

SUBSTANCES THAT COULD BE IN WATER

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S.EPA prescribes regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

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, in some cases, radioactive material, and substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances 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, or wildlife;

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may 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 by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

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

For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, call the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

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ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

REPORTING YEAR 2024

Presented by
Westerly Water Department

PWS#: RI1559512

WESTERLY WATER QUALITY REPORT

We are pleased to present our annual water quality report covering the period between January 1 and December 31, 2024. This report fulfills the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) requirement to provide a Consumer Confidence Report for all customers receiving water from a public system. This report explains the quality of your drinking water, its sources, and an overview of the water system.

We remain committed to producing drinking water that meets or exceeds all state and federal drinking water standards. Our exceptional staff continues to work hard every day, at any hour, to deliver the highest quality drinking water without any interruption. As new challenges to drinking water quality and safety emerge, we pledge to remain vigilant in meeting the goals of source water protection, water conservation, and community education while continuing to serve the needs of all our water users. The staff at the Westerly Water Department is always available to assist you should you ever have any questions or concerns about your water.

WHERE DOES MY WATER COME FROM?

The Westerly Water Department's water supply comes from twelve gravel-packed wells located at seven well fields within the Pawcatuck River Aquifer Region. The wellfields are located on Bradford Road, Old Carriage Road, Pound Road, and White Rock Road in the Town of Westerly. The total system production capability is 7.43 million gallons per day.

If you live close to an existing well site, please be very cautious about discharging any type of pollutant into the ground. This could negatively affect the water supply in future years. For information regarding the area where you live in relation to water sources that supply the Westerly System, please call the Westerly Water Department at (401) 348-2559.

SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT

A Source Water Assessment Plan (SWAP) is available for review at our office. This plan is an assessment of the delineated areas around our listed sources through which contaminants, if present, could migrate and reach our source water. It also includes an inventory of potential sources of contamination within the delineated areas, and a determination of the water supply's susceptibility to contamination by the identified potential sources. According to the Source Water Assessment Plan, our water system had a susceptibility rating of medium. If you would like to review the Source Water Assessment Plan, please feel free to contact our office during regular office hours.

PROTECTING YOUR WATER

Bacteria are a natural and important part of our world. There are around 40 trillion bacteria living in each of us; without them, we would not be able to live healthy lives. Coliform bacteria are common in the environment and are generally not harmful themselves. The presence of this bacterial form in drinking water, however, is a concern because it indicates that the water may be contaminated with other organisms that can cause disease.

In 2016, the U.S. EPA passed a new regulation called the Revised Total Coliform Rule, which requires additional steps that water systems must take to ensure the integrity of the drinking water distribution system by monitoring for the presence of bacteria like total coliform and E coli. The rule requires more stringent standards than the previous regulation, and it requires water systems that may be vulnerable to contamination to have in place procedures that will minimize the incidence of contamination. Water systems that exceed a specified frequency of total coliform occurrences are required to assess their system and correct any problems quickly. The U.S. EPA anticipates greater public health protection under the new regulation due to its more preventive approach to identifying and fixing problems that may affect public health. Though we are fortunate to have the highest-quality drinking water, our goal is to eliminate all potential pathways of contamination into our distribution system, and this new rule helps us to accomplish that goal.

IMPORTANT HEALTH INFORMATION

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised 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 may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. Any school/childcare facility can request testing at any time for lead sampling. RIDOH is currently offering voluntary testing to Rhode Island public schools and childcare facilities. The U.S. EPA/CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791 or <http://water.epa.gov/drink/hotline>.

WESTERLY WEBSITE MAKES PAYMENTS EASIER

Website enhancements have facilitated the implementation of online utility bill payment on the Town of Westerly website www.westerlyri.gov. Additional information on online bill payment can be obtained by contacting the Westerly Water Department at (401) 348-2559.

WATER MAIN FLUSHING

Distribution mains (pipes) convey water to homes, businesses, and hydrants in your neighborhood. The water entering distribution mains is of very high quality; however, water quality can deteriorate in areas of the distribution mains over time. Water main flushing is the process of cleaning the interior of water distribution mains by sending a rapid flow of water through the mains.

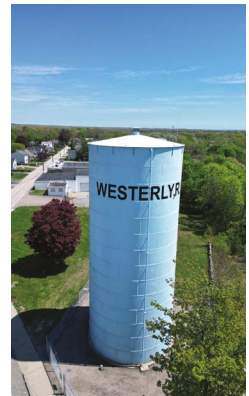
Flushing maintains water quality in several ways. For example, flushing removes sediments like iron and manganese. Although iron and manganese do not themselves pose health concerns, they can affect the taste, clarity, and color of the water. Additionally, sediments can shield microorganisms from the disinfecting power of chlorine, contributing to the growth of microorganisms within distribution mains. Flushing helps remove stale water and ensures the presence of fresh water with sufficient dissolved oxygen and disinfectant levels, and an acceptable taste and smell.

