

# ***Annual Drinking Water Quality Report Alleghany County – Covington Distribution Area***

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for calendar year 2009 is designed to provide you with valuable information about your drinking water quality. We are committed to providing you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water, and we want you to understand the efforts we make to protect your water supply. The quality of your drinking water meets all state and federal requirements administered by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH).

If you have questions about this report, want additional information about any aspect of your drinking water, or want to know how to participate in decisions that may affect the quality of your drinking water, please contact:

Mr. Christopher Clark – Director of Public Works at (540) 863-6650
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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances (referred to as contaminants) in source water may come from septic systems, discharges from domestic or industrial wastewater treatment facilities, agricultural and farming activities, urban stormwater runoff, residential uses, and many other types of activities. Water from surface sources is treated to make it drinkable while groundwater may or may not have any treatment.

All drinking water, including bottled drinking 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 can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (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 microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

## **SOURCES AND TREATMENT OF YOUR DRINKING WATER**

Your drinking water is purchased from the City of Covington. Covington's water treatment plant, located on the Jackson River just upstream of Westvaco, filters and disinfects surface water. The treated water is then distributed throughout the distribution system by booster pumping stations, storage tanks and piping.

## **SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENTS**

A source water assessment for the City of Covington was completed by the VDH. This assessment determined that the water source, the Jackson River, may be susceptible to contamination. All surface water sources (rivers, reservoirs) are exposed to a wide array of contaminants of varying concentrations and changing hydrologic, hydraulic and atmospheric conditions that promote migration of contaminants from land use activities of concern within the assessment area. More specific information may be obtained by contacting the water system representative listed above.

## QUALITY OF YOUR DRINKING WATER

Your drinking water is routinely monitored according to Federal and State Regulations for a variety of contaminants. The tables that follow show the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

Most of the results in the table are from testing done in 2009. However, the state allows us to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Some of our data, though accurate, is more than one year old.

### DEFINITIONS

In the table and elsewhere in this report you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. The following definitions are provided to help you better understand these terms:

*Non-detects (ND)* – lab analysis indicates that the contaminant is not present.

*Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l)* – one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.

*Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter* – one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000.

*Parts per trillion (ppt) or Nanograms per liter (nanograms/l)* – one part per trillion corresponds to one minute in 2,000,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000,000.

*Picocuries per liter (pCi/L)* – picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

*Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU)* – nephelometric turbidity unit is a measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

*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.

*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.

*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.

*Variances and exemptions* – state or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.

## WATER QUALITY RESULTS

### Microbiological (Alleghany County systems annual summary)

#### PWSID #2005095 – Cherokee Forest and Indian Valley

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Violation	Date of Sample(s)	Typical Source of Contamination
total coliform bacteria	presence or absence	0	presence of coliform bacteria in >1 sample per month	1	no	11/3/09	naturally present in the environment

#### PWSID #2005440 – Clearwater Park, Clearview Estates, Intervale and Dunbrack Road

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Violation	Date of Sample(s)	Typical Source of Contamination
total coliform bacteria	presence or absence	0	presence of coliform bacteria in >1 sample per month	0	no	monthly	naturally present in the environment

#### PWSID #2005800 – Rosedale, Oakwood Forest, Westwood and Callaghan

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Violation	Date of Sample(s)	Typical Source of Contamination
total coliform bacteria	presence or absence	0	presence of coliform bacteria in >1 sample per month	3	Yes June 2009	monthly	naturally present in the environment

### Lead and Copper (Alleghany County systems)

#### PWSID #2005095 – Cherokee Forest and Indian Valley

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	AL Exceeded	Samples > AL	Typical Source of Contamination
lead	ppb	0	AL = 15	<5	no	0	corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
copper	ppm	1.3	AL = 1.3	0.121	no	0	

Five samples for lead and copper analysis were collected from the distribution system in August of 2009; analysis frequency is every three years.

#### PWSID #2005440 – Clearwater Park, Clearview Estates, Dunbrack Road and Intervale

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	AL Exceeded	Samples > AL	Typical Source of Contamination
lead	ppb	0	AL = 15	4	no	0	corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
copper	ppm	1.3	AL = 1.3	0.334	no	0	

Ten samples for lead and copper analysis were collected from the distribution system in September of 2009; analysis frequency is every three years.

#### PWSID #2005800 – Rosedale, Oakwood Forest, Westwood and Callaghan

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	AL Exceeded	Samples > AL	Typical Source of Contamination
lead	ppb	0	AL = 15	4	no	1	corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
copper	ppm	1.3	AL = 1.3	0.270	no	0	

Ten samples for lead and copper analysis were collected from the distribution system in September of 2009; analysis frequency is every three years.

