

# OREGON CITY water <sup>2021</sup> quality report



Based on  
findings from  
data collected  
in 2020

[orcitizen.org/publicworks/water-quality-reports](http://orcitizen.org/publicworks/water-quality-reports)

## welcome...

We are pleased to provide you with Oregon City's 2021 Water Quality Report. Our drinking water continues to meet or surpass all state and federal standards and regulations.

### Committed to:

- **Protecting public health –**

Providing clean, safe drinking water that complies with all state and federal regulations.

- **Protecting public safety –**

Ensuring reliable, plentiful water for fire suppression.

- **Protecting the environment –**

Providing a safe and reliable stormwater system and implementing watershed protection and restoration actions that consistently promote surface water quality and stream health.

## Clackamas River- Our Drinking Water Source

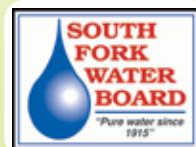
Water from the Clackamas River is made safe to drink by conventional treatment at the South Fork Water Board (SFWB) Treatment Plant, located in the Park Place area of Oregon City. The basic steps to the treatment process are:

- **Coagulation** – adding chemicals (alum and polymers) to the water that causes very small suspended particles to attract one another and form larger particles.
- **Flocculation** – gently stirring the water to bring the suspended particles together so they will form larger clumps, called floc.
- **Sedimentation** – the velocity of the water is reduced allowing gravity to settle out the floc.
- **Filtration** – any remaining particles not settled out earlier are removed as the water flows through filters made up of sand and anthracite coal.
- **Corrosion Control** – adding soda ash in order to increase the pH of the water,

making it less likely to deteriorate piping material and plumbing fixtures.

- **Disinfection** – adding sodium hypochlorite (a liquid form of chlorine that is similar to household bleach) to kill any disease-causing organisms in the water. It is important to have a small amount of chlorine remain in the water as it travels throughout the distribution system. This is called a chlorine residual.

SFWB, and by extension, Oregon City, is a member of the Regional Water Providers Consortium which is a collaborative and coordinating organization that works to improve the planning and management of municipal water supplies in the greater Portland metropolitan region. Find out more about the Consortium, its members, and its work in emergency preparedness, water conservation, and regional coordination at [www.regionalth2o.org](http://www.regionalth2o.org). Learn more about SFWB by visiting their website at [www.sfwb.org](http://www.sfwb.org).



# Protecting Our Drinking Water Source

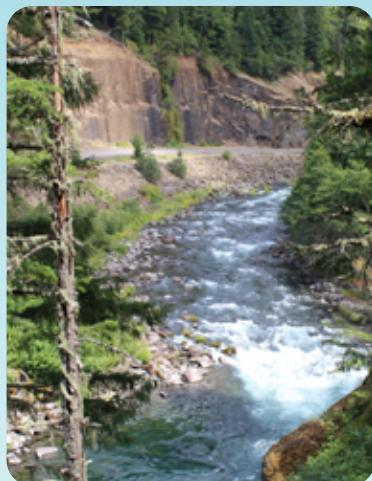
The Clackamas River watershed begins on the slopes of Olallie Butte near Mount Hood, and flows nearly 83 miles from its headwaters (elevation 6,000 feet) to its confluence with the Willamette River near Clackamette Park (elevation 12 feet); it encompasses 940 square miles.

Unlike the City of Portland's Bull Run watershed, the Clackamas River watershed is completely unprotected. The watershed crosses two counties and includes federal, state and private lands. It is 72% publicly owned, 25% privately owned and 3% tribally owned.

An updated Source Water Assessment was completed in 2019. The delineated drinking water protection area is occupied by a wide variety of land uses: residential/municipal, agricultural/forest, and commercial/industrial. The updated Source Water Assessment identified over 3,000 potential sources of pollution with the 8-hour time-of-travel upstream of the lower Clackamas River intakes. Many of these potential sources of pollution pose a moderate to high risk to the drinking water. To learn about contamination risks to our drinking water source go to the updated Source Water Assessment Report (May 2019) at: <https://www.orcity.org/publicworks/source-water-assessment-report>

In 2010, the Clackamas River Water Providers (CRWP) completed a Drinking Water Protection Plan for the Clackamas River. The purpose of this plan is to provide a road map of potential strategies and programs to implement over the next decade, and beyond, to preserve the Clackamas River as a high quality drinking water source. You can read the plan and learn more about the CRWP by going to: [www.clackamasproviders.org](http://www.clackamasproviders.org).

