



# ANNUAL DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT

## 2023 RESULTS

SUGARLOAF WATER SYSTEM

PWS ID: 463168

# VISION OF TOMORROW, ACTION TODAY

Dear Valued Customer,

I am very happy to report on the many accomplishments the District has made over the past year. The District continues to innovate and provide value to our customers on a daily basis. We have continued to actively contain costs, pursue grant funding for our tank replacement projects and our energy resilience needs and proactively coordinating with our local partners and agencies. We have also continued our support of the Howard Hansen Dam downstream fish passage project with our Regional Water System Supply (RWSS) Partners. Our efforts helped support Congress adding an additional \$50M to the project's budget and for the first time in over 15 years, project funding in the amount of \$500M was included in the President's budget for Congress to consider this coming year. Finally, there were two very important milestones the District met in this reporting period which are:

- We did not raise residential rates for the 8th straight year.
- The District retired approximately \$15M in debt (related to past RWSS bonds) ten years early.

Other efforts included:

**Financials** – The District maintained a strong financial position because of staff's diligent work containing expenses and having very strong water sales. Additionally, the District had a budget surplus of \$1M in 2023 due to the extended sunshine and dry weather experienced throughout this past summer and early fall. The State Auditor's Office completed their annual audit and found no findings related to the District's financial well-being. The District's debt to equity ratio which hovered around 50% in 2015 is now down to approximately 10%.

**Infrastructure** – The City of Covington's Jenkins Creek project in SE 272nd Street is wrapping up the water utility relocation work and hopefully the roadwork will be completed by the end of 2024. The 148th Avenue Watermain Extension restoration work is now complete and the District's 500 Zone now has a functional second supply to the zone (which includes Pacific Raceways). Our Tank 1 and Tank 4 projects designs are now complete and are substantially permitted. The next step is to complete the bid documents while simultaneously, the District is also pursuing a \$5M FEMA grant for Tank 1.

**Operations** – Tacoma Water completed the cleaning and inspection of RWSS's Pipeline 5 and is now considering treatment technique changes at GRFF to reduce/eliminate the production of manganese in summer. The District's Operations Team continued to grow and expand on its technical expertise this past year. A great example was their work completing the installation of new 16" diameter water main located at the District's campus. This project will improve the hydraulic flows to the growing Downtown Covington corridor as well as improve the kW production of the District's turbine facility.

I want to say thank you for the opportunity to serve as your General Manager and that myself and staff take our commitment to serve safe, reliable water to you and our community very seriously and in the upmost professional manner. Onward and upward!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Keown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomas Keown, P.E.  
General Manager  
Covington Water District



Because doing the right thing is crucial when it comes to our future's water quality.

# SAFE & RELIABLE DRINKING WATER

Our goal is to continue improving our product by implementing cost effective measures such as source and distribution system improvements that enhance reliability and produce a level of water quality that exceeds federal and state drinking water standards.

This commitment to safe and reliable drinking water combined with the investments into source and infrastructure improvements will have lasting benefits for current and future generations.

Please take time to review this report and join us in appreciating the vital role water plays in all of our lives.

Covington Water District is committed to providing our consumers with safe, reliable drinking water.



# RELIABLE SERVICE AND COMMITMENT TO YOU

Covington Water District (CWD) is proud to present your annual Water Quality Report. This edition summarizes the results of the water quality testing completed from January through December of 2023. The results contained in this report show Covington Water District is providing safe potable water that meets or exceeds federal and state regulatory agency requirements. We hope the contents of this report are useful and informative.

Sugarloaf Water System's drinking water comes from one ground water source owned and operated by Covington Water District.

## Protecting Public Health is our Number One Priority

Covington Water District's Operations employees strive to protect public health through extensive water quality testing. Twice a month, CWD's Water Treatment Operator collects a water sample in the water distribution

system looking for coliform bacteria. If there is a presence of coliform bacteria in drinking water, this indicates that disease-causing organisms (pathogens) could be in the water system. Samples are submitted to a independent certified laboratory for analysis and those results are submitted to the Washington State Department of Health Office of Drinking Water.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the information contained in this report, please contact Glenn Stockman, Water Quality Lead at 253-867-0944 or [glenn.stockman@covingtonwater.com](mailto:glenn.stockman@covingtonwater.com).

We work to provide clean water so you don't have to worry about it.



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR HEALTH

## Important Information for Your Health

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, and 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).

## Minerals - Lead & Copper

Studies cited by the EPA show that ingesting lead or copper can cause health problems, especially in preg-

nant women and young children. Lead and copper found in drinking water usually comes from home plumbing. Some homes have higher levels than other homes. Water with a low pH can cause copper from copper pipes and lead from the solder (used to connect the pipes), to dissolve directly from pipes into the drinking water. Lead-based solder was banned in 1986, but small amounts of lead can still be found in many brass-plumbing fixtures and can slowly dissolve into water that has been left standing in pipes for longer periods of time.

Federal and state drinking water rules establish "action levels" allowable for lead and copper in water samples collected from homes. At least 90 percent of samples may have no more than 0.015 milligrams of lead in one liter of water and no more than 1.3 milligrams of copper per liter. Once every three years, we sample 5 (five) homes for lead and copper. The most recent sampling was completed in 2023 (see the lead and copper results for 2023 in the Water Quality Analytical Results chart on page 8). Results show our system at or below the action levels for both lead and copper. The next required scheduled monitoring will be completed in 2026.

