



ANNUAL WATER
QUALITY
REPORT

Water testing performed in 2006

LAGRANGE *georgia*
SMART MOVE™

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CITY OF
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Continuing Our Commitment

Once again we proudly present our annual water quality report. This edition covers all testing completed from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006. We are pleased to tell you that our compliance with all state and federal drinking water laws remains exemplary. As in the past, we are committed to delivering the best-quality drinking water. To that end, we remain vigilant in meeting the challenges of source water protection, water conservation, and community education while continuing to serve the needs of all of our water users.

For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call the City of LaGrange Water Division at (706) 883-2130.

What Makes Water Hard?

If substantial amounts of calcium or magnesium, both nontoxic minerals, are present in drinking water, the water is said to be hard. Hard water does not dissolve soap readily, so making lather for washing and cleaning is difficult. Conversely, water containing little calcium or magnesium is called soft water.

Important Health Information

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 may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. The U.S. EPA/CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.



Where Does My Water Come From?

Water is supplied by the City of LaGrange through the abundant resources of the Chattahoochee River and West Point Lake Reservoir. This resource contains sufficient quantities to supply our area's current and future needs. By withdrawing water from the upper level, we experience a more uniform quality of water for treatment processing. The City of LaGrange water purification process is designed to remove or inactivate harmful quantities of contaminants.

Source Water Assessment

A source water assessment has been conducted on the City of LaGrange watershed as required by the Safe Drinking Water Act. This assessment was conducted by WWETCO, LLC, for the protection and benefit of our water system. We have identified all potential contaminants within the assessment area. The assessment area has been divided into three zones. These zones are the Inner Management Zone for the area within 7 miles of the water intakes, the Outer Management Zone for the area from 7 to 20 miles, and the Non-Management Zone for the area greater than 20 miles. The results of this survey placed 82% of potential contaminants in a low priority ranking.

For additional information concerning this source water assessment, contact the City of LaGrange Water Division.

Water Treatment Process

The treatment process consists of a series of steps. First, raw water is drawn from our water source and then goes to a mixing tank where aluminum sulfate and polymers are added. The addition of these substances cause small particles to adhere to one another (called floc) making them heavy enough to settle into a basin from which sediment is removed. Chlorine is then added for disinfection. At this point, the water is filtered through layers of fine coal and silicate sand. As smaller, suspended particles are removed, turbidity disappears and clear water emerges.

Chlorine is added again as a precaution against any bacteria that may still be present. (We carefully monitor the amount of chlorine, adding the smallest quantity necessary to protect the safety of your water without compromising taste.) Finally, sodium hydroxide (used to adjust the final pH and alkalinity), fluoride (used to prevent tooth decay), and a corrosion inhibitor (used to protect distribution system pipes) are added before the water is pumped to sanitized, underground reservoirs, water towers, and into your home or business.

Information on the Internet

The U.S. EPA Office of Water (www.epa.gov/watrhme) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov) Web sites provide a substantial amount of information on many issues relating to water resources, water conservation, and public health. Also, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division has a Web site (www.dnr.state.ga.us/dnr/environ) that provides complete and current information on water issues in Georgia, including valuable information about our watershed.



Naturally Occurring Bacteria

The simple fact is, bacteria and other microorganisms inhabit our world. They can be found all around us: in our food; on our skin; in our bodies; and, in the air, soil, and water. Some are harmful to us and some are not. Coliform bacteria are common in the environment and are generally not harmful themselves. The presence of this bacterial form in drinking water is a concern because it indicates that the water may be contaminated with other organisms that can cause disease. Throughout the year, we tested more than 700 samples (more than 60 samples every month) for coliform bacteria. In that time, none of the samples came back positive for the bacteria. Federal regulations now require that public water that tests positive for coliform bacteria must be further analyzed for fecal coliform bacteria. Fecal coliforms are present only in human and animal waste. Because these bacteria can cause illness, it is unacceptable for fecal coliforms to be present in water at any concentration. Our tests indicate no fecal coliform is present in our water.

How Long Can I Store Drinking Water?

The disinfectant in drinking water will eventually dissipate even in a closed container. If that container housed bacteria prior to filling up with the tap water the bacteria may continue to grow once the disinfectant has dissipated. Some experts believe that water could be stored up to six months before needing to be replaced. Refrigeration will help slow the bacterial growth.



Cryptosporidium in Drinking Water

Cryptosporidium is a microbial parasite found in surface water throughout the United States. Although filtration removes *Cryptosporidium*, the most commonly used filtration methods cannot guarantee 100% removal. Water collected from West Point Lake in the last year did not detect the presence of *Cryptosporidium*.

