



Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation: Monitoring by Index Systems

Introduction

The 1996 Amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) require the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA or Agency) to publish revisions to the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation (UCMR) establishing criteria for a program to monitor unregulated contaminants in drinking water and to publish a list of contaminants to be monitored. Under the UCMR, a randomly selected sample of 800 community water systems (CWSs) and non-transient, non-community water systems (NTNCWSs) that serve 10,000 or fewer persons (small systems) will monitor and report these unregulated contaminants. To minimize impact on small systems, EPA will pay all costs associated with: sending water samples to the appropriate laboratory, analyzing water samples, and reporting results for the participating small systems. EPA selected 30 small systems from the national representative sample of 800 systems to be "Index Systems." Additional sampling and information collection will take place for this group of small systems to help EPA better understand temporal variability of contaminant occurrence, and assist EPA in evaluating small system operating conditions when developing future regulations. This fact sheet focuses on the special role that Index Systems play in the implementation of the UCMR, and serves as a supplement to other UCMR fact sheets for small systems.

For a brief regulatory history of the UCMR, please refer to the UCMR Fact Sheet: *Monitoring for List 1 Contaminants by Selected Small Public Water Systems* (EPA 815-F-01-004), or the UCMR web site at: www.epa.gov/safewater/ucmr.html.

What Is the Role of Index Systems Within the UCMR Program?

Index Systems are a subset of 30 systems that were selected from the national representative sample of 800 small systems required to conduct Assessment Monitoring. These 30 systems will conduct Assessment Monitoring for the List 1 contaminants each year of the five-year UCMR listing cycle – 2001 through 2005. If your system was selected as an Index System, you should have been notified by your State drinking water agency or EPA.

To ensure sample collection quality and to minimize the burden on Index Systems, EPA will not only pay for the costs of shipping and testing (as it will do for all participating small systems), but will also provide for field technicians to assist with conducting the sampling for these systems. While on site, technicians will gather additional system-specific information regarding the environmental setting and system operation characteristics that may affect water quality. This extensive yearly monitoring of Index Systems is being conducted to improve EPA's understanding of temporal variability of contaminant occurrence, and so that EPA can more fully evaluate small system operating conditions when developing future regulations.

When and Where Must Monitoring Occur? (See §141.40(a)(5))

Index Systems will collect samples for the Assessment Monitoring contaminants each year during the five-year UCMR listing cycle of 2001 through 2005. The State or EPA will notify Index Systems of their monitoring requirements and schedules, and will provide specific notification of when the State, EPA, or its contractor will be on site to collect UCMR samples.

For all five years of Assessment Monitoring, at least one sample will be taken between May 1 and July 31, when the water system is vulnerable to contamination, or during another period of greatest vulnerability as specified by the State or EPA. During each year of monitoring, systems whose sources are surface water or ground water under the influence of surface water will sample four times per year (once every three months), and systems with ground water as their source will sample twice per year (five to seven months apart). Samples must be collected at the entry point(s) to the distribution system.

Are There Any Special Requirements for Index Systems? (See §141.40(a)(6))

Yes. As noted, EPA or its contractor will assist with the collection of the UCMR samples for Index Systems. System operators will be required to assist the sample collector in identifying appropriate sampling locations. During these sample collection visits, EPA or its contractor will work with the system to gather more information to characterize the environmental setting and environmental factors affecting the system. Systems will also be required to provide information on operating conditions at the time of sampling, such as: water source, well casing and screen depths for applicable wells, and pumping rates for each well or intake.

How Are the Samples to Be Analyzed? (See §141.40(a)(5) and Appendix A)

Samples are to be analyzed by an EPA-designated contract laboratory, which will be required to adhere to the UCMR's quality control (QC) specifications. EPA has contracted with several laboratories to analyze UCMR samples taken at small systems.

How Will the Monitoring Data Be Reported to EPA? (See §141.35(e))

Small systems will not have to report monitoring results directly to EPA. Instead, EPA will arrange to receive the results from the designated contract laboratories; copies will be sent to the system and to the State. The system will have 30 days to review and comment on the data. EPA will wait for an additional 60 days before placing the data in the National Drinking Water Contaminant Occurrence Database to allow for further quality control review by the system and the State. Each small system, however, is still responsible for ensuring that a copy of its monitoring results is sent to the State.

Are There Requirements for Notifying the Public? (See §141.153(d) and §141.207)

Yes. Under the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) Rule (40 CFR 141.153(d)), published on August 19, 1998 (63 FR 44511), CWSs must report the monitoring results whenever unregulated contaminants are detected. CCRs are to be sent to all billing customers each year by July 1. (The CCR Rule does not apply to non-community water systems.) For NTNCWSs, UCMR results will be made available to the public through the requirements of the revised Public Notification (PN) Rule (65 FR 25982), under 40 CFR 141.207. As required by the PN Rule, NTNCWSs must notify persons served by the system of the availability of UCMR results within 12 months after the results are known. Because the revised PN Rule goes into effect at different times in different states, owners and operators should check with their State drinking water agency to determine which public notice requirements apply. Details on these reporting requirements can be found in the documents: *Preparing Your Drinking Water Consumer Confidence Report* (EPA 816-R-99-002) and *Public Notification Handbook* (EPA 816-R-00-010). Both are available on the Web at www.epa.gov/safewater.

Where Can I Get More Information?

More information on the UCMR is available from the following sources:

- *Federal Register* notices of September 17, 1999 (64 FR 50556), March 2, 2000 (65 FR 11372), and January 11, 2001 (66 FR 2273).
- The EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water Web Site (www.epa.gov/safewater/ucmr.html).
- *Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation Guidance for Operators of Public Water Systems Serving 10,000 or Fewer People* (EPA 815-R-01-002).
- UCMR Fact Sheet: *Monitoring for List 1 Contaminants by Selected Small Public Water Systems* (EPA 815-F-01-004).
- UCMR Fact Sheet: *Screening Survey for List 2 Contaminants by Selected Small Public Water Systems* (EPA 815-F-01-006).
- *Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation Analytical Methods and Quality Control Manual* (EPA 815-R-00-006).
- *Supplement A to the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation Analytical Methods and Quality Control Manual* (EPA 815-R-00-002).
- The Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800 426-4791).

EPA is developing additional guidance materials, so check the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water Web Site often for the latest information about them. Table 1 lists UCMR contacts in the EPA regional offices and the Agency's Technical Support Center in Cincinnati, OH.

EPA	Contact	Telephone
Region 1	Chris Ryan	617 918-1567
Region 2	Robert Poon	212 637-3821
Region 3	Michelle Hoover	215 814-5258
Region 4	Janine Morris	404 562-9480
Region 5	Janet Kuefler	312 886-0123
Region 6	Andrew J. Waite	214 665-7332
Region 7	Stan Calow	913 551-7410
Region 8	Rod Glebe	303 312-6627
Region 9	Jill Korte	415 744-1853
Region 10	Gene Taylor	206 553-1389
Technical Support Center	Dan Hautman	513 569-7948