

# **THREE MILE WATER DISTRICT**

P. O. BOX 906  
BONNERS FERRY, IDAHO 83805

## **2023 Annual Drinking Water Report**

This is the year 2024 edition of the Three Mile Water District's annual drinking water report. In this report, you will see that water sampling and testing has been conducted year around and results have been gathered to inform you, our customer, about your drinking water. The first section of this report titled **In Review**: contains important information we share with you year after year in our report. The second section of this report on page 4 titled **What's New**: contains new information that may not have been in last years report or information that may have changed since last year. Some of the language and formatting in the What's new section may be mostly the same as it was in last years report so you may need to read through it carefully to identify what's new. We hope this information will aid and help you to better understand our Water System.

### **IN REVIEW:**

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requires that water utilities issue an annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) such as this one, to our customers in addition to other notices that may be required by law. This CCR details where our water comes from, what it contains, and any risks our water testing and treatment are designed to prevent.

### **WHERE OUR WATER COMES FROM**

Drinking water can come from many sources. Surface water comes from sources such as Lakes, Rivers, and even oceans or rain. Ground Water comes from sources below the ground such as wells and springs. Our drinking water comes from two independent wellfields, comprised of 11 active wells that are operated and maintained by the Three Mile Water District (TMWD).

### **HOW WE ENSURE OUR GROUND WATER IS POTABLE**

To help ensure the delivery of safe drinking water to customers, TMWD water is pumped from two distinctive aquifers deep in the ground. Since these aquifers are underground, they are not under the direct influence of surface water which contains harmful microbial contaminants; therefore we do not use chlorine for disinfection. Instead our water is only treated with natural air to remove corrosivity(carbonation) which can cause lead and copper to leach from old fixtures such as sink faucets and lead soldered pipes.

We consistently conduct sampling of the water we pump to ensure it meets drinking water standards before it is served to anyone. Throughout the distribution and treatment systems, the water is monitored by measuring instruments and controls to ensure water is being safely delivered to you. If at any time the water quality does not meet minimum standards, we will notify you, our customers of the event(s) on our website, in our business office, and through other means such as media or by mail if necessary.

### **WATER QUALITY SAMPLING**

Water quality sampling is conducted throughout the water distribution and treatment systems to proportionately gauge the quality of the water we serve all the way to your water tap. Tests and

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samples are performed consistently depending on the needs and requirements outlined in SDWA and Operation & Maintenance procedures specific to our water system. Some tests and samples are performed daily, most weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly, or by a frequency specified by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA).

## **THE U.S. EPA AND YOUR WATER...**

The US EPA sets standards for our drinking water quality. These standards are regulations that the US EPA sets to control the level of acceptable contaminants in the nation's drinking water. These standards include assessing and protecting water sources, protection of wells and collection systems, ensuring qualified operators treat water, ensuring the integrity of the distribution system, and making information available to the public on the quality of our drinking water. We treat our water according to both DEQ and U.S. EPA's regulations. The U.S. FDA regulates interstate bottled water.

## **WHAT IF I HAVE SPECIAL HEALTH CONCERNS?**

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Examples would be people who are immune-compromised, undergoing chemo therapy, people who have had organ transplants, people with HIV or AIDS or other immune disorders. Some elderly people and infants can be particularly at risk from infections or other problems. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. U.S. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infections by Crypto Sporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline **(800) 426-4791**

## **SAMPLING FOR CONTAMINANTS**

Over the years we have sampled for many different contaminants in our water and have found very little (if any) of them. Starting on page 6 are charts of water sampling and sample test results we have conducted in our drinking water system within the last three (3) years. You may notice by looking at the chart that these samples and sample test results not only meet, but exceed current water quality standards. Keep in mind that it is to be expected to find at least small amounts of some contaminants. Even bottled drinking water may contain small amounts of contaminants. In many parts of the country the 'tap' water is actually more 'pure' than bottled water. Also keep in mind that the presence of contaminants does NOT necessarily indicate a health risk. The following section details the types of contaminants source water and drinking water may contain.

## **CONTAMINANTS IN GROUND WATER?**

Most ground water sources contain minerals, but many also have metals, some even have chemicals, and even radioactive materials in them. Wastes from animal and human activity can contaminate groundwater sources that are unconfined. Contaminants are the things that are carried by, dissolved by, or absorbed into pure water. Ground water can even be contaminated if the area above the groundwater is remote and relatively free from human activity. If the ground water source is unconfined materials dumped or buried on the land above a groundwater source, they can move through the soil and end up in the groundwater source. Contaminants introduced into nearby lakes, rivers, and streams can seep or enter into unconfined groundwater sources as well.

