

# 2024 Drinking Water Quality Report



## SOUTHWEST WATER AUTHORITY CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT

Southwest Water Authority's vision is "People and Businesses Succeeding with Quality Water." We take our responsibility of providing southwest North Dakota with a reliable supply of quality drinking water very seriously. Working with the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), we place drinking water safety at the top of our priorities. Our drive is to achieve a level of excellence that is unsurpassed in our field. To that end, we present our Annual Drinking Water Report. This report will provide information to our customers about the quality of our drinking water. It contains a table of water quality data, definitions of terms, specific language requirements, and other information we hope you will find useful and educational.

### Source and Treatment

Southwest Water Authority takes Missouri River Water from Lake Sakakawea. This is a surface water source. The intake is about 86 miles northeast of Dickinson. From the intake, the water is pumped to the Zap Reservoirs and then flows by gravity to the Dodge pump station where chlorine and ammonia are added to form chloramines. The job of chloramines is to kill disease producing bacteria and viruses in the water. The water then travels to the Richardton Reservoir and pump station. From the Richardton pump station the water is pumped to the Dickinson Reservoir and then flows by gravity to the Water Treatment Plants in Dickinson where it is treated using the following processes:

**Ozone**, added to raw water for disinfection, and taste and odor.

**Clarifying and softening**, where quicklime is added to the water to change dissolved calcium and magnesium (hardness) into undissolved particles. Alum and a flocculant are then added to collect those particles into heavier pieces that will settle out of the water.

**Stabilization**, where carbon dioxide is added to bring pH down to acceptable levels. Phosphate is added to limit scale and corrosion. Fluoride is also added to provide resistance to tooth decay.

**Filtration**, at the SWTP six primary and two secondary Ultra Filtration membrane filters and at the DWTP where seven sand and anthracite coal filters remove suspended particles not removed in the clarifying and softening process. Filtration can also be effective in the physical removal of the protozoan Cryptosporidium.

**Disinfection**, where chloramines are once again added to reduce bacteria to a safe level and provide a residual that protects against contamination. From here the drinking water is pumped throughout the distribution system for delivery to you, our valued customer.

### Contamination Sources

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:

**Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

**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.

**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 can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

**Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

As part of a nationwide program, the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality completed an assessment of our source water and determined our water system is moderately susceptible to potential contaminant sources. They also noted that "historically, Southwest Water Authority has effectively treated this source water to meet drinking water standards." Information about the Source Water Assessment can be obtained by calling 1-888-425-0241, or e-mailing us at [swa@swwater.com](mailto:swa@swwater.com).

### Drinking Water Safety

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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791). More information about drinking water is available on the EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater).

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. The EPA/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

### So the Bottom Line is This.

At Southwest Water Authority, our highest priority is your family's health where drinking water is concerned. With that thought in mind, we are pleased to report that our water system was in compliance with all drinking water regulations in 2024. We want you and all of our valued customers to be informed about our water utility, therefore if you have any questions about this report or any other concerns, please contact Grace Rixen, Water Treatment Manager or Ledeanne O'Shields, CFO/Office Administrator at 888-425-0241 or e-mail us at [swa@swwater.com](mailto:swa@swwater.com). You are welcome to attend any of our regularly scheduled meetings, which are generally held on the first Monday of each month. If you are interested in attending or would like to request an agenda time, please contact us at the number listed above for information on time and location. If you are aware of non-English speaking individuals who need assistance with the appropriate language translation, please contact us at the number listed above. In order to allow individuals who consume our drinking water, but who do not receive water bills, to learn about our water system, we would appreciate it if our large volume water customers would post copies of this report in conspicuous locations or distribute them to tenants, residents, patients, students, and/or employees.

## Detected Contaminants

The EPA requires us to monitor for over 90 drinking water contaminants and those that were detected are listed in the table below. Test results are from 2024. The State does allow reduced monitoring for certain contaminants because their levels do not change significantly over time. For this reason, some of the test results are more than one year old.

