



ANNUAL  
**WATER**  
QUALITY  
**REPORT**

*Water testing performed in 2009*

*Presented By:*



BRUNSWICK & TOPSHAM  
WATER DISTRICT

PWS ID#: 0090260

## Maintaining High Standards

Once again we are proud to present our annual water quality report. This report covers all testing performed between January 1, 2009, and December 31, 2009. The events of the past few years have presented many of us with challenges we could not have imagined. Yet in spite of this, we have maintained our high standards in an effort to continue delivering the best quality drinking water possible. There may be other hurdles in the future, but know that we will always stand behind you and the drinking water we work diligently to provide.

We encourage you to share your thoughts with us on the information contained in this report. Should you ever have any questions, we are always available to assist you.

## 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. 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 [www.epa.gov/safewater/hotline/](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/hotline/).



## Community Participation

We want our valued customers to be informed about their utility. Feel free to attend our monthly Board meetings, held on the second Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at our office located at 266 River Road in Topsham. You can also get the latest information at our Web site; please visit it at [www.btwater.org](http://www.btwater.org).

## Where Does My Water Come From?

Our sources of supply are all ground water taken from various wells, as follows:

- Jackson Station, Topsham: one 24-inch-diameter well, one 18-inch-diameter well
- Jordan Avenue Station, Brunswick: 138 2.5-inch-diameter wells
- Taylor Station, Brunswick: one 24-inch-diameter well, one 18-inch-diameter well, and one 12-inch-diameter well
- Williams Station, Brunswick: one 12-inch-diameter well

Our water distribution system includes approximately 115 miles of water main, three storage tanks, 6,800 services, and 800 private and public hydrants. In 2009 we delivered an average of approximately 1.7 million gallons of water per day to our customers.



## How Is My Water Treated and Purified?

At all of our sources, we add sodium hypochlorite (chlorine) to protect against bacteriological contaminants and fluoride to promote dental health. We also add sodium-zinc polyphosphate to inhibit corrosion of the distribution system piping and to reduce lead and copper corrosion of internal plumbing systems. The water from the Jackson and Taylor wells is filtered to remove iron and manganese caused by erosion of natural deposits in the sand and gravel aquifer. The pH of the water from the Jordan Avenue well field is adjusted using aeration to reduce the corrosivity of the water.



## Information on the Internet [www.btwater.org](http://www.btwater.org)

Did you know that the District has a Web site that we update regularly? (Yes, we do mean regularly.) Part of our customer service is making sure that we have the latest information available for you, not only at our office, but also on the Web. Our staff posts and updates all of our service applications, public notices, and Board of Trustee agendas and minutes. The site doesn't stop there. We also have a page where you can email questions, a slide show of District history, and when practical, we post videos of ongoing projects.

There are educational materials for groups and students, a section with frequently asked questions, and a secure portion of the site that allows customers to sign-up for automatic payment from checking and saving accounts. (We are presently unable to process credit cards.) We are also on Facebook, which we update periodically when the flushing program or other work is ongoing in the distribution system. We appreciate that many of our customers use the Internet to find information and answers, so we strive to make the District's site as informative and up to date as possible.

## Questions?

If you have any questions or comments about this report or any other aspect of our operations, please contact Alan J. Frasier PE, General Manager, at (207) 729-9956 (phone), (207) 725-6470 (fax), or [ajfrasier@btwater.org](mailto:ajfrasier@btwater.org) (email).



## 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.



## Variations, Exemptions, and Waivers

In 2008, The Brunswick and Topsham Water District applied for and was granted a full three-year waiver for water testing for certain synthetic organic compounds (SOC) at both the Jackson and Taylor treatment facilities; the Jordan treatment facility was required to test for all regulated SOC. This is an exemption from doing tests for insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and certain other industrial chemicals that are regulated in drinking water. The State of Maine Drinking Water Program grants a waiver only upon determining, on a case by case basis, that “it will not result in an unreasonable health risk.” For any water tests that are not waived, the District is required to report contaminants that were detected in our water supply in this CCR.

## Lead and Drinking Water

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 Brunswick and Topsham Water District 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 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 or at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

## Radon

The highest radon level for our system was 587 picocuries per liter (pCi/L), taken in December of 2004. Radon is found in soil and bedrock formations and is a water soluble, gaseous by-product of uranium decay. Most radon is released to the air moments after turning on the tap. Only about 1 percent to 2 percent of the radon in the air comes from drinking water. The State of Maine currently recommends follow-up action (or treatment) for radon levels in drinking water above 20,000 pCi/L. Breathing radon released to air from tap water increases the risk of lung cancer over the course of your lifetime. If you wish to seek more information about radon, please call (800) SOS-RADON, or contact the State Drinking Water Program and request a Radon Fact Sheet.