Substances That Might Be in Drinking Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA prescribes regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

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, in some cases, radioactive material, and substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances that may be present in source water include:

Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, or wildlife;

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may result from urban stormwater runoff, 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 stormwater runoff, and residential uses;

Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems;

Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, call the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

What Causes the Pink Stain on Bathroom Fixtures?

The reddish-pink color frequently noted in bathrooms on shower stalls, tubs, tile, toilets, sinks, toothbrush holders, and on pets' water bowls is caused by the growth of the bacterium *Serratia marcescens*. *Serratia* is commonly isolated from soil, water, plants, insects, and vertebrates (including man). The bacteria can be introduced into the house through any of the above-mentioned sources. The bathroom provides a perfect environment (moist and warm) for bacteria to thrive.

The best solution to this problem is to continually clean and dry the involved surfaces to keep them free from bacteria.

Chlorine-based compounds work best, but keep in mind that abrasive cleaners may scratch fixtures making them more susceptible to bacterial growth. Chlorine bleach can be used periodically to disinfect the toilet and help to eliminate the occurrence of the pink residue. Keeping bathtubs and sinks wiped down using a solution that contains chlorine will also help to minimize its occurrence.

Serratia will not survive in chlorinated drinking water.





Contamination from Cross-Connections

Cross-connections that contaminate drinking water distribution lines are a major concern.

A cross-connection is formed at any point where a drinking water line connects to equipment (boilers), systems containing chemicals (air conditioning systems, fire sprinkler systems, irrigation systems), or water sources of questionable quality. Cross-connection contamination can occur when the pressure in the equipment or system is greater than the pressure inside the drinking water line (backpressure). Contamination can also occur when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to fairly routine occurrences (main breaks, heavy water demand) causing contaminants to be sucked out from the equipment and into the drinking water line (backsiphonage).

Outside water taps and garden hoses tend to be the most common sources of cross-connection contamination at home. The garden hose creates a hazard when submerged in a swimming pool or when attached to a chemical sprayer for weed killing. Fertilizers, cesspools, or garden chemicals may contaminate garden hoses that are left lying on the ground. Improperly installed valves in your toilet could also be a source of cross-connection contamination.

Community water supplies are continuously jeopardized by cross-connections unless appropriate valves, known as backflow prevention devices, are installed and maintained. We have surveyed all industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities in the service area to make sure that all potential cross-connections are identified and eliminated or protected by a backflow preventer. We also inspect and test each backflow preventer to make sure that it is providing maximum protection.

For more information, review the Cross-Connection Control Manual from the U.S. EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/safewater/crossconnection.html. You can also call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Table Definitions

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

MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level): 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.

MCLG (Maximum Contaminant Level Goal): 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.

MRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level): 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.

MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal): 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.

NA: Not applicable.

NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Units): Measurement of the clarity, or turbidity, of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

ppb (parts per billion): One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

ppm (parts per million): One part substance per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

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

Sampling Results

During the past year we have taken hundreds of water samples in order to determine the presence of any radioactive, biological, inorganic, volatile organic, or synthetic organic contaminants. The table below shows only those contaminants that were detected in the water. Although all of the substances listed here are under the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL), we feel it is important that you know exactly what was detected and how much of the substance was present in the water.

The state allows us to monitor for certain substances less than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data are included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

REGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Chlorine (ppm)	2006	[4]	[4]	1.10	0.98–1.25	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Chlorine Dioxide (ppb)	2006	800	800	20	10–160	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Chlorite (ppm)	2006	1	0.8	0.29	0.01–0.42	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Fluoride (ppm)	2006	4	4	0.72	0.35–1.05	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Haloacetic Acids [HAA] (ppb)	2006	60	NA	14	9–22	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (ppm)	2006	10	10	1.7	1.7–1.7	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	2006	80	NA	40	23–56	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Total Organic Carbon (ppm)	2006	TT	NA	1.44	1.2–1.8	No	Naturally present in the environment
Turbidity¹ (NTU)	2006	TT	NA	0.14	0.03–0.14	No	Soil runoff
Turbidity (Lowest monthly percent of samples meeting limit)	2006	TT	NA	100	NA	No	Soil runoff

Tap water samples were collected from 30 sample sites throughout the community

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	ACTION LEVEL	MCLG	AMOUNT DETECTED (90TH% TILE)	SITES ABOVE ACTION LEVEL	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Copper (ppm)	2006	1.3	1.3	0.13	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives
Lead (ppb)	2006	15	0	2.5	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

UNREGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	TYPICAL SOURCE
Bromodichloromethane (ppb)	2006	5.1	5.1–5.1	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chlorodibromomethane (ppb)	2006	2.8	2.8–2.8	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chloroform (ppb)	2006	4.4	4.4–4.4	By-product of drinking water disinfection

Footnote:

¹Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. It is monitored because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the filtration system.