Southwest Water Authority’s Table of Detected Regulated Contaminants							
Contaminant (units)	MCLG	MCL	Level Detected	Detection Range	Test Date	Exceedance or Violation?	Major Sources in Drinking Water
Total Organic Carbon (TOC) Removal							
Alkalinity (ppm) Source Water	N/A	N/A	164	148-164	2024	N/A	Natural erosion, plant activities, and certain industrial waste discharges
Total Organic Carbon (ppm) Source Water	N/A	TT	3.89	2.84-3.89	2024	N/A	Naturally present in the environment
Total Organic Carbon (ppm) Finished Water	N/A	TT	2.91	1.85-2.91	2024	N/A	Naturally present in the environment
Microbial Contaminants							
Turbidity¹ (NTU)	N/A	TT= 0.3	0.2	N/A	2024	100% of samples met limit	Soil runoff
Inorganic Contaminants							
Barium (ppm)	2	2	0.0126	N/A	2016	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper (ppm)	0	AL= 1.3	0.0738	N/A	2022	No sites exceeded the Action Level	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.92	N/A	2016	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Lead² (ppb)	0	AL= 15	ND	N/A	2022	No sites exceeded the Action Level	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Nitrate-Nitrite (ppm)	10	10	0.078	N/A	2024	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Radioactive Contaminants							
Gross Alpha, including Ra, excluding Rn & U (pCi/l)	15	15	0.359	N/A	2018	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Disinfectants							
Chloramines (ppm)	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4.0	3.1	2.73-3.27	2024	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Disinfection Byproducts							
Total Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	0	60	18	9.22- 18.25	2024	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	0	80	11	6.47- 18.55	2024	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection

Southwest Water Authority’s Table of Detected Unregulated Contaminants³							
Alkalinity, as Carbonate (ppm)	N/A	N/A	4	ND-4	2024	N/A	N/A
Bicarbonate as HCO3 (ppm)	N/A	N/A	200	181-200	2024	N/A	N/A

## Definitions and Abbreviations:

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

**Maximum Contaminant Level (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 (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.

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (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 (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):** 1 ppb is equivalent to adding 1 pound of a contaminant to 999,999,999 pounds of water (about 120,000,000 gallons).

**Parts per million (ppm):** 1 ppm is equivalent to adding 1 pound of a contaminant to 999,999 pounds of water (about 120,000 gallons).

**Picocuries per liter (pCi/l):** A measure of radioactivity.

**Treatment Technique (TT):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**N/A:** Not Applicable

**ND:** Not Detected

**NTU:** Nephelometric Turbidity Units

¹ Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. It is monitored because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.

² There is no safe level of lead in drinking water. Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Some of the health effects to infants and children include decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can also result in new or worsened learning and behavior problems. The children of persons who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy may be at increased risk of these harmful health effects. Adults have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems. Contact your health care provider for more information about your risks. Southwest Water Authority is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. **Use water from the cold tap for drinking and cooking. 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 drinking 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 <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's disease should consult their personal doctor.

³ USEPA has recently published the Lead and Copper Rule Revision. The purpose of this revision is to strengthen public health protections by removing lead service lines within public water systems. One requirement of this rule revision was to inventory all drinking water service lines within our public water system and notify consumers which type of line serves each property. You may have recently received a letter from our system with this information. Additional work to update the service line inventory, including inspection of the line, may need to be performed to further document and confirm the type of material make up both the public and private portions of the line serving your home or business. We will need the help of home/building owners in order to access the service line on the private side of the service line to positively identify the material of the line that carries water within your home/building. Our system may perform this work with our own system employees.

The water we provide is treated with the addition of fluoride as a part of the water treatment process to enhance dental health. For information regarding the level of fluoride in the finished water provided to our customers please contact our office at 888-225-0241.