Pregnant women and young children can be more vulnerable to lead

in drinking water than the general population. If you have concerns about lead levels in the water at your home, have your water tested. Running water between 30 seconds and 2 minutes after it sits stagnant in the pipes for a few hours can help clean the tap and reduce the amount of lead and/or copper in your water. A change in the temperature of water will also tell you when fresh water arrives. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791) or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

## Water Quality Improvements

Active mixing devices have been installed in some of the District's storage facilities to improve water quality, eliminate stratification, reduce water age, and provide equalization of free chlorine. Proper mixing will minimize taste and odor issues and help reduce the formation of disinfection by-products (DBPs). The need for additional mixing devices is being evaluated via the District's capital improvement program.

## DRINKING WATER CONTAMINANTS INFORMATION

All sources of water contain some amount of contaminants, including bottled water. In general, the sources for both tap and bottled water include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over land or percolates through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and in some cases radioactive material. The water can also pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals and/or from human activity.

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, 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 byproducts 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 be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

# HOW DO WE TREAT YOUR WATER?

## Chlorine (Sodium Hypochlorite)

The District treats all ground water sources with the addition of chlorine (sodium hypochlorite) to protect against microorganisms which can cause illnesses such as typhoid, cholera, hepatitis and giardiasis.

This chlorination process is completed at the source where chlorine levels are monitored around the clock. Free chlorine residuals are also monitored throughout the water system 24/7. Chlorine is added to our water supply to act as an oxidant that destroys microorganisms in order to help maintain your health and safety. Chlorine also reacts with natural organic material commonly found in surface water sources such as the Regional Water Supply System (RWSS). This reaction forms compounds called disinfection byproducts (DBPs). The District meets drinking water standards for two groups of disinfection byproduct compounds. Byproduct levels found in water depend primarily on:

- The amount of natural organic material in the water.
- The amount of chlorine used to treat the water.
- The amount of time it takes water to reach the customer.
- The temperature of the water.





# WHAT'S IN YOUR WATER?

The results in the following table show the substances identified at the water source, at the treatment plant, and in the distribution system in 2023. The table does not include other volatile organic chemicals and synthetic organic chemicals that were tested for but not detected in our drinking water, including many industrial chemicals, herbicides and pesticides.



Scan Here to learn more about chlorine and drinking water standards

## CWD Sugarloaf Water System Water Quality Table 2023

Regulated Substances	Unit	Year Sampled	MCL (Maximum amount allowed)	MCLG (Ideal amount or less)	Range or level Detected or # Exceed AL	Regulation Met	Potential Sources of Contaminant
Regulated at the Source							
Nitrate	ppm	2023	10 ppm	10 ppm	1.80 ppm	YES	Natural erosion
Regulated in the Distribution System							
Chlorine	ppm	2023	MRDL = 4 ppm	NA	0.63-1.06 ppm	YES	Treatment additive
Total Coliforms	%	2023	5.0% of samples per month	0	0	YES	Coliforms are naturally present in the environment
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM's)	ppb	2023	80 ppb	NA	2.27 ppb	YES	Disinfection interaction
Regulated Substances	Unit	Year Sampled	Action Level +	MCLG (Ideal amount or less)	Results*/Homes Exceeding Action Level	YES	Potential Sources of Contaminant
Regulated at the Customer's Tap							
Lead	ppb	2023	AL = 15 ppb	0	1.8 ppb*/0 of 5	YES	Household plumbing
Copper	ppm	2023	AL = 1.3 ppm	1.3 ppm	0.884 ppm*/0 of 5	YES	Household plumbing

\*90<sup>th</sup> Percentile: i.e., 90 percent of the samples were less than the values shown.

+The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment of other requirements which a water system must follow.

### Acronyms

**NA:** Not Applicable

**ND:** Not Detected

**NTU:** Nephelometric Turbidity Units, measure of the clarity, or turbidity, of water.

**ppm:** Parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/L)

**ppb:** Parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (µg/L)

### Definitions

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

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

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL):** 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.

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG):** 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.



## WHERE YOU CAN GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



Covington Water District  
18631 SE 300th Place  
Covington, WA 98042  
[www.covingtonwater.com](http://www.covingtonwater.com)  
(253) 631-0565

Water Quality Lead  
(253) 867-0944  
[glenn.stockman@covingtonwater.com](mailto:glenn.stockman@covingtonwater.com)

Customer Service Department  
(253) 631-0565  
[customer.service@covingtonwater.com](mailto:customer.service@covingtonwater.com)

Washington State Department of Health  
(253) 395-6750  
[www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw)

United States Environmental Protection Agency  
[www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater)  
Safe Drinking Water Hotline  
(800) 426-4791

The hotline and EPA website offers information about drinking water contaminants and their potential health effects as well as guidelines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control about appropriate ways to reduce the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants. Both sources also offer information about lead in drinking water, testing methods and steps you can take to minimize exposure.

**Covington Water District Board Meetings**  
Covington Water District Board meetings are regularly scheduled open public meetings held at 4:30pm, on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

Visit our website for meeting information  
[www.covingtonwater.com/35/Board](http://www.covingtonwater.com/35/Board)



### COMMISSIONERS:

Alan Eades  
Kevin Fuhrer  
Brad Lake  
David B. Roselle  
Tal Weberg



**GENERAL MANAGER:**  
Thomas Keown, P.E.