

ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

Water testing performed in 2008



Presented By:
CITY OF EL CAMPO



PWS ID#: TX2410002

Este reporte incluye información importante sobre el agua para tomar. Para asistencia en español, favor de llamar al telefono (979) 541-5075.

Meeting the Challenge

We are once again proud to present to you our annual water quality report. This edition covers all testing completed from January 1 through December 31, 2008. Over the years, we have dedicated ourselves to producing drinking water that meets all state and federal drinking water standards. We continually strive to adopt new and better methods for delivering the best quality drinking water to you. As new challenges to drinking water safety emerge, we remain vigilant in meeting the challenges of source water protection, water conservation, and community education while continuing to serve the needs of all our water users.

Please share with us your thoughts about the information in this report. After all, well-informed customers are our best allies.

Important Health Information

You may be more vulnerable than the general population to certain microbial contaminants, such as *Cryptosporidium*, in drinking water. Infants, some elderly, or immunocompromised persons such as those undergoing chemotherapy for cancer; those who have undergone organ transplants; those who are undergoing treatment with steroids; and people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders can be particularly at risk from infections. You should seek advice about drinking water from your physician or health care provider. Additional guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* are available from the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Substances That Could Be in Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA prescribes regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration 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 these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

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 can acquire naturally occurring minerals, in some cases radioactive material, and substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances 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, or wildlife;

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may 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 which may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems;

Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Contaminants may be found in drinking water that may cause taste, color, or odor problems. These types of problems are not necessarily causes for health concerns. For more information on taste, odor, or color of drinking water, please contact our business office. For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, call the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Where Does My Water Come From?

The City of El Campo Water Department customers are fortunate because they enjoy an abundant water supply from five water wells. These water wells draw water from a combination of the Angelina and the Chicot groundwater formations, which range in depth from 750 feet to 1,400 feet. Combined, these wells are capable of producing about eight million gallons of high-quality drinking water every day. During all of 2008, your water department produced and delivered to your taps 637,302,000 gallons of water—an average of 1,746,000 gallons per day! These numbers indicate that the current water supply should be adequate to provide the City of El Campo with quality drinking water for several years to come.

What's Your Water Footprint?

You may have some understanding about your carbon footprint, but how much do you know about your water footprint? The water footprint of an individual, community, or business is defined as the total volume of freshwater that is used to produce the goods and services that are consumed by the individual or community or produced by the business. For example, 11 gallons of water are needed to irrigate and wash the fruit in one half-gallon container of orange juice. Thirty-seven gallons of water are used to grow, produce, package, and ship the beans in that morning cup of coffee. Two hundred and sixty-four gallons of water are required to produce one quart of milk, and 4,200 gallons of water are required to produce two pounds of beef.

According to the U.S. EPA, the average American uses about 100 gallons of water daily. In fact, in the developed world, one flush of a toilet uses as much water as the average person in the developing world allocates for an entire day's cooking, washing, cleaning, and drinking. The annual American per capita water footprint is about 8,000 cubic feet; twice the global per capita average. With water use increasing six-fold in the past century, our demands for freshwater are rapidly outstripping what the planet can replenish.

To check out your own water footprint, go to www.h2oconserve.org, or visit www.waterfootprint.org to see how the water footprints of other nations compare.

Community Participation

You are invited to attend the City of El Campo City Council meetings and to voice any concerns you may have about your drinking water. The City Council meets the second and fourth Tuesday of every month, beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the City Hall, 315 East Jackson Street, El Campo, Texas 77437. Please call (979) 541-5000 to confirm meeting times.

Source Water Assessment

The TCEQ has completed a Source Water Susceptibility Assessment for your drinking water source. This report describes the susceptibility and types of constituents that may come into contact with your drinking water source based on human activities and natural conditions. The information contained in this Assessment will allow us to focus our source water protection activities. More information about source water assessment and protection can be found at www.epa.gov/safewater/protect.html or you can contact Jerry Lewis at (979) 541-5075 for more information.

Questions?

For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Jerry Lewis, Utilities Superintendent, at (979) 541-5075.



Lead and 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. The City of El Campo 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 www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

What's a Cross-connection?

Cross-connections that contaminate drinking water distribution lines are a major concern. A cross-connection is formed at any point where a drinking water line connects to equipment (boilers), systems containing chemicals (air conditioning systems, fire sprinkler systems, irrigation systems), or water sources of questionable quality. Cross-connection contamination can occur when the pressure in the equipment or system is greater than the pressure inside the drinking water line (backpressure). Contamination can also occur when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to fairly routine occurrences (main breaks,

heavy water demand) causing contaminants to be sucked out from the equipment and into the drinking water line (backsiphonage).