## What's 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 (backsiphonage).

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, review the Cross-Connection Control Manual from the U.S. EPA's Web site at [www.epa.gov/safewater/crossconnection.html](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/crossconnection.html). You can also call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

## SWAP

In 1996, amendments to the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) required each state to complete assessments for each public water supply source. The assessments identify and describe conditions that may threaten the quality of water available to consumers. These assessments are the focus of Maine's Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP). The State of Maine Drinking Water Program (DWP) completed its SWAP report for the Brunswick and Topsham Water District in 2003. The report was sent to municipal officials in Brunswick and Topsham. The report can be viewed by contacting the Brunswick and Topsham Water District.

The responsibility for protecting public water supply sources from contamination falls largely to the public water suppliers. But the municipal officials, not water suppliers, make land-use decisions. This means that protection of public water supplies requires a partnership between water suppliers, state and federal regulators, local landowners, and municipalities.

Categories of risk evaluation for public water sources include well type and site geology; existing

and future risk of acute contamination; and existing and future risk of chronic contamination.

The following is a summary of the assessment provided by the DWP. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact the Brunswick and Topsham Water District.

The DWP has assessed the risk of all our water sources, based on type and geology, to be at the moderate level. The only practical means of reducing the risk is through replacement of the source. Acute contaminants, such as pathogens, nitrates, and nitrites, are those that can make people sick immediately after being consumed. The DWP has assessed all of our sources to have low risk for existing and future acute contamination. Chronic contaminants are those that pose a health risk if consumed over many years. The DWP has assessed our sources to have, on average, moderate risk for existing and future chronic contamination.



## Sampling Results

During the past year we have taken hundreds of water samples in order to determine the presence of any radioactive, biological, inorganic, volatile organic, or synthetic organic contaminants. The table below shows only those contaminants that were detected in the water. The state allows us to monitor for certain substances less 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	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Alpha Emitters <sup>1</sup> (pCi/L)	2006	15	0	1.45	NA	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Arsenic <sup>2</sup> (ppb)	2008	10	0	5	NA	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Barium (ppm)	2008	2	2	0.006	NA	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Chlorine (ppm)	2009	[4]	[4]	0.66	0.48–0.77	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Chromium (ppb)	2008	100	100	2.2	NA	No	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride <sup>3</sup> (ppm)	2009	4	4	1.41	NA	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Haloacetic Acids [HAA] <sup>4</sup> (ppb)	2009	60	NA	30.8	20–40	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate <sup>5</sup> (ppm)	2009	10	10	1.5	NA	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Radon <sup>6</sup> (pCi/L)	2008	4,000	NA	548	NA	No	Erosion of natural deposits
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] <sup>4</sup> (ppb)	2009	80	NA	47.9	15.7–72.7	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community <sup>7</sup>							
SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AL	MCLG	AMOUNT DETECTED (90TH%TILE)	SITES ABOVE AL/TOTAL SITES	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Copper (ppm)	2008	1.3	1.3	0.57	0/38	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives
Lead (ppb)	2008	15	0	1	0/38	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

<sup>1</sup> Action level over 5 pCi/L requires testing for Radium. Action level over 15 pCi/L requires testing for Radon and Uranium.

<sup>2</sup> The U.S. EPA adopted the new MCL standard in October 2001. Water systems must meet this new standard by January 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Fluoride levels must be maintained between 1–2 ppm for those systems that fluoridate the water.

<sup>4</sup> We were required by the U.S. EPA to conduct an evaluation of our distribution system. This is known as an Initial Distribution System Evaluation (IDSE) and is intended to identify locations in our distribution system that have elevated disinfection by-product concentrations. Disinfection by-products (e.g., HAAs and TTHMs) result from continuous disinfection of drinking water and form when disinfectants combine with organic matter that naturally occurs in the source water.

<sup>5</sup> Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant you should ask advice from your health provider.

<sup>6</sup> The State of Maine adopted a Maximum Exposure Guideline (MEG) for Radon in drinking water at 4,000 pCi/L, effective 1/1/2007. If Radon exceeds the MEG in water, treatment is recommended. It is also advisable to test indoor air for Radon. The U.S. EPA is proposing setting federal standards for Radon in public drinking water.

<sup>7</sup> Action levels (AL) are measured at consumer's tap. Ninety percent of the tests must be equal to or below the action level.

## 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.

**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.

**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).