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Although historical samples have shown that TMWD ground water is safe from any dangerous contaminants as defined on the following page, we are required by the SWA to provide our customers with the following definitions of varying contaminants found in water sources throughout the country.

## **CONTAMINANT DEFINITIONS**

**Minerals and Metals** – Usually naturally occurring like calcium, manganese, and ferrous iron, but can also be artificially introduced through the use of Road salts which are used in the wintertime to melt ice on roads to keep cars from sliding around. When the ice melts, the salt gets washed off the roads and could eventually end up in the groundwater.

**Microbial Elements** – Such as bacteria, viruses, or protozoa are usually single-cell creatures that for the most part, are naturally occurring and harmless to humans, but may be harmful if originating from septic systems, livestock operations or wildlife.

**Pesticides & Herbicides** – May come from home and agricultural overuse, they can seep into ground water.

**Radioactive Elements** – Are naturally occurring elements

**Organic Chemical Elements** – Are usually man-made (synthetic) and vaporize easily (volatile). Petroleum products & degreasers are examples of gas station and/or dry cleaner waste improperly disposed of that seeps into the ground. Over use of herbicides can also introduce chemicals into the ground water.

## **SAMPLING FOR BACTERIA, VIRUSES, AND PROTOZOA**

Along with many tests and samples, we sample for coliform bacteria. Coliform bacteria are a range of indicator microorganisms that should not be present in drinking water. The presence of these bacteria in drinking water indicates the possibility of other dangerous microorganisms or viruses that can cause severe illness in humans.

## **WATER USE EFFICIENCY**

All water systems are now required to use water in an efficient manner. This means gauging the water pumped from the ground vs. the water used by our customers. We are at about 95% of knowing where our water goes. The remaining 5% of the water we pump into our system is not accounted for. There are many reasons of how and why water is lost in the water system. Leaks, old water meters, non-metered water connections, fire hydrant use, and water theft. We strive to make sure everything is metered, leaks are fixed in a timely manner, and policies are put into place to help circumvent theft. More information can be obtained about this by calling 304-5627 or the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline **(800) 426-4791**

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

We encourage you to get involved with your publicly owned water district. The Three Mile Water District holds monthly board meetings where I as your Certified Water Operator give monthly reports and present current and future water projects, as well as information about the current state of our

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water system. Board meetings are the best way to directly get involved in the activities of our water system.

Outside the monthly Board meetings, you can contact us for answers to questions, comments, or to help. Please contact our business office, Youngwirth Davis and Associates at **267-5166**.

## WHAT'S NEW:

### COMPLIANCE VIOLATIONS

We strive to ensure that we are delivering quality potable water to our customers. However, it is also our duty to inform you the customer about any violations. Within the Calendar year of 2022, our water system received **no** violations.

### CONTAMINANT DETECTION, DETECTION LIMITS, AND VIOLATIONS

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detected in the last three (3) calendar years, excluding the year this report was published.

In in the table you will find terms and abbreviations that might not be familiar to you. To help you better understand these terms, we have provided the definitions below the following tables on pages 7 & 8.

### WATER QUALITY DATA TABLE

2023 Coliform Monitoring				
Contaminant	Total samples taken	Total Positive sample results	Violation	Typical Source
Total Coliform	24	0	No	Naturally present in the environment
Fecal Coliform	24	0	No	Found in Human and Animal waste

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<b>2023 Chemical/Radiation Monitoring</b>				
<b>Contaminant</b>	<b>Total samples taken</b>	<b>Highest sample concentration</b>	<b>Violation</b>	<b>Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)</b>
Nitrate	2	0.63 PPM	No	10.0 PPM

<b>2022 Coliform Monitoring</b>				
<b>Contaminant</b>	<b>Total samples taken</b>	<b>Total Positive sample results</b>	<b>Violation</b>	<b>Typical Source</b>
Total Coliform	30	1	No	Naturally present in the environment
Fecal Coliform	30	0	No	Found in Human and Animal waste

<b>2022 Chemical Monitoring</b>				
<b>Contaminant</b>	<b>Total samples taken</b>	<b>Highest sample concentration</b>	<b>Violation</b>	<b>Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)</b>
Nitrate	2	1.25 PPM	No	10.0 PPM
Simazine	2	ND	No	0.07 PPB
Glyphosate	2	ND	No	5 PPB
2, 4-D	2	ND	No	0.1 PPB
Picloram	2	ND	No	0.1 PPB
Radium 226	2	<0.160+/-0.085	No	5 pCi/L
Radium 228	2	<0.203+/-0.427	No	5 pCi/L

<b>2021 Coliform Monitoring</b>				
<b>Contaminant</b>	<b>Total samples taken</b>	<b>Total Positive sample results</b>	<b>Violation</b>	<b>Typical Source</b>
Total Coliform	24	0	No	Naturally present in the environment