### Volatile Organic Contaminants (Alleghany County systems)

#### PWSID #2005095 – Cherokee Forest and Indian Valley (sampled quarterly in 2009)

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL*	Level Found	Violation	Sample Period	Typical Source of Contamination
total trihalomethanes	ppb	0	80	range 29 - 73	no	2009	by-product of drinking water chlorination
total haloacetic acids	ppb	0	60	range 1.1 - 24	no	2009	by-product of drinking water chlorination

\* MCL based on an average of four consecutive samples.

#### PWSID #2005440 – Clearwater Park, Clearview Estates, Intervale and Dunbrack Road (sampled quarterly in 2009)

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL*	Level Found	Violation	Sample Period	Typical Source of Contamination
total trihalomethanes	ppb	0	80	range 19 - 55	no	2009	by-product of drinking water chlorination
total haloacetic acids	ppb	0	60	range 24 - 69	no	2009	by-product of drinking water chlorination

\* MCL based on an average of four consecutive samples.

#### PWSID #2005800 – Rosedale, Oakwood Forest, Westwood and Callaghan (sampled quarterly in 2009)

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL*	Level Found	Violation	Sample Period	Typical Source of Contamination
total trihalomethanes	ppb	0	80	range 46 - 87	no	2009	by-product of drinking water chlorination
total haloacetic acids	ppb	0	60	range 1 - 2	no	2009	by-product of drinking water chlorination

\* MCL based on an average of four consecutive samples.

### Inorganic Contaminants (City of Covington Data)

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Violation	Date of Sample(s)	Typical Source of Contamination
<sup>1</sup> turbidity							
a) highest single measurement	TU	NA	TT	0.11	no	8/6/09	soil runoff
b) lowest monthly percentage meeting 0.3 NTU limits	percent	NA	TT	100 %	no	NA	
nitrate	ppm	10	10	0.20	no	7/20/09	runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
fluoride	ppm	4	4	range 0.95 to 1.21	no	daily	water additive which promotes strong teeth; erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories

<sup>1</sup>Turbidity – Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water, a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.

**Volatile Organic Contaminants (City of Covington Data)**

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Violation	Date of Sample(s)	Typical Source of Contamination
total trihalomethanes*	ppb	0	80	range 15 to 56	no	10/20/09 7/20/09 5/13/09 1/15/09	by-product of drinking water chlorination
total haloacetic acids*	ppb	0	60	range 4.9 to 52	no	10/20/09 7/20/09 5/13/09 1/15/09	by-product of drinking water chlorination
No other VOCs detected**						7/20/09	

\*Analyses required every year for Stage 1 DBP Rule.

\*Analyses required every three months for Stage 2 DBP Rule.

\*\*Analyses for all other VOCs required annually.

**Radiological Contaminants (City of Covington Data)**

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Violation	Date of Sample(s)	Typical Source of Contamination
gross alpha radiation	pCi/l	0	15	0	no	10/14/08	erosion of natural deposits
gross beta radiation	pCi/l	0	50	1.6	no	10/14/08	erosion of natural deposits

\*Analyses frequency is every six years.

**Synthetic Organic Contaminants (City of Covington Data)**

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Violation	Date of Sample(s)	Typical Source of Contamination
no synthetic organic contaminants detected						07/14./08 04/08/08	

\*Analyses frequency is every three years.

**Total Organic Carbon (City of Covington Data)**

Contaminant	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Violation	Date of Sample(s)	Typical Source of Contamination
total organic carbon	NA - ratio	NA	TT 1.00 removal ratio	all removal ratios 1.00 or above	no	monthly	naturally occurring

Samples collected monthly.

We constantly monitor for various contaminants in the water supply to meet all regulatory requirements. The table lists only those contaminants that had some level of detection. Many other contaminants have been analyzed but were not present or were below the detection limits of the lab equipment.

Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) are set at very stringent levels by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In developing the standards, EPA assumes that the average adult drinks 2 liters of water each day throughout a 70-year life span. EPA generally sets MCLs at levels that will result in no adverse health effects for some contaminants or a one-in-ten-thousand to one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect for other contaminants.

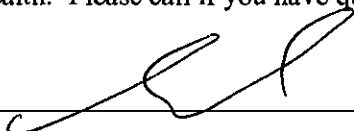
If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Alleghany County is responsible for providing high quality drinking 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 15 to 30 seconds or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature 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 of at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

## **VIOLATION INFORMATION**

**Water Quality Violations** – Total coliform bacteria were detected in three samples during June 2009 in the Rosedale, Oakwood Forest, Westwood and Callaghan system. A MCL violation occurs when total coliform bacteria is detected in more than one sample per month. The cause of the June violation is unknown. The duration of this violation was only one month and samples collected since then have been satisfactory.

**Monitoring and reporting violations** – We had no monitoring or reporting violations in 2009.

This Drinking Water Quality Report was prepared by the Alleghany County Department of Public Works with the assistance and approval of the Virginia Department of Health. Please call if you have questions.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  


Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
3/22/10