of customers each year have been assisted because of **H.O.P.E.**

For more information, please call (229) 338-8330, ext. 345.

If every church in our community would donate \$25 per week, there should not be a single person with a legitimate need that is not helped through **H.O.P.E.**

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than is the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, persons 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 are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.