During flushing operations in your neighborhood, some short-term deterioration of water quality, though uncommon, is possible. You should avoid tap water for household use at that time. If you do use the tap, allow your cold water to run for a few minutes at full velocity before use, and avoid using hot water, to prevent sediment accumulation in your hot water tank.

Please contact us if you have any questions or if you would like more information on our water main flushing schedule.

WATER TREATMENT PROCESS

Westerly's groundwater source is very good right out of the ground. The only treatment required prior to distribution is pH adjustment and polyphosphate addition for corrosion control along with mixed oxidants (MIOX) including chlorine for disinfection to protect against bacterial contaminants.



SAMPLING RESULTS

Our water is monitored for many kinds of contaminants on a very strict sampling schedule. We take 44 samples each month at 11 different locations. The

information below represents only those substances that were detected; our goal is to keep all detections below their respective maximum allowed levels. The State recommends monitoring for certain substances less

often than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data are included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

REGULATED SUBSTANCES							
Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	Highest Level Allowed (MCL / MRDL)	Ideal Goal MCLG / MRDLG	Highest Result	Range of Results	Violation	Typical Source
Barium (ppm)	2023	2	2	0.089	0.011-0.089	No	Discharge of drilling wastes ; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Benzene (ppb)	2024	5	0	ND	ND	No	Runoff/leaching from insecticide used on cotton and cattle
Beryllium (ppb)	2023	2	2	ND	ND	No	Discharge from metal refineries and coal-burning factories; Discharge from electrical, aerospace, and defense industries
Cadmium (ppb)	2023	5	5	ND	ND	No	Corrosion of galvanized pipes; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from metal refineries; Runoff from waste batteries and paints
Chlorine (ppm)	2024	4	4	1.94	ND-1.94	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Chromium (ppb)	2023	100	100	ND	ND	No	Discharge from steel and mills; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	2023	4	4	0.17	ND-0.17	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Haloacetic Acids (HAA) (ppb)	2024	60	NA	15.1	6-15.1	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (ppm)	2024	10	10	3.66	0.02-3.66	No	Runoff from fertilizer use;
Toluene (ppm)	2024	1	1	ND	ND	No	Discharge from petroleum factories
Total Coliform Bacteria ¹ (Monthly Max %)	2024	Presence of Coliform Bacteria in >5% of the monthly samples	0%	0.61%	0.43-0.61%	No	Naturally present in the environment
Toxaphene (ppb)	2024	3	0	ND	ND	No	Discharge from factories; Leaching from gas storage tanks and landfills
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	2024	80	NA	32.16	ND-32.16	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Turbidity (NTU)	2024	TT	0	5.5	ND-5.5	No	Soil runoff

Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community

Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	EPA's Action Level (AL)	Ideal Goal MCLG / MRDLG	Amount Detected (90th%tile)	Sites Above AL/Total Sites	Violation	Range of Results	Typical Source
Copper (ppm)	2024	90% of samples less than 1.3 ppm	1.3	0.89	0/30	No	0.028-1.26	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	2024	90% of samples less than 15 ppb	0.015	0.017	4/30	Yes	0.0005-0.0606	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

DEFINITIONS

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

MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level): 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. Secondary MCLs (SMCLs) are established to regulate the aesthetics of water (i.e., taste and odor).

MCLG (Maximum Contaminant Level Goal): 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.

MRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level): 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.

MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal): 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.

NA: Not applicable

ND (Not detected): Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

pCi/L (picocuries per liter): A measure of radioactivity.

ppb (parts per billion): One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

ppm (parts per million): One part substance per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

ppt (parts per trillion): One part substance per trillion parts water (or nanograms per liter).

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

UNREGULATED AND OTHER SUBSTANCES			
Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	Average Amount Detected	Range Low-High
Bromochloroacetic Acid (ppb)	2022	1.5	1.4-1.6
Bromodichloromethane (ppb)	2024	2.1	ND-11
Bromoform (ppb)	2024	0.12	ND-0.68
Chloroform (ppb)	2024	3.09	ND-15
Dibromoacetic Acid (ppb)	2024	0.7	ND-1.4
Dibromochloromethane (ppb)	2024	1.13	ND-5.7
Dichloroacetic Acid (ppb)	2024	4.6	1.6-7.6
Nickel (ppm)	2023	tances	ND-0.0014
Sodium (ppm)	2024	20.56	9.8-45.1
Trichloroacetic Acid (ppb)	2024	5.25	4.4-6.1

