

READER'S GUIDE TO THE Consumer Confidence Report

The following questions and answers are provided to help Sacramento Suburban Water District (SSWD) customers better understand the information presented in the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). You can find additional water quality information on SSWD's website at sswd.org, or by calling 916.972.7171.

1. What is the purpose of the Consumer Confidence Report?

Every year public water systems, such as SSWD, are required by law to provide water quality information to their customers. The CCR is prepared in accordance with State and Federal regulations. It includes information about the major sources of SSWD's drinking water supplies, what constituents were detected in those supplies, and how those constituents may affect public health. It also indicates how SSWD's water supplies comply with State and Federal safe drinking water standards. Federal and State laws dictate the content of the CCR.

2. What are the major sources of water delivered by SSWD?

The water customers receive comes from several different sources. SSWD's primary source of supply are groundwater wells that are located throughout the North Service Area (NSA) and South Service Area (SSA). When available, surface water purchased from the Placer County Water Agency (and treated by the San Juan Water District) is used to supplement SSWD's NSA water supply. Also, when available, treated surface water purchased from the City of Sacramento is used to supplement SSWD's SSA supply.

3. What kinds of constituents are found in drinking water?

To ensure tap water is safe to drink, United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (DDW) have established regulatory standards that limit the amount of certain constituents in drinking water provided by public water systems.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some constituents, many are naturally occurring. Constituents, such as microscopic organisms (bacteria, algae, and viruses), and certain minerals can enter water as it travels over land surfaces or through the ground. The presence of these constituents does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

Per the latest CCR, SSWD provides water to customers that continues to meet State and Federal drinking water standards.





4. How do constituents get into the water supply?

Some constituents are natural and enter the water supply from the environment. Others come from cities, farms, and certain industrial land uses and processes, including dry cleaning and rocket fuel manufacturing. Some constituents are by-products of the water disinfection process.

For each constituent detected in SSWD’s supplies, the CCR indicates the possible sources of that constituent. Examples include erosion of natural mineral deposits, contact with naturally-occurring organic material such as leaves, waste discharges from municipal and industrial sites, leaching from fertilizer use or septic tanks, and runoff from livestock feedlots.

5. How are constituents measured and reported in the CCR?

Constituents are measured and reported in extremely small quantities such as parts per million, parts per billion, and in some cases, parts per trillion. The “units” column of the CCR tables identifies the unit of measurement for each individual constituent detected. All analyses are performed by state-certified laboratories that meet minimum reporting requirements for each constituent analyzed. If these measurements are difficult to imagine, think about these comparisons:

Parts per million:

1 drop in 14 gallons¹

1 second in 12 days

1 inch in 16 miles

1 cent in \$10,000

Parts per billion:

1 drop in 14,000 gallons

1 second in 32 years

1 inch in 16,000 miles

1 cent in \$10 million

Parts per trillion:

10 drops in enough water to fill the Rose Bowl

1 second in 32,000 years

1 inch in 16 million miles

1 cent in \$10 billion

¹ A large bathtub holds about 42 gallons. An average swimming pool holds about 14,000 gallons.

6. What are the maximum levels allowed for constituents in drinking water?

The Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) listed for each constituent is USEPA’s and/or DDW’s maximum permissible level of that constituent in drinking water. The health effects of a constituent are the primary factors considered by USEPA and DDW when establishing an MCL; however, analytical and treatment technologies as well as economic factors are also considered. The column next to the MCL in the report reflects DDW’s Public Health Goal (PHG) or USEPA’s Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) for each constituent. A PHG or MCLG is not a regulatory limit but rather an estimate of the level a constituent poses no known or expected health risk if consumed daily over a lifetime. In many cases, it may not be possible to remove or reduce a constituent to the level represented by the PHG or MCLG because the technology may not yet exist or may be so costly it would make tap water unaffordable.

7. **What do “Primary Drinking Water Constituents,” “Secondary Drinking Water Constituents” and “Unregulated Drinking Water Constituents” mean?**

Constituents listed in the “primary” section are believed to pose a risk to public health if detected at levels greater than the MCL. Constituents listed in the “secondary” group can affect the appearance, taste, or smell of water without affecting the safety of the water (unless they also have a primary standard). In other words, primary constituents are thought to have health-related impacts when present above their respective MCLs, while secondary constituents have aesthetic impacts when present above their respective MCLs. Constituents listed as “unregulated” are occasionally monitored to help State and Federal agencies determine where certain constituents occur and whether they should be regulated. Unregulated constituents have no established standards.