**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.

Coming in Late Summer-Early Fall:

## Clackamas River Water Conservation



Keep an eye out for this campaign to do your part to protect water in the Clackamas River by reducing outdoor water use by turning irrigation systems down for the fall fish runs!

For more information, please email:  
[christine@clackamasproviders.org](mailto:christine@clackamasproviders.org)

# Frequently Asked Questions About Drinking Water

## I can taste and smell chlorine in the water. Why?

You may be sensitive to the taste and smell of the disinfectant. The amount of sodium hypochlorite varies throughout the distribution system, but it generally measures less than 1 part per million (ppm). This is well below the maximum residual disinfectant level, set by EPA, of 4 ppm.

*Some suggestions for minimizing the taste and odor of chlorine:*

- Fill a glass container with water and set it aside. Within an hour the chlorine will evaporate. Then cover the container and store it in the refrigerator.
- Mix the water in a blender. This will speed up the dissipation of the chlorine residual.

- Add 1 or 2 teaspoons of lemon juice to the water, refrigerate.

Remember that if you plan to store drinking water after the chlorine residual has been removed, treat the water as you would a perishable food. Store it in clean, airtight containers and refrigerate.

## Is there fluoride in Oregon City's drinking water?

No fluoride is added to Oregon City's drinking water. Naturally-occurring fluoride in the Clackamas River is generally less than 0.10 ppm (the detection limit for fluoride analysis). Check with your dentist to see if supplemental fluoride is recommended for your family.

*Find more questions and answers at:*

[www.orcity.org/publicworks/drinking-water-faqs](http://www.orcity.org/publicworks/drinking-water-faqs)

## Monitoring For Contaminants

Our most recent test results can be seen in the data table on page 4 of this Report.

We are required to report only those substances that were present at detectable levels. We are allowed to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year, therefore some of the data can be more than one year old.

You may view all monitoring results and compliance records by visiting the Oregon Health Authority SDWIS Data Online website at <https://yourwater.oregon.gov/>.

*Search by water system name or ID number:*

**Oregon City** – OR4101511

**South Fork Water Board** – OR4100591



## Stormwater Management

Oregon City is one of thirteen co-permittees on the Clackamas County National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Discharge Permit (permit number 101348). Our most recent five-year permit, issued March 16, 2012 by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), lists numerous programs and tasks required of the city as we work to prevent stormwater pollution and improve stream and river health.

As required by DEQ, Oregon City submitted a Permit Renewal Application on February 28, 2017. The current permit has been administratively extended until such time as DEQ issues the next one.

Learn more about our ongoing stormwater programs and read our annual reports, submitted to DEQ by November 1st each year, by going here:

<http://www.orcity.org/publicworks/npdes-documents-page>

# • 2020 monitoring data •

Substance/Contaminant (Unit of Measure)	MCL (MRDL)	MCLG (MRDLG)	Oregon City Measurement or Average (Range)	Sample Date	Major Sources in Drinking Water	Violation?
<b>DISINFECTANT RESIDUAL, DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS, AND BY-PRODUCT PRECURSORS</b>						
Chlorine (ppm)	(4)	(4)	0.82 (0.22 - 1.29)	2020	Water additive used to control microbes	No
Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	60	N/A	36.0 (23.5 - 46.1)	2020	By-product of disinfection with chlorine, combined with organic matter	No
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	80	N/A	53.2 <sup>1</sup> (37.7 - 58.8)			
Total Organic Carbon <sup>2</sup> Raw Water (ppm)	TT	-	1.04 (0.64 - 2.36)	2020	Naturally present in the environment	No
Total Organic Carbon <sup>2</sup> Finish Water (ppm)	TT	-	0.36 (ND - 0.9)			
<b>MICROBIOLOGICAL CONTAMINANTS</b>						
Total Coliform Bacteria (presence/absence)	TT	N/A	N/A	2020 (44 samples each month)	Naturally present in the environment	No
E. coli (presence/absence)	***	0	0		Human and animal fecal waste	No
Turbidity <sup>3</sup> (NTU)	TT = 0.3 in 95% of samples	-	0.04	2020	Soil runoff	No
<b>METALS &amp; INORGANIC CONTAMINANTS</b>						
Barium (ppm)	2	2	0.00280		Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from drilling waste/Metal refineries	No
Aluminum (ppm)	0.2	-	0.016		Erosion; Discharge fertilizer/aluminum factories	No
Nitrate (ppb)	10	10	0.159		Fertilizer run-off; Septic; Sewage; Erosion	No
Sodium (ppm) (Recommended Max Level)	20	-	13.3	2/11/20	Erosion of natural deposits; w/soda ash treatment	No
Total Dissolved Solids (ppm)	1.0	-	61.0		Organic and inorganic substances in liquid	No
Lead (ppb) (Tier 1 homes)	AL = 15	0	90th% = ND	2018 (Round 19)	Corrosion of household plumbing; Erosion of natural deposits	No
Copper (ppm) (Tier 1 homes)	AL = 1.3	1.3	90th% = ND		Collected every 3 years - next in 2021	No
<b>SECONDARY STANDARDS<sup>4</sup></b>						
Chloride (ppm)	250	-	11.0			-
Sulfate (ppm)	250	-	4.9	2/11/20		-
Hardness (ppm) <sup>5</sup>	4	-	36.0			-