UNREGULATED CONTAMINANT MONITORING RULE PART 3 (UCMR3)			
Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	Average Amount Detected	Range Low-High
Perfluorobutanesulfonic Acid (PFBS) (ppt)	2024	1.10	ND-3.82
Perfluoroheptanoic Acid (PFHpA) (ppt)	2024	1.23	ND-3.45
Perfluorononanoic Acid ³ (PFNA) (ppt)	2024	0.36	ND-2.19
Perfluorooctanesulfonate Acid (PFOS) (ppt)	2024	1.92	ND-6.69
Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) (ppt)	2024	3.28	ND-7.54
Perfluoroundecanoic Acid ³ (PFUnA) (ppt)	2024	0.12	ND-2.06
Perfluorodecanoic Acid ³ (PFDA) (ppt)	2024	ND	ND
Perfluorohexanoic Acid (PFHxA) (ppt)	2024	1.75	ND-5.86
Perfluorohexanesulfonic Acid (PFHxS) (ppt)	2024	0.14	ND-2.39

UNREGULATED CONTAMINANT MONITORING RULE PART 4 (UCMR4)			
Substance (Unit of Measure)	Year Sampled	Average Amount Detected	Range Low-High
Monochloroacetic Acid ³ (ppb)	2024	ND	ND
Monobromoacetic Acid ³ (ppb)	2024	ND	ND
Dichloroacetic Acid (ppb)	2024	4.6	1.6-7.6
Trichloroacetic Acid (ppb)	2024	5.25	4.4-6.1
Bromochloroacetic Acid (ppb)	2022	1.5	1.4-1.6
Dibromoacetic Acid ³ (ppb)	2024	0.7	ND-1.4
Managanese (ppb)	2020	7	7

Table Footnotes:

2) 4000 pCi/l of Radon in water contributes about 0.4 pCi/l of Radon in air.

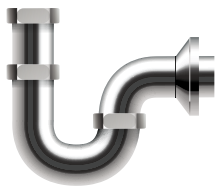
3) Substance was sampled with results below detection limits in years since detected result.

Table Footnotes: 1) This value refers to the highest monthly percentage of positive samples detected during the year. For 2021 Westerly Water collected 565 samples for coliform bacteria of which only 1 sample was positive.

LEAD IN HOME PLUMBING

If present, Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children.

Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and in home plumbing. The Westerly Water Department is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formulas, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. If you have a lead or galvanized service line requiring replacement, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact The Westerly Water Department at 401-348-2559. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>. The Westerly Water Department developed an in-depth inventory of lead lines throughout town this year. While working within the requirements of the Rhode Island Department of Health, we have reviewed internal data as well as performed in person inspections of unknown house lines, this inventory can be found at the link below. We are encouraging residents to complete the **survey** below as well, if you have not done so already. **Survey** - <https://westerlyri.gov/FormCenter/Water-Sewer-5/Water-Service-Survey-65>. **Inventory** - https://ridoh.120water-ptd.com/?mc_cid=2c5c39b4f6&mc_eid=c26c0c7fb6



RADON

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. You should pursue radon removal for your home if the level of radon in your air is 4 pCi/L or higher. There are simple ways to fix a radon problem that are not too costly. For additional information, call your state radon program or call U.S. EPA's Radon Hotline at (800) SOS-RADON.

WHAT IS A CROSS CONNECTION?

Cross-connections that contaminate drinking water distribution lines are a major concern. A cross connection is formed at any point where a drinking water line connects to equipment (boilers), systems containing chemicals (air conditioning systems, fire sprinkler systems, irrigation systems) or water sources of questionable quality. Cross-connection contamination can occur when the pressure in the equipment or system is greater than the pressure inside the drinking water line (backpressure). Contamination can also occur when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to fairly routine occurrences (main breaks, heavy water demand) causing contaminants to be sucked out from the equipment and into the drinking water line (back siphonage).

Outside water taps and garden hoses tend to be the most common sources of cross-connection contamination at home. The garden hose creates a hazard when submerged in a swimming pool or when attached to a chemical sprayer for weed killing. Garden hoses that are



left lying on the ground may be contaminated by fertilizers, cesspools or garden chemicals. Improperly installed valves in your toilet could also be a source of cross-connection contamination.

Community water supplies are continuously jeopardized by cross-connections unless appropriate valves, known as backflow prevention devices, are installed and maintained. We have surveyed all industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities in the service area to make sure that all potential cross connections are identified and eliminated or protected by a backflow preventer. We also inspect and test each backflow preventer to make sure that it is providing maximum protection.

For more information call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

You are invited to participate in our public forum and voice your concerns about your drinking water. We encourage our residents to follow our Utilities Department page on Facebook. The Town Council meets on the first, second, and third Mondays of the month, beginning at 5:30 p.m., at Town Hall, 45 Broad Street, Westerly, RI and is broadcast via Zoom and Facebook.

VIOLATIONS (TIER 3 PUBLIC NOTICE)

The Westerly Water Department had one monitoring violation this 2024 reporting year, this is a Tier 3 public notice requirement. We actively performed a make-up sample as soon as we were made aware of the missed sample. This sample did not pose a concern for public health matters. We are diligent in our treatment process and do our best to take all necessary precautions to continue to provide you with great water quality.

QUESTIONS?

For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water please contact the Director of Public Works – Utilities Division;
Max Sposato at (401) 348-2561.