8. **Why does the current report have last year’s date?**

State and Federal regulations require the CCR to be received by customers by July 1 of each year. It is also required to contain the most recent water quality data (for the sources used to provide water) through the end of the previous year.

9. **Some sample dates listed in the report are older than others. Why isn’t all the data current?**

DDW allows water systems, such as SSWD, to monitor some constituents less than once per year because the concentrations of these constituents do not change frequently. The data, though still representative, may be more than a year old.

10. **What does SSWD do to ensure the safety of the drinking water it provides?**

Providing customers with high-quality, reliable water is SSWD’s top priority. SSWD conducts regular water quality testing of its water supplies, both directly at the source and in the distribution system.

SSWD tests and maintains 71 groundwater production wells and approximately 700 miles of water mains. SSWD serves over 194,000 people in a 36-square-mile area with approximately 47,000 service connections.





11. Am I receiving groundwater or surface water?

When available, some parts of SSWD's service area may change from groundwater to surface water on relatively short notice in response to notifications from San Juan Water District or the City of Sacramento, both of which provide surface water to SSWD. Customers should assume that the constituents identified in the report may be present within the listed ranges at any given time.

12. Is it possible to get specific data for water that enters my home?

No, but SSWD may be able to provide customers with more specific water quality information for their area. Customers can contact **David Armand**, Environmental Compliance Supervisor, by telephone at 916.679.2888, or by email at darmand@sswd.org for details or more information.

Customers are encouraged to visit SSWD's web site at sswd.org to view the current and previous versions of the CCR.

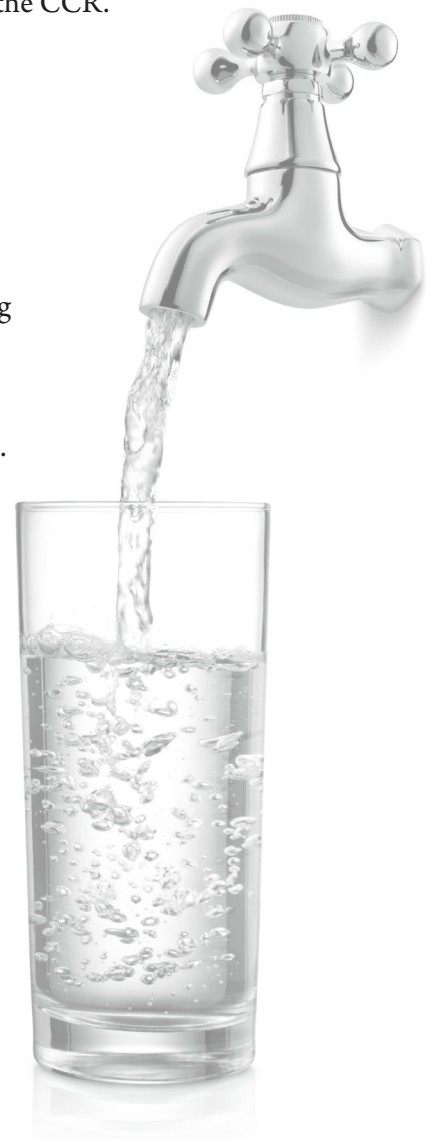
Glossary of Terms – Constituents

Coliform and Total Coliform Bacteria: Microscopic organisms in water that are used as indicators of possible contamination.

Hardness: Hardness in water is caused by dissolved mineral compounds. It is expressed in parts per million (ppm) of calcium carbonate (CaCO₃). Water softening systems often express hardness as grains per gallon (grains/gal).

DBPs: DBPs or disinfection by-products, include trihalomethanes (THMs) and haloacetic acids (HAAs). THMs and HAAs are by-products of chlorine disinfection. They are formed when chlorine reacts with certain naturally- occurring organic substances in water.

Turbidity: Turbidity in water is caused by suspended matter such as clay, silt, finely divided inorganic and organic matter, and biological material.



SSWD Administrative Office

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