<sup>1</sup> **Highest Locational Running Annual Average** is the highest calculated annual average at a single location. Oregon City samples for disinfection by-products quarterly, at 4 locations.

<sup>2</sup> **Total Organic Carbon (TOC)** has no health effects, however TOC provides a medium for the formation of disinfection by-products.

<sup>3</sup> **Turbidity is a measure of cloudiness** caused by suspended particles in the water. It is monitored because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the filtration system. Turbidity is monitored continuously, every 2 hours during treatment plant operation. The value reported is the highest single measurement for the year. 100% of samples tested were below the treatment technique level of 0.3 NTU.

<sup>4</sup> **Secondary standards have no MCLs.** Numbers listed are guidelines for contaminants that may cause aesthetic effects in drinking water such as staining of plumbing fixtures, tastes, and odors.

<sup>5</sup> **Hardness.** 80-100 ppm is considered medium hard.

# Table of Definitions

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

**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.

**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.

**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.

**MRDLG:** *Maximum Residual Disinfectant 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.

**N/A:** *Not Applicable.*

**N/D:** *Not Detected.* The results were below the laboratory reporting limit.

**NTU:** *Nephelometric Turbidity Unit.* A measurement of the water turbidity. Turbidity greater than 5 NTU is noticeable to the average person.

**ppb:** *Parts per billion.* A measure of the concentration of a substance in a given volume of water. One part per billion corresponds to one penny in \$10,000,000.

**ppm:** *Parts per million.* A measure of the concentration of a substance in a given volume of water. One part per million corresponds to one penny in \$10,000.

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

**90th Percentile:** The highest result found in 90% of the samples when listed in order from the lowest to the highest results.

# Cross Connection/Backflow Prevention Program

Oregon City water customers play a big part in helping to keep our drinking water safe by complying with the Cross Connection/Backflow Prevention Program (CC/BPP). Learn more at <http://www.orcity.org/publicworks/cross-connection-backflow-prevention-program>.



Most modern water-using fixtures and appliances such as sinks, toilets, and clothes washers have built-in backflow prevention features. Some, however, require installation of a backflow prevention assembly to comply with plumbing code and to protect the cross connection from backflow conditions. Common residential examples are landscape irrigation and fire sprinkler systems. For plumbing permit information contact the Oregon City Building Department at **503.722.3789** or go to <http://www.orcity.org/building>.

## Riparian Health



Does a stream flow through your property? Learn what you can do to protect and improve the vegetation and trees alongside the water. A healthy riparian area has many benefits, including filtering sediment and pollutants from stormwater runoff and providing shade to cool stream water temperature. Elevated water temperature can negatively impact coldwater fish and other coldwater aquatic species. Visit <http://conservationdistrict.org/resources/stream> for more information.

# What Can You Do To Reduce Your Exposure to Lead?

- **Run the cold water faucet to flush out lead.** If water has not been used for several hours, run the cold water for 30 seconds to 2 minutes, or until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature, before using it for drinking or cooking.
- **Use only cold water for cooking, drinking, and preparing baby formula.** Do not use hot water from the tap to cook, drink, or make baby formula. Lead dissolves more easily into hot water.
- **Do not boil water to remove lead.** Boiling water will not reduce lead levels.
- **Consider using a filter.** Confirm the filter is approved to reduce lead. Always maintain and replace a filter device in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to protect water quality. Contact NSF International at **1.800.673.8010** or [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) for information on performance standards for water filters.
- **Consider buying low-lead fixtures.** As of January 4, 2014 all pipes, fittings, and fixtures are required to contain less than 0.25% lead. When buying new fixtures, consumers should seek out those with the lowest lead content.

Visit [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) to learn more about lead content in plumbing fixtures.

- **Regularly clean your faucet aerator.** Particles containing lead from solder or household plumbing can become trapped in your faucet aerator. Regular cleaning every few months will remove these particles and reduce your exposure to lead.

For more information visit <http://www.drinktap.org/water-info/whats-in-my-water/lead-in-water.aspx>.



*Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.*

## Lead & Drinking Water

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. South Fork Water Board and Oregon City are 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 [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

The main source of lead in drinking water is typically from household plumbing. This is usually lead solder that was used in homes built or plumbed with copper pipes before 1985. Lead was banned for use in household plumbing construction in 1985. Lead can also be found in brass plumbing fixtures and components. Oregon City has no lead water service lines in the distribution system.

No lead is detected in Oregon City's drinking water as it leaves the treatment plant. South Fork's corrosion control strategy increases the pH of the water, making it less likely to deteriorate piping materials and plumbing fixtures. Oregon City is in compliance with all state and federal standards for both lead and copper.

# 2020 System Improvement Projects

Replacement of aging components in the drinking water distribution system is necessary to maintain good water quality and system reliability.

Project Name	Ductile Iron Pipe (Length in Feet)						
	Pipe Diameter	4"	6"	8"	10"	12"	18"
Hillock Heights				230			
Parker Knoll			30	745			
Meyers Road Extension						2200	
Gardiner Middle School	80	80		105			
Gardiner Middle School			60			350	
High St. Water Main Replacement	228	118	1383				
Molalla Ave Water Main Project				1320			2300
<b>Totals</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>3678</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>2630</b>	<b>2300</b>	

**Total New Pipe (Length in Feet) = 9,309**

**Like most cities across the nation**, Oregon City has aging infrastructure. In order to continue providing reliable, high quality water to our customers, a percentage of water system revenue funds capital improvement projects. These investments allow us to:



- **Replace old cast iron pipe with ductile iron pipe.** Cast iron pipe tends to corrode over time. This corrosion builds up on the pipe interior, reducing the effective diameter and capacity of the pipe. It also contributes to discolored water that, while being safe to drink, is aesthetically unpleasing.

- **Ensure reliability** by replacing older, smaller diameter piping with larger diameter piping that improves fire flow as well as water quality.

- **“Loop” sections of pipeline whenever possible.** Eliminating dead-end lines improves water circulation so water quality and fire flow are enhanced.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Environmental Protection Agency (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.

## Important Message From The EPA

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 at **1.800.426.4791**.

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/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 at **1.800.426.4791**.



**Oregon City  
Public Works**  
122 South Center St.  
Oregon City, OR  
97045-2935

# OREGON CITY water <sup>2021</sup> quality report

## Join Us

You are encouraged to participate in City decisions that may affect water quality. City Commission meetings are held at City Hall, 625 Center Street, Oregon City, the first and third Wednesday of each month, starting at 7:00 pm. Find meeting agenda information or watch archived videos of public meetings at [www.orcity.org](http://www.orcity.org).



<http://theriverstartshere.org>

## Resources

City of Oregon City: [www.orcity.org](http://www.orcity.org)

City Hall (625 Center Street): **503.657.0891**

Public Works Operations (122 S. Center Street): **503.657.8241**

Questions about your utility bill: **503.657.8151**

To report a water leak: **503.657.8241**

OC Request!: [www.orcity.org/community/oc-request-faqs-and-requests](http://www.orcity.org/community/oc-request-faqs-and-requests)

South Fork Water Board: [www.sfwb.org](http://www.sfwb.org)

Clackamas River Water Providers: **503.723.3511**, [www.clackamasproviders.org](http://www.clackamasproviders.org)

Oregon Health Authority, Drinking Water Program: <http://public.health.oregon.gov/HealthyEnvironments/DrinkingWater/Pages/index.aspx>

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality: [www.oregon.gov/DEQ](http://www.oregon.gov/DEQ)

Environmental Protection Agency: [www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)

EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline: **1.800.426.4791**

Greater Oregon City Watershed Council: **503.427.0439**, [www.gocwc.org](http://www.gocwc.org)

Clackamas River Basin Council: **503.303.4372**, [www.clackamasriver.org](http://www.clackamasriver.org)

Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District: [www.conservationsdistrict.org](http://www.conservationsdistrict.org)

Metro: [www.oregonmetro.gov](http://www.oregonmetro.gov)

OSU Extension Service: [www.extension.oregonstate.edu](http://www.extension.oregonstate.edu)

Regional Water Providers Consortium: [www.regionalh2o.org](http://www.regionalh2o.org)

Este informe contiene información importante acera de su agua potable. Haga que alguien lo traduzca para usted, o hable con alguien que lo entienda.

В этом сообщении содержится важная информация о воде, которую вы пьёте. Попросите кого-нибудь перевести для вас это сообщение или поговорите с человеком, который понимает его содержание.