Outside water taps and garden hoses tend to be the most common sources of cross-connection contamination at home. The garden hose creates a hazard when submerged in a swimming pool or when attached to a chemical sprayer for weed killing. Garden hoses that are left lying on the ground may be contaminated by fertilizers, cesspools, or garden chemicals. Improperly installed valves in your toilet could also be a source of cross-connection contamination.

Community water supplies are continually jeopardized by cross-connections unless appropriate valves, known as backflow prevention devices, are installed and maintained.

We have surveyed all industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities in the service area to make sure that all potential cross-connections are identified and

eliminated or protected by a backflow preventer. We also inspect and test each backflow preventer to make sure that it is providing maximum protection.

For more information, review the Cross-Connection Control Manual from the U.S. EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/safewater/crossconnection.html. You can also call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

“WELL-INFORMED CUSTOMERS
ARE OUR BEST ALLIES.”



What's growing in my pet's water bowl?

Dog and cat owners often notice the appearance of black or pink growths in their pet's water bowl. These growths come from various types of mold in the air—not the water. Similar

growths can also be found on showerheads and shower curtains. Wash your pet's water bowl frequently and be sure to have plenty of fresh water available at all times.

Is it safe to drink water from a garden hose?

Substances used in vinyl garden hoses to keep them flexible can get into the water as it passes through the hose. These chemicals are not good for you nor are they good for your pets. Allow the water to run for a short time in order to flush the hose before drinking or filling your pets' drinking containers. There are hoses made with "food-grade" plastic that will not contaminate the water. Check your local hardware store for this type of hose.

What makes water Hard?

If substantial amounts of either calcium or magnesium, both nontoxic minerals, are present in drinking water, the water is said to be hard. Hard water does not dissolve soap readily, so making lather for washing and cleaning is difficult. Conversely, water containing little calcium or magnesium is called soft water.

Sampling Results

During the past year we have taken hundreds of water samples in order to determine the presence of any radioactive, biological, inorganic, volatile organic, or synthetic organic contaminants. The table below shows only those contaminants that were detected in the water. Although all of the substances listed here are under the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL), we feel it is important that you know exactly what was detected and how much of the substance was present in the water.

The state requires us to monitor for certain substances less than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data are included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

REGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Alpha Emitters (pCi/L)	2006	15	0	2.83	2.10–4.2	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Arsenic (ppb)	2008	10	NA	4.0	2.0–4.0	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Barium (ppm)	2008	2	2	0.215	0.19–0.246	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Beta/Photon Emitters ¹ (pCi/L)	2006	50	0	2.07	ND–3.30	No	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Chlorine (ppm)	2008	[4]	[4]	1.20	0.71–1.92	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Combined Radium (pCi/L)	2006	5	0	0.2	ND–0.6	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	2008	4	4	0.35	0.3–0.4	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate (ppm)	2008	10	10	0.36	0.25–0.51	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Selenium (ppb)	2008	50	50	1.30	ND–3.8	No	Discharge from petroleum and metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from mines

Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AL	MCLG	AMOUNT DETECTED (90TH% TILE)	SITES ABOVE AL/TOTAL SITES	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Copper (ppm)	2007	1.3	1.3	0.169	0/30	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives
Lead (ppb)	2007	15	0	2.8	0/30	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

UNREGULATED AND OTHER SUBSTANCES²

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH
Bicarbonate (ppm)	2006	257	245–264
Bromoform (ppb)	2006	0.5	0.5–0.5
Calcium (ppm)	2008	36.8	30.6–45.9
Chloride (ppm)	2008	69	54–78
Copper (ppm)	2008	0.011	0.003–0.027
Iron (ppm)	2008	0.007	ND–0.02
Lead (ppm)	2008	0.001	ND–0.002
Magnesium (ppm)	2008	12	9.5–15.2
Manganese (ppm)	2008	0.0023	ND–0.0038
pH (Units)	2008	7.5	7.5–7.6
Sodium (ppm)	2008	79	70–94
Sulfate (ppm)	2008	16	13–19
Total Alkalinity (ppm)	2008	210	201–216
Total Dissolved Solids (ppm)	2008	363	358–374
Total Hardness (ppm)	2008	141	115–162

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.

NA: Not applicable.

ND (Not detected): Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

pCi/L (picocuries per liter): A measure of radioactivity.

ppb (parts per billion): One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

ppm (parts per million): One part substance per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

¹The MCL for beta particles is 4 mrem/year. The U.S. EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for beta particles.

²Unregulated contaminants are those for which the U.S. EPA has not established drinking water standards. The purpose of unregulated contaminant monitoring is to assist the U.S. EPA in determining the occurrence of unregulated contaminants in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted.