

2023 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

Wauchula Hills WTP

System ID Number 6254799

This report will be mailed to customers only upon request and is also available at **2428 Commerce Ct., Bowling Green, FL 33834** upon request. This report can also be viewed at the URL link located on your water bill or at the following address <https://www.hardeecounty.net/departments/utilities>.

We are very pleased to provide you with this year's Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. We want to keep you informed about the excellent water and services we have delivered to you over the past year. Our goal is and always has been, to provide to you a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. Our water source has two 12" wells that draw water from the Floridian Aquifer. Before delivery to you, the water is scrubbed with force drafted air to improve taste and odor. It is then injected with sulfuric acid to further assist in sulfide removal. Near final treatment Orth polyphosphate is added to sequester the hardness forming compounds and to make the water less corrosive. Finally, the water is disinfected with chlorine to achieve free available residuals.

In 2022 the Department of Environmental Protection performed a Source Water Assessment on our system. A search of the data sources indicated that there are three unique potential sources of contamination near our wells, and all had a low susceptibility. The assessment results are available on the FDEP Source Water Assessment and Protection Program website at <https://www.dep.state.fl.us/swapp>.

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact **Evelyn Guffey, Utilities Operations Manager** at **863-773-3465**. We encourage our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. Any customer can obtain additional information from EPA at their Safe Drinking WaterHotline (800-426-4791).

Wauchula Hills WTP routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws, rules, and regulations. Except where indicated, this report is based on the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2023. Data obtained before January 1, 2023, and presented in this report is from the most recent testing done in accordance with the laws, rules, and regulations.

In the tables below, you may find unfamiliar terms and abbreviations. To help you better understand these terms we have provided the following definitions:

Maximum Contaminant Level or MCL: 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.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal or MCLG: 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.

Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

Initial Distribution System Evaluation (IDSE): An important part of the Stage 2 Disinfection By-Products Rule (DBPR). The IDSE is a one-time study conducted by water systems to identify distribution system locations with high of trihalomethanes (THMs) and haloacetic acids (HAAs). Water systems will use results from the IDSE, in conjunction with their Stage 1 DBPR compliance monitoring data, to select compliance monitoring locations for the Stage 2 DBPR.

Maximum residual disinfectant level or MRDL: 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.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal or MRDLG: 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.

Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{l}$): one part by weight of analyte to 1 billion parts by weight of the water sample.

Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l): one part by weight of analyte to 1 million parts by weight of the water sample.

Picocurie per liter (pCi/L): measure of the radioactivity in water.

Table 1: Radioactive Contaminants

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mos./yrs.)	MCL Violation (Y/N)	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	08/21	N	7.0	N/A	0	15	Erosion of natural deposits.
Radium 226 + 228 or Combined radium (pCi/L)	08/21	N	3.1	N/A	0	5	Erosion of natural deposits.

Table 2: Inorganic Contaminants

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mos./yrs.)	MCL Violation (Y/N)	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Barium (ppm)	08/21	N	0.0888	N/A	2	2	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride (ppm)	08/21	N	0.317	N/A	4.0	4.0	Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories. Water additive which promotes strongteeth when at the optimum level of 0.7 ppm.
Nickel (ppb)	08/21	N	0.414	N/A	N/A	100	Pollution from mining and refining operations. Natural occurrence in soil.
Nitrate (ppm)	08/23	N	0.173	N/A	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	08/21	N	11.0	N/A	N/A	160	Saltwater intrusion, leaching from soil.

Table 3: Lead and Copper

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mos./yrs.)	AL Exceeded (Y/N)	90th Percentile Result	No. of sampling sites exceeding the AL	MCLG	AL (Action Level)	Likely Source of Contamination
Copper (tap water) (ppm)	08/23	N	0.13500	0	1.3	1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives.
Lead (tap water) (ppb)	08/23	N	0	0	0	15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.

Table 4: Stage 1 and 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection By-Products

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mos./yrs.)	MCL Violation (Y/N)	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Chlorine (ppm)	2023 Monthly	N	1.15	0.93-2.66	MRDGL=4	MRDL=4	Water additive used to control microbes.
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	1/23-12/23 Annually	N	32	22-32	N/A	MCL=60	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) (ppb)	1/23-12/23 Annually	N	69	60-69	N/A	MCL=80	By-product of drinking water disinfection

- During 2023 our system had only annual results and all these results were below the MCL, we reported the highest result as the level detected.

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. Wauchula Hills Water Treatment Plant 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 <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

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.

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations, which limit the amounts 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 1-800-426-4791.

In our continuing efforts to maintain a safe and dependable water supply, it may be necessary to make improvements in your water system. The costs of these improvements may be reflected in the rate structure. Thank you for understanding and for allowing us to continue providing your family with clean, quality water this year.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than 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/Center for Disease Control (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 (800-426-4791).

We at Hardee County Utilities are committed to ensuring the quality of your water and work around the clock to provide top quality water to every tap. We would like you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water **treatment process and protect our water resources. We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are** the heart of our community, our way of life and our children's future.

If you have any questions or concerns about the information provided, please feel free to call any of the numbers listed.