



Public Utilities Commission

The Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission (GRPUC) was established in 1910. The GRPUC provides leadership for the direction of the municipal utility. They establish policy, manage capital investments and organize the business framework. The Commission includes President Steve Welliver, Secretary Glen Hodgson, Commissioners Dale Adams, June Johnson and Greg Chandler. We welcome your participation in the public forum section of our regular monthly meetings held on the second Wednesday of the month at the PW/PUC service center.

The GRPUC is issuing the results of monitoring done on its drinking water for the period from January 1 to December 31, 2009. The purpose of this report is to advance consumers' understanding of drinking water and heighten awareness of the need to protect precious water sources.

The GRPUC provides drinking water to its residents from a groundwater source: five wells ranging from 140-572 feet deep, that draw water from the Quaternary Buried Artesian, Biwabik Iron-Formation, and Quaternary Buried Unconfined aquifers.

The water provided to customers may meet drinking water standards, but the Minnesota Department of Health has also made a determination as to how vulnerable the source of water may be to future contamination incidents. If you wish to obtain the entire source water assessment regarding your drinking water, please call 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 (and press 5) during normal business hours. Also, you can view it online at: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/swa -or- www.grpuc.org

Contaminants 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, and wildlife.

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production and 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 can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

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

Water Conservation Reminder

Your help in the efficient use of water will reduce the need for implementing water restrictions. Check for leaks in your home and at outside fixtures. Leaks will needlessly cause your water bill to increase.



Make A Difference

You can save water by following these tips:

Indoors

- Check your toilet for "silent" leaks by placing a little food coloring in the tank and seeing if it leaks into the bowl.
- Keep a gallon of drinking water in the refrigerator rather than running the tap for cold water. This also makes the water taste better.
- Run your washing machine with a full load of clothes in cold water when possible.

Outdoors

- Use drought-tolerant plants and grasses for landscaping and reduce grass-covered areas.
- Cut your grass at least two to three inches high to shade the roots, making it more drought tolerant; keep your mower sharp for the healthiest grass.
- Install a rain sensor on the irrigation system.
- If your grass springs back when you step on it, it doesn't need watering.
- If it rains an inch or more, wait at least five days to water again.
- Use a sprinkler that delivers large drops, rather than a fine mist.
- Let the clippings lie on the ground. This shades the soil to prevent evaporation.
- Let your lawn go dormant during the hot summer months. This saves money and time spent mowing.
- Spread mulch around flowerbeds, shrubs and trees. This will reduce the water requirements for your landscape.

For more information log on to:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water> or
<http://www.mrwa.com/>

GRAND RAPIDS

DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT

2009

*Celebrating 100 years -
Service is Our Nature*



If you have questions about the Grand Rapids Public Utilities Commission's drinking water or would like information about opportunities for public participation in decisions that may affect the quality of the water, please call:

Dennis Doyle
Water Department Manager
or

Anthony Ward
GRPUC General Manager
at
218-326-7024

Important EPA Health Information

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

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 activity.

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. 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 microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

No contaminants were detected at levels that violated federal drinking water standards in the GRPUC drinking water system.

Some contaminants were however detected in trace amounts that were below legal limits. The table to the right shows the contaminants that were detected in trace amounts last year. (Some contaminants are sampled less frequently than once a year; as a result, not all contaminants were sampled for in 2009. If any of these contaminants were detected the last time they were sampled for, they are included in the table along with the date that the detection occurred.)



Key to the Contaminants

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. **Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasibly possible. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety. **Action Level (AL):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirement which a water system must follow. **90th Percentile Level:** This is the value obtained after disregarding 10 percent of the samples taken that had the

highest levels. (For example, in a situation in which 10 samples were taken, the 90th percentile level is determined by disregarding the highest result, which represents 10 percent of the samples.) Note: In situations in which only 5 samples are taken, the average of the two with the highest levels is taken to determine the 90th percentile level. **ppm:** Parts per million. **ppb:** Parts per billion. **N/A:** Not applicable (does not apply). The **Average Result** is the value used to determine compliance with federal standards. It sometimes is the highest value detected and sometimes is an average of all the detected values. If it is an average, it may contain sampling results from the previous year.

DRINKING WATER QUALITY TABLE FOR 2009

Detected Substance Units of Measurement	Test Date	MCL: highest amount allowed	MCLG: No health risk	Average Result	Range of Detections	Typical Source of Substance in Drinking Water
Total Coliform Bacteria	2009	>1 present	0 present	2*	N/A	Naturally present in the environment.
*Follow up sampling on November 17, 2009 showed no contamination present.						
Fluoride ppm	2009	4.0	4.0	1.13	1.0-1.3	State of Minnesota requires all municipal water systems to add fluoride to the drinking water to promote strong teeth; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.
Nitrate (as Nitrogen) ppm	2009	10	10	0.48	N/A	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits.
Copper ppm	2009	AL: 90% of samples must be < 1.3 ppm	N/A	90% level: .92	0 out of 20 samples above AL	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.
Barium ppm	2005	2.0	2.0	0.07	N/A	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.
Lead ppb	2009	AL: 90% of samples must be < 15 ppb	N/A	90% level: 2.0	0 out of 20 samples above AL	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.
Some contaminants do not have Maximum Contaminant Levels established for them. These unregulated contaminants are assessed using state standards known as health risk limits to determine if they pose a threat to human health. If unacceptable levels of an unregulated contaminant are found, the response is the same as if an MCL has been exceeded; the water system must inform its customers and take other corrective actions. The two unregulated contaminants that were detected are below:						
Sodium ppm	2009	No established EPA limit		78	N/A	Erosion of natural deposits.
Sulfate ppm	2009	No established EPA limit		7.53	N/A	Erosion of natural deposits.

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 GRPUC 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 the 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>.