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## 2021 Coliform Monitoring

Contaminant	Total samples taken	Total Positive sample results	Violation	Typical Source
Fecal Coliform	24	0	No	Found in Human and Animal waste

## 2021 Chemical Monitoring

Contaminant	Total samples taken	Highest sample concentration	Violation	MCL
Nitrate	2	0.555 PPM	No	10.0 PPM

## IMPORTANT TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS DEFINED

### Unit Descriptions

Term	Definition
positive samples/month	positive samples/month: Number of samples taken monthly that were found to be positive
NA	NA: not applicable
ND	ND: Not detected
NR	NR: Monitoring not required, but recommended.
PPM	Parts of contaminants per million parts of water
pCi/L	picoCuries per liter of water. A Curie is a unit of radioactivity equivalent to 1 gram of radium and the prefix "pico" means a trillionth.
PPB	Parts of contaminants per billion parts of water

### Important Drinking Water Definitions

Term	Definition
MCLG	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.
MCL	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.
TT	TT: Treatment Technique: A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

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Important Drinking Water Definitions (continued)	
AL	AL: Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
Variances and Exemptions	Variances and Exemptions: State or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.
MRDLG	MRDLG: Maximum residual disinfection 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.
MRDL	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.
MNR	MNR: Monitored Not Regulated
MPL	MPL: State Assigned Maximum Permissible Level

## For more information please contact:

**Contact Name:** Dustin Ridgley – Water Operator  
**Phone:** 304-5627

**Company Name:** Three Mile Water District  
**Phone:** 267-5166  
**Address:** P.O. Box 906  
Bonners Ferry, ID 83805

## WATER CONSERVATION TIPS

Did you know that the average U.S. household uses approximately 330 gallons of water per day or 82 gallons per person per day? Luckily, there are many low-cost and no-cost ways to conserve water. Small changes can make a big difference - try one today and soon it will become second nature.

- Take short showers - a five (5) minute shower uses 4 to 5 gallons of water compared to up to 50 gallons for a bath.
- Shut off water while brushing your teeth, washing your hair and shaving and save up to 500 gallons a month.
- Use a water-efficient showerhead. They're inexpensive, easy to install, and can save you up to 750 gallons a month.
- Run your clothes-washer or dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.
- Water plants only when necessary.
- Fix leaky toilets and faucets. Faucet washers are inexpensive and take only a few minutes to replace. To check your toilet for a leak, place a few drops of food coloring in the tank and wait. If it seeps into the toilet bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Fixing it or replacing it with a new, more efficient model can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.

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- Adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered. Apply water only as fast as the soil can absorb it and during the cooler parts of the day to reduce evaporation.
- Teach your kids about water conservation to ensure a future generation that uses water wisely. Make it a family effort to reduce next month's water bill!
- On the internet visit <http://www.epa.gov/watersense> for more information.

### **CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL SURVEYS**

The purpose of this survey is to determine whether a cross-connection may exist at your home or business. A cross connection is an unprotected or improper connection to a public water distribution system that may cause contamination or pollution to enter the system. We are responsible for enforcing cross-connection control regulations and insuring that no contaminants can, under any flow conditions, enter the distribution system. If you have any of the devices listed in the Cross connection potential device list below, please contact us so that we can discuss the issue, and if needed, survey your connection and assist you in isolating it if that is necessary.

### **CROSS CONNECTION POTENTIAL DEVICES**

- Boiler/ Radiant heater (water heaters not included)
- Underground lawn sprinkler system
- Pool or hot tub (whirlpool tubs not included)
- Additional source(s) of water on the property
- Decorative pond
- Watering trough

### **SOURCE WATER PROTECTION TIPS**

Protection of drinking water is everyone's responsibility. You can help protect your community's drinking water source in several ways:

- Eliminate excess use of lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides - they contain hazardous chemicals that can reach your drinking water source.
- Pick up after your pets.
- If you have your own septic system, properly maintain your system to reduce leaching to water sources or consider connecting to a public water system.
- Dispose of chemicals properly; take used motor oil to a recycling center.
- Volunteer in your community. Find a watershed or wellhead protection organization in your community and volunteer to help. If there are no active groups, consider starting one. Use EPA's Adopt Your Watershed to locate groups in your community, or visit the Watershed Information Network's How to Start a Watershed Team.
- Organize a storm drain stenciling project with your local government or water supplier.
- Stencil a message next to the street drain reminding people "Dump No Waste - Drains to River" or "Protect Your Water." Produce and distribute a flyer for households to remind residents that storm drains dump directly into your local water body.



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## **Additional Information for Lead**

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 Three Mile Water District is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in your 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 on the internet at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.