

COUNTY OF LOS ALAMOS

1999 DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT

You're Invited . .

The Los Alamos County Utilities Board encourages public interest and participation in our community's decisions affecting drinking water. Regular Utilities Board meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the County Annex conference room at 901 Trinity Drive. The public is always welcome.

For Your Information

In addition to testing we are required to perform, our water system voluntarily tests for many additional substances and microscopic organisms to make certain our water meets water quality standards. We'll be happy to answer any questions you may have. For information, call 662-8130.

The State of New Mexico is doing a source water assessment scheduled to be completed in 2004.

For People With Special Conditions

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than is the general population. Immuno-compromised 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. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline: (800-426-4791).

The Source of Los Alamos Drinking Water

The Los Alamos County water system is supplied by groundwater pumped from 12 wells, which tap the main aquifer under the Pajarito Plateau, part of the Santa Fe Formation. The Los Alamos County system has well-head protection in place

Sources for communities' drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) can 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 radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

EPA and AWWA Hotline Numbers

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 water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791). Information is also available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.waterdata.com>.

Disinfection System

As part of investigations into disinfection systems other than gaseous chlorine, an on-site hypochlorous acid generator was installed at the Pajarito Booster Station No. 2, and has been operating successfully since June, '98.



Quemazon Booster

Consumer Confidence Report: 1999 Drinking Water Quality Data

Detected Compounds	Units	SDWA MCL	SDWA MCLG	Range of Values Detected	System Average	Violation	Major Sources
<i>Inorganic Compounds</i>							
Arsenic	ppb	50	n/a	< 1 - 10	3.2	NO	Natural deposits
Chromium	ppb	100	100	< 1 - 4	2.6	NO	Natural deposits
Fluoride	ppm	4	4	0.29-0.42	0.35	NO	Natural deposits, Fluoridation by County
Nitrate & Nitrite	ppm	10	10	0.30 - 0.52	0.40	NO	Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Natural deposits
Lead (residential taps)	ppb	15 ¹	0	< 5.0 - 12.0	over 90% less than detect limit of 5 ppb	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing
Copper (residential taps)	ppm	1.3 ¹	1.3	< 0.05 - 0.13		0.09 ppm	NO
Hardness (as CaCO ₃)	grains/gal	-	-	1.60 - 2.50	2.04	NO	Natural deposits
<i>Organic Compounds</i>							
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) ²	ppb	100	0	< 0.5 - 19.5	5.2	NO	By-product of drinking water chlorination
<i>Radionuclides</i>							
Alpha emitters	pCi/L	15	0	0 - 1.20	0.48	NO	Decay of natural deposits
Beta/photon emitters	pCi/L	50	0	2.60 - 5.10	3.44	NO	Decay of natural, man-made deposits
<i>Microbiology</i>							
Total Coliform ³	cfu per 100 mL	5%	0	max. monthly positive samples: 0 of 48 (0%) min. monthly positive samples: 0 of 45 (0%)	Total positive samples in 1999: 0 of 553	NO	Regrowth of soil bacteria in the distribution system piping

Notes:

¹ 1999 results. The Action Level for lead/copper is exceeded if 90% of homes tested have lead levels above 15 ppb and copper levels above 1.3 ppm. No lead/copper samples exceeded action levels.

² TTHM compliance is based on a running annual average. TTHM concentrations vary seasonally in our water.

³ The MCL for total coliforms is the presence of coliform bacteria in 5% or more of the monthly samples.

Key to Table

MCL = Maximum Contaminant Level

MCLG = Maximum Contaminant
Level Goal

pCi/L = picocuries per liter (a measure
of radioactivity)

ppm = parts per million, or milligrams
per liter

ppb = parts per billion, or micrograms
per liter

cfu = colony forming units

How to Read the Table Above

Our water is tested to assure that it is safe and healthy. The results of tests performed in 1999 are presented in the table.

The column marked **SDWA MCLG** shows the Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG). This is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLG allows for a margin of safety.

The column marked **SDWA MCL** is the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL). This is the highest level of a contaminant allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

The column marked **Range of Values Detected** shows minimum to maximum results observed in our water in 1999.

Major Sources provides an explanation of typical or man-made origins of contaminant.

Cryptosporidium

Cryptosporidium, found in rivers and streams, is a microscopic organism that, when ingested, can result in diarrhea, fever and other gastrointestinal symptoms.

Los Alamos water comes from wells, not rivers, and, as expected, cryptosporidium has not been detected in our water supply.

Additional Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Monitoring

LANL conducts additional testing for tritium, high explosive compounds (HE), perchlorate, synthetic organic compounds (SOC), and volatile organic compounds (VOC).

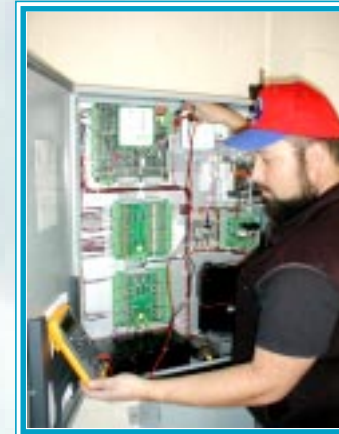
During 1999, all of the substances were below standard detection limits in drinking water wells.

Radon

Radon is a naturally-occurring radioactive element, whose decay products have been linked to cancer in humans. EPA is currently considering regulation of radon in drinking water, but no MCL has been established. Radon 222 levels in Los Alamos' water supply are as follows (in pCi/L): Our water testing results showed a level of 224 to 576 pCi/L, with an average of 300 pCi/L.



Ted Jaramillo - SCADA Monitoring



Joe Montoya - RTU Testing

System Improvements

During 1999, the Los Alamos County Utilities Department's computer automated controls for the water system were upgraded and made ready for the change to the year 2000.

No problems were encountered with the changeover to the year 2000 (Y2K).

Also during 1999, a major water transmission line was replaced under Canyon Road as part of the Canyon Road Upgrade Project.

Environmental surveillance reports
are available at LANL's reading room

We at Los Alamos County Utilities know how very important safe and good quality drinking water is to our community. Los Alamos County incurred no violations in 1999.

Our goal is to provide you high-quality, safe drinking water that meets or exceeds federal and state standards.

The County takes seriously our pledge to safeguard the quality and safety of Los Alamos drinking water, now and in the future!



Guaje Well No. 5A



1999 Highlights

1999 was a year of transitions. It was the Los Alamos County Department of Public Utilities' first full year of responsibility for the management of the water production system, through a lease agreement with the Department of Energy. Negotiations continued during 1999 on the transfer of system ownership to the County.

El informe contiene información importante sobre la calidad del agua en su comunidad.
Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.



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