

# Town of Williamstown

## 2009 Water Quality Report

- Turn the water off when you are brushing your teeth or washing your hands
- Use a bucket of suds to wash a car or bicycle. Then rinse quickly with a hose.
- Wash laundry or do dishes in full loads.
- Water the garden in the morning or evening to avoid excessive evaporation.
- Use bark mulch around shrubs, trees, or plantings as it retains moisture much better than just soil.
- Fix leaks as toilets and faucets can attribute up to as much as 3,000 gallons of waste per year.

**We are pleased to report that Williamstown's water meets all water quality standards for drinking water set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.**

Williamstown's water comes from three sources; all three are ground water wells, in a confined aquifer. They are also artesian in their flow characteristics, this means they are under pressure and will come to the top of the ground without the use of a pump. The pumps are only installed to create enough force to fill the underground storage tank (2.75 million gallons), located between the end of South Street and the end of Stone Hill Rd. Two of the wells are located on Stetson Road adjacent the Little League field, and the other located off Main St. behind the town's tennis courts. Williamstown still maintains the surface supplies of Sherman Springs Reservoir and Rattlesnake Reservoir as backups for emergency supply. These two sources account for an approximate 10 million gallon safety net.

### Measurements

In the following report, one part per million (ppm) means that one pound of substance can be detected in a million pounds of water or one milligram of substance can be found in a liter of water (mg/l). To put this into perspective, one part per million is approximately one drop per 10 gallons of water.

**Drinking water including bottled water may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants.** The presence of contaminants in drinking water does not necessarily indicate that the drinking water poses a health risk. Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as those 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. EPA\CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available by contacting **the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791/ EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater> or the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Agency Western Region Office at 1-413-755-1100. Their website can be viewed at [www.state.ma.us/dep](http://www.state.ma.us/dep).**

Williamstown treats the water with Sodium Hypochlorite (NACl) chlorine; as a disinfectant and a Poly-orthophosphate (PO<sub>4</sub>)<sup>3-</sup> as a sequestering agent for calcium, iron, manganese. The product name for our poly-orthophosphate is AQUAMAG.

### Maximum Contaminant Level

**Maximum Contaminant Level or MCL :** The maximum permissible level of a contaminant in a water, which is delivered to any user of a public water system. Maximum contaminant levels are enforceable standards. The margins of safety in MCLG's ensure that exceeding the MCL slightly does not pose significant risk to public health.

### Maximum Contaminant Level Goal

**Maximum Contaminant Level Goal or MCLG :** The maximum level of a contaminant in drinking water at which no known or anticipated adverse effect on the health effect of persons would occur, and which allows for an adequate margin of safety. MCLGs are non-enforceable public health goals.

## Definitions

- (i) The sources of drinking water (both tap 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 human or animal activity.
- (ii) Contaminants that may be present in source water include:
- (A) *Microbiological contaminants*, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- (B) *Inorganic contaminants*, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water run-off, industrial and domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- (C) *Pesticides and herbicides*, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water run-off, and residential uses.
- (D) *Organic chemical contaminants*, including synthetic or volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also, come from gas stations, urban storm water run-off, and septic systems.
- (E) *Radioactive contaminants*, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.
- (iii) In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the E.P.A. prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. F.D.A. regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

Contaminant (Units)	Level Detected	Range Detected	MCL	Violation (Yes/No)	Possible Source of Contamination
<b>Inorganic</b>					
Nitrates (ppm)	0.01	.01-ND	10	No	Run off from fertilizer, leaching from septic tanks; sewage

## LEAD AND COPPER SAMPLING 2009

Contaminant (Units)	Action Level	MCLG	Level Detected	Number of sites sampled	Number of sites found above Action Level	Possible source of contamination	Violation (Yes/No)
Lead (ppm)	.015 p.p.m.	0	ND-.0088 p.p.m.	24	0	Corrosion of household plumbing	No
Copper (ppm)	1.3 ppm	1.3	.36 p.p.m	24	0	Corrosion of household plumbing	No

Radioactive	Level Detected	Range Detected	MCL	MCLG	Violation (Yes/No)	Possible Source of Contamination
Combined radium (pCi/l)	1.1	n/a	5	0	No	Erosion of Natural Deposits
Alpha emitters (pCi/l)	1.3	.4-1.3	15	0	No	Erosion of natural deposits

**Please make sure fire hydrants are not hidden or masked by any foliage, plantings or fencing, as it is designed so that your property is adequately protected in the event of a fire!!!!**

Copies of this report are also available at the Town Garage, 675 Simonds Road and Town Hall, 31 North Street. It is also available on the web [www.williamstown.net](http://www.williamstown.net).

This report is submitted by **Edward J. Rondeau**, your Water and Sewer Superintendent. Any questions or comments can be forwarded to me by calling **(413) 458-3383**.