Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for 2008
Town of Secretary
June 8, 2009
PWSID 0090007

We're pleased to present to you this year's Annual Water Quality Report. This report is designed to inform you about the water quality and services we deliver to you every day. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water. Our water source is a ground source which consists of two (2) deep wells which draw from the confined Piney Point Formation.

This report shows our water quality and what it means.

We have a source water protection plan available from our office that provides more information such as potential sources of contamination. This plan is also available from Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Dorchester County Public Library.

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).

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact Yvonne Pritchett at Town Hall, 410-943-3113. We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled town meetings held on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm at Secretary's Town Hall.

The Town of Secretary routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. This table shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2008. As water travels over the land or underground, it can pick up substances or contaminants such as microbes, inorganic and organic chemicals, and radioactive substances. All drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. It's important to remember that the presence of these contaminants does not necessarily pose a health risk.

In this table you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

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.

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

Action Level - the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Maximum Contaminant Level - The "Maximum Allowed" (MCL) is 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 - The "Goal"(MCLG) is 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.

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TEST RESULTS						
Contaminant	Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Unit Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Radioactive Contaminants						
Beta/photon emitters	N	5	pCi/1	0	50	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Alpha emitters	N	< 1	pCi/1	0	15	Erosion of natural deposits
Combined radium (226 & 228)	N	< 0.8	pCi/1	0	5	Erosion of natural deposits
Inorganic Contaminants						
Arsenic (average) (range)	**Y**	**15.5 13.5-20.0**	ppb	n/a	10	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Copper (2007)	N	0.229	ppm	1.3	AL=1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
Fluoride	N	0.29	ppm	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Lead (2007)	N	0	ppb	0	AL=15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits
Nitrate (as Nitrogen)	N	< 0.2	ppm	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Volatile Organic Contaminants						
TTHM (distribution) [Total trihalomethanes]	N	6.99	ppb	0	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (distribution)	N	0	ppb	0	60	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Unregulated Contaminants						
Sodium	N	15.3	ppm	N/A	N/A	Erosion of natural deposits

Note: Test results are for year 2008 or as indicated; not all contaminants are required to be tested for annually. These are our most recent results.

Our water system violated a drinking water standard for Arsenic during 2008. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results from the Maryland Department of Environment for 2008 show that our system exceeded the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for Arsenic. The standard for Arsenic was lowered from 50 ppb to 10 ppb effective January 23, 2006. The average level of Arsenic for our system during 2008 was 15.5 ppb as determined by quarterly monitoring.

What should I do?

- **You do not need to use an alternative (e.g., bottled) water supply.** However, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor.

What does this mean?

This is not an immediate risk. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. Some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years, could experience skin damage or problems with their circulatory system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer .

Steps we are taking

We have a contract with Shanahan Artesian Well Company, Inc. to drill new wells which will be blended with the current wells to lower the arsenic level. We have continued to post quarterly notices of this water quality issue and will do so until it is resolved. For more information, please contact the Town of Secretary at 410-943-3113 or Town Hall, 122 Main Street, Secretary, MD 21664.

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Note: 2 new wells have been drilled and tested. These new wells have been drilled into The Federalsburg Aquifer, which has been shown through testing to be free or very low in arsenic contamination. We anticipate that these will be placed into service in the near future. As a precaution, we are continuing to test for arsenic on a quarterly basis.

All sources of drinking water are subject to potential contamination by substances that are naturally occurring or man made. These substances can be microbes, inorganic or organic chemicals and radioactive substances. All 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 the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

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 Secretary 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.

NOTE: As can be seen by results listed in the above tables, lead, which is tested for triennial (every 3 years) in accordance with Federal and State Regulations in Secretary's distribution system, was not detected in our most recently collected samples.

We constantly monitor for various contaminants in the water supply to meet all regulatory requirements. This past year we received reporting violations for April 1st thru April 30th and May 1st thru May 31st when routine Bacti test results for those months were not received by MDE by the required due date. This did not pose a threat to the quality of our water supply as test results were negative for the presence of bacteria.

MCL's are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated contaminants, a person would have to drink 2 liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.

Thank you for allowing us to continue providing your family with clean, quality water this year. In order to maintain a safe and dependable water supply we sometimes need to make improvements that will benefit all of our customers. These improvements are sometimes reflected as rate structure adjustments. Thank you for understanding.

Please call our office if you have questions about this report.

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