

A SHARED RESOURCE

Pinellas County Utilities' 1999 Consumer Confidence Water Quality Report

When you drink Pinellas County's tap water you're drinking clean, high quality water. Pinellas County Utilities (PCU) proudly reports that the water we provide our customers meets or exceeds all Federal and State standards for safe drinking water. PCU first provided this report to all of our customers in 1998, one full year before the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) required all public water systems to produce a similar report.

All the information contained in this report has been collected and reported in accordance with the rules and regulations of the USEPA and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). Each day, County employees are working around-the-clock to ensure that the water provided to you meets these standards and your expectations for safety, reliability and quality.

We hope that you will take a few minutes to review this important information. If you have any questions about this report, or Pinellas County Utilities, please do not hesitate to call our office at 727/464-4714. A customer service representative will be happy to assist you.

Pinellas County complies with the Americans with Disability Act. To obtain accessible formats of this document, please contact the Pinellas County Department of Public Affairs at 727/464-4600 or TDD 727/464-4431.

Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No.
758
Tampa,
Florida

14 South Fort Harrison Ave.
Clearwater, FL 33756



The majority of the text in this publication is mandated by The Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Printed on recycled paper at a cost of 10¢ per household by Pinellas County Utilities.

H₂O A SHARED RESOURCE

Pinellas County Utilities' 1999 Consumer Confidence Water Quality Report

Published in June 2000

IT ALL STARTS WITH A DROP OF RAIN...

PCU's water starts with a safe and reliable source of groundwater. What is groundwater? It is water that has fallen as rain, then absorbed into the ground where it travels through layers of sand, clay and limestone. Percolation through these layers acts as a natural filtering process before the water is trapped in an underground lake or stream known as an aquifer. It is here, deep underground in the Floridan Aquifer*, that PCU draws its water supply.

Wellfields serving our system are located in northeastern Pinellas County and in central Pasco County. From these wellfields the water is then pumped to the S.K. Keller Water Treatment facility. At the treatment facility water undergoes four treatment processes. First a polyphosphate inhibitor is added to control corrosion in the distribution system and home plumbing. Next the water is aerated for the removal of natural elements such as hydrogen sulfide which has a displeasing odor. Then the water is chlorinated to disinfect against bacteria. Lastly, the pH (acid-alkali) is adjusted using sodium hydroxide for stabilization. The water is then pumped to your home or business through more than 1,285 miles of pipes in the PCU distribution system.

*The Floridan Aquifer, a thick sequence of porous limestone, is considered to be one of the largest aquifers in the nation and varies from 2,000 feet thick near the center of the state to a few hundred feet in coastal areas.

CONSERVE WATER

Our Water Sources

The highly skilled professionals working in PCU's state-approved laboratory analyze more than 85,000 samples of treated and untreated water a year. The water supply is regularly tested for more than 550 contaminants. In every case, the levels of contaminants found were below the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) allowed by the USEPA attesting to the superior quality of our groundwater supply.

What do all the numbers mean?

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 EPA's **Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791**.



Pinellas County Utilities...

routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws, rules, and regulations. Except where indicated otherwise, this report is based on the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st 1999.

As authorized and approved by EPA, the State has reduced monitoring requirements for certain contaminants to less often than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of our data, though representative, is more than one year old.

MCL's & Possible Health Effects

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 two liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described effect.

Our Water Sources

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 and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- (A) Microbial 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 stormwater runoff, industrial or 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 stormwater runoff, and residential uses.

(D) Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

(E) Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations, which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) 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 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 (800)-426-4791**.

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 can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. DPA/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 at (800) 426-4791**.

A Note To Our Customers About Lead And Drinking Water:

Infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general population. It is possible that lead levels at your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of materials used in your home's plumbing. If you are concerned about elevated lead levels in your home's water, you may wish to have your water tested and flush your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using tap water. Additional information is available from the **Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791**.

Lead in drinking water is rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, but can add to a person's total lead exposure. All potential sources of lead in the household should be identified and removed, replaced or reduced.

Your Participation is Welcome!

The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners meets every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. except for the monthly public hearing, usually the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The public is invited to attend and participate in public comment at the 5th floor assembly room in the Pinellas County Court House at 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida. Meetings are televised live and repeated during the week on the Pinellas County Government Access TV channel (PCGA TV-18). The meetings are closed captioned for the hearing impaired. The agenda is publicized on the County website at www.co.pinellas.fl.us/bcc/.

Tampa Bay Water's Governing Board meets the third Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at 2535 Landmark Avenue, Clearwater, Florida. To view their agenda, visit their website at www.tampabaywater.org or call 727/796-2355.

Make An Informed Water Quality Decision

If you have questions or concerns about your water quality, contact the Pinellas County Utilities Laboratory at 727/582-2302. To check complaints against water conditioning businesses, call the Pinellas County Department of Consumer Protection at 727/464-6200.

Soil
Sand
Clay
Limestone
Floridan Aquifer
Groundwater

PINELLAS COUNTY UTILITIES' WATER MEETS OR EXCEEDS ALL FEDERAL AND STATE DRINKING WATER STANDARDS!