Town of La Plata 2016 Drinking Water Quality Report

PWSID: 008-0025

Important Information Concerning Your Drinking Water

We are pleased to present to you the Annual Water Quality Report for 2016. This report is designed to inform you about the water quality and services we deliver to you every day. Maryland Environmental Service (MES), an Agency of the State of Maryland, operates the water treatment facility and prepared this report on behalf of the Town of La Plata.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates Public Water Systems and the contaminants found in water through the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The SDWA sets regulations and guidelines for how public water systems operate and identifies several hundred drinking water contaminants, establishes monitoring frequencies and limitations. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is responsible for the enforcement of the SDWA and routinely conducts sanitary surveys, inspections and monitoring for all public water systems. MES provides safe dependable operations of the water system and is dedicated to consistently providing high quality drinking water that meets or exceeds the SDWA standards.

If you have any questions about this report or have questions concerning your water utility, please contact *Jay Janney at 410-729-8350, e-mail jjann@menv.com*

For More Information:

For the opportunity to ask more questions or participate in decisions that may affect your drinking water quality, please contact the Director of Operations for *La Plata Water Treatment Plant at 301-934-8421.*

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The water for the Town of La Plata is pumped from five wells, each is over 1000 feet deep. Four wells are located in the Lower Patapsco aquifer and the other well is located in the Upper Patapsco formation. After the water is pumped out of the well we add disinfectant to protect against microbial contaminants. The Maryland Department of the Environment has performed an assessment of the source water. A copy of the results is available. Call Maryland *Environmental Service at 410-729-8350*

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).*

Definitions:

- *Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)* - 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.
- *Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)* - 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.
- *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 required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
- *Turbidity* - Relates to a condition where suspended particles are present in the water. Turbidity measurements are a way to describe the level of "cloudiness" of the water.
- *NTU - Nephelometric Turbidity Units.* Units of measurement used to report the level of turbidity or "cloudiness" in the water.
- *pCi/l* - Picocuries per liter. A measure of radiation.
- *ppb* - Parts per billion or micrograms per liter.
- *ppm* - Parts per million or milligrams per liter.

Special points of interest:

The Town of La Plata Drinking Water met all of the State and Federal requirements. Drinking Water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some compounds. The presence of these compounds 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 (EPA's) Safe Drinking Water Act Hotline (1-800-426-4791).*

Important information about Gross Alpha Emitters:

Alpha emitters are naturally occurring radiations in soil, air and water. These emitters generally occur when certain elements decay or break down in the environment. The emitters enter drinking water through various methods including the erosion of natural deposits. There are no immediate health risks from consuming water that contains gross alpha, however some people who drink water containing alpha emitters in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer. Currently, the highest level of gross alpha detected is 7.2 pCi/l which is below the 15 pCi/l MCL.

The following table lists all the drinking water contaminants that were detected during the 2016 calendar year. The presence of these compounds in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in the table is from testing done January 1 – December 31, 2016.

The State requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year.

Town of La Plata Treated Water Quality Report 2016

Contaminant	Highest Level Allowed EPAs MCL	Highest Level Detected	Ideal Goal (EPA's MCLG)
Regulated at the Treatment Plants			
Fluoride (2014/2015 Testing)	4000 ppb	811 ppb (Range: 343 to 811 ppb)	4000 ppb
Source: Erosion of natural deposits and discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories			
Chromium (2016 Testing)	100 ppb	<10 ppb	100 ppb
Source: Erosion of natural deposits, discharge from steel/pulp mills			
Barium (2016 Testing)	2000 ppb	20.2 ppb (Range: 3.4 to 20.2 ppb)	2000 ppb
Source: Erosion of natural deposits, discharge from metal refineries			
Nitrate	10 ppm	0.09 ppm (Range: 0.0 to 0.09 ppm)	10 ppm
Source: Erosion of natural deposits, runoff from fertilizer, and leaching from septic tanks and sewage			
Gross Alpha (2016 Testing)	15 pCi/l	7.2 pCi/l (Range: 6.7 to 7.2 pCi/l)	0 pCi/l
Source: Erosion of natural deposits			
Combine Radium (226 & 228) (2015 Testing)	5 pCi/l	0.5 pCi/l*	N/A
Sources: Erosion of natural deposits			
Gross Beta (2010 Testing)	50 pCi/l*	8.4 pCi/l**	0 pCi/l
Source: Erosion of natural deposits			
Notations: * EPA considers 50 pCi/l to be the level of concern for beta particles ** Because the beta particle results were below 50 pCi/l, no testing for individual beta particle constituents was required. Typical sources of contaminant: Erosion of natural deposits.			
Regulated in the Distribution			
Chlorine	4 ppm	1.4 ppm* (Range: 1.23 to 1.54 ppm)	4 ppm
Water additive used to control microbes *Average result			
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) (2016 Testing)	80 ppb	8.7 ppb	n/a
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (2016 Testing)	60 ppb	1.8 ppb	n/a
Typical Source of Contamination: By-product of drinking water disinfection			
Regulated in the Distribution	**Action Level**	**90th Percentile**	**Ideal Goal**
Copper (2014 Testing)	1300 ppb	192 ppb	1300 ppb
Typical sources of contaminant: corrosion of household plumbing			
Lead (2014 Testing)	15 ppb	0 ppb	0 ppb
Source: Corrosion of household plumbing fixtures and systems			

Sources of Drinking Water

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.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain compounds in water provided by public water systems. We treat our water according to EPA's regulations. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

Lead Prevention

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 Town of La Plata 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 drinking 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 *EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or at http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.*

Advanced technology available to consumers

The Town of La Plata has invested in several innovative technologies in order to help conserve our natural resources and to help meet future needs. A new Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) was installed in August 2012 to automate the Town's water meter reading and billing system. This system allows residents to access their account information over the internet and set alerts to notify them of potential leaks. In addition, the Town now has the ability to detect leaks in system mains to reduce major problems of leaking pipes under Town roadways. Utility customers who would like to be able to access their accounts using this new technology will be able to do so after contacting the Town at 301-934-8421 or emailing cjohnson@townoflaplata.org to set up their account.

Radon

The result of the March 2014 radon sample was 265 pCi/l. Radon is a radioactive gas that you cannot see, taste, or smell. It is found throughout the U.S. Radon can move up through the ground and into a home through cracks and holes in the foundation. Radon can build up to high levels in all types of homes. Radon can also get into indoor air when released from tap water from showering, washing dishes, and other household activities. Compared to radon entering the home through soil, radon entering the home through tap water will in most cases be a small source of radon in indoor air. Radon is a known human carcinogen. Breathing air containing radon can lead to lung cancer. Drinking water containing radon may also cause increased risk of stomach cancer. If you are concerned about radon in your home, test the air in your home. Testing is inexpensive and easy. There are simple ways to fix a radon problem that are not too costly. For additional information, call your state radon program or call EPA's Radon Hotline (800-SOS-RADON).

If you have any questions about this report or your drinking water, please call Jay Janney at 410-729-8350 or email your request to jjann@menv.com.

MARYLAND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE