

# Etowah Utilities Water Quality Report for 2021

## Is my drinking water safe?

Yes, our water meets all of EPA's health standards. We have conducted numerous tests for over 80 contaminants that may be in drinking water. As you'll see in the chart on the back, we only detected 12 of these contaminants. We found all of these contaminants at safe levels.

## What is the source of my water?

Your water, which is surface water, comes from the Hiwassee River. Our goal is to protect our water from contaminants and we are working with the State to determine the vulnerability of our water source to *potential* contamination. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) has prepared a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) Report for the untreated water sources serving this water system. The SWAP Report assesses the susceptibility of untreated water sources to *potential* contamination. To ensure safe drinking water, all public water systems treat and routinely test their water. Water sources have been rated as reasonably susceptible, moderately susceptible or slightly susceptible based on geologic factors and human activities in the vicinity of the water source. The Etowah Utilities sources rated as *slightly* susceptible to potential contamination.

An explanation of Tennessee's Source Water Assessment Program, the Source Water Assessment summaries, susceptibility scorings and the overall TDEC report to EPA can be viewed online at: <https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/wr-water-resources/water-quality/source-water-assessment.html> or you may contact the Water System to obtain copies of specific assessments.

## Why are there contaminants in my water?

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 Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

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

**For more information about your drinking water, please call Brandon Frost at 423- 263-9441.**

## How can I get involved?

Our Water Board meets on the fourth Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Etowah Community Center, 155 Robinson Street. Please feel free to participate in these meetings.

## Is our water system meeting other rules that govern our operations?

The State and EPA require us to test and report on our water on a regular basis to ensure its safety. We have met all of these requirements. Results of unregulated contaminant analysis are available upon request. We want you to know that we pay attention to all the rules.

## Other Information

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.

## Pharmaceuticals In Drinking Water

1. Flushing unused or expired medicines can be harmful to your drinking water. Learn more about disposing of unused medicines at : <https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/osp-policy-and-sustainable-practices/community-programs->

[and-services/unwanted-household-pharmaceuticals-takeback-program.html](#)

Contaminants that may be present in source water:

- 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 and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation prescribe regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. **Etowah Utilities water treatment processes are designed to reduce any such substances to levels well below any health concern.** FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

## Do I Need To Take Special Precautions?

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 under-gone 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 not only their drinking water, but food preparation, personal hygiene, and precautions in handling infants and pets from their health care providers. EPA/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).

## Lead in 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. Etowah Utilities 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 <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

## Water System Security

Following the events of September 2001, we realize that our customers are concerned about the security of their drinking water. We urge the public to report any suspicious activities at any utility facilities, including treatment plants, pumping stations, tanks, fire hydrants, etc. to 263-9441



# Water Quality Data

## What does this chart mean?

- **MCLG** - Maximum Contaminant Level Goal, or 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.
- **MCL** - Maximum Contaminant Level, or 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. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink 2 liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.
- **MRDL**: 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 the 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.
- **AL** - Action Level, or the concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- **Below Detection Level (BDL)** - laboratory analysis indicates that the contaminant is not present at a level that can be detected.
- **Non-Detects (ND)** - laboratory analysis indicates that the contaminant is not present.
- **Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l)** – explained as a relation to time and money as one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.
- **Picocuries per liter (pCi/L)** - picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.
- **Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter** - explained as a relation to time and money as one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000.
- **Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU)** - nephelometric turbidity unit is a measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person
- **RTCR**– Revised Total Coliform Rule. This rule went into effect on April 1, 2016 and replaces the MCL for total coliform with a Treatment Technique Trigger for a system assessment.
- **TT** - Treatment Technique, or a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

## ETOWAH UTILITIES

Contaminant	Violation Yes/No	Level Detected	Range of Detections	Date of Sample	Unit Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Total Coliform Bacteria	No	0		2021		0	<1 positive sample	Naturally present in the environment
Total Coliform Bacteria (RTCR)	No	0		2021		0	TT Trigger	Naturally present in the environment
Turbidity <sup>1</sup>	No	0.17	0.03-0.17	2021	NTU	n/a	TT	Soil runoff
Copper <sup>2</sup>	No	90 <sup>th</sup> %=0.221		2021	ppm	1.3	AL=1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
Fluoride	No	0.68 .49avg	0.18-0.68	2021	ppm	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Lead <sup>2</sup>	No	90 <sup>th</sup> %=1.0		2021	ppb	0	AL=15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits
Sodium	No	2.08		2021	ppm	N/A	N/A	Erosion of natural deposits; used in water treatment
TTHM *4 [Total trihalomethanes]	Yes	37.0 avg.	19.0-68.3	2021	ppb	n/a	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) *4	Yes	41.7 avg.	21.8-87.5	2021	ppb	N/A	60	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Total Organic Carbon <sup>3</sup>	No			2021	ppm	TT	TT	Naturally present in the environment.
Chlorine	No	1.31	0.8-1.6	2021	ppm	4	4	Water additive used to control microbes.
Nitrate	No	0.132	0.0-0.132	2021	ppm	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use, leaching from septic tanks. Erosion of natural deposits

<sup>1</sup>100% of our samples were below the turbidity limit. Turbidity is a measurement of the cloudiness of water. We measure turbidity because it is a good indication of the effectiveness of our treatment process.

<sup>2</sup>During the most recent round of Lead and Copper testing, 0 out of 30 households sampled for lead contained concentrations exceeding the action level and 0 out of 30 households sampled for copper contained concentrations exceeding the action level. Infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general population. It is possible that lead levels at



your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of materials used in your home’s plumbing. If you are concerned about elevated lead levels in your home’s water, you may wish to have your water tested and flush your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using tap water. Additional information is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

<sup>3</sup>We have met all treatment technique requirements for Total Organic Carbon removal.

**\*4-Important information about your drinking water**

**Monitoring Requirements Not Met for Etowah Utilities**

**Etowah Utilities** violated drinking water requirements over the past year. Even though these were not emergencies, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing (did) to correct the situations.

*We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards. During the first quarter of 2021 we failed to monitor for Total Trihalomethanes and Total Haloacetic Acids per our Stage 2 LRAA Monitoring Plan and therefore cannot be sure of the quality of your drinking water during that time.*

**What should I do?**

There is nothing you need to do at this time.

The table below lists the contaminant(s) we did not test according to our monitoring plan during a recent compliance period, how often we are supposed to sample, how many samples we are supposed to take, how many samples we took, when the samples should have been taken, and the date on which samples were (or will be) taken.

<b>Contaminant</b>	<b>Required sampling frequency</b>	<b>Number of samples required</b>	<b>When samples should have been taken during week of</b>	<b>When samples were taken (or will be taken)</b>
Total Trihalomethanes	Quarterly	4	2/10/2021	3/4/2021
Total Haloacetic Acids	Quarterly	4	2/10/2021	3/4/2021

**What is being done?**

During the scheduled sampling event of 2/10/2021, there was an ice storm that affected FedEx shipping hubs that delayed samples being delivered to Pace Analytical Lab. The decision was made to wait until shipping times were normalizing to keep from these important samples being above the hold times required by the lab. This error has been corrected by either using another shipper or simply driving the sample to its respected lab to follow with the LRAA Monitoring Plan. This violation does not reflect on the drinking water itself, just the plan in how they are collected. Each sample listed above still fell within acceptable limits set forth by the EPA in clean water use. For more information, please contact Brandon Frost, with Etowah Utilities, at (423) 263-9441 or P.O. Box 927 Etowah, TN 37331.

*Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses).*

This notice is being sent to you by:

Etowah Utilities State Water System ID#TN0000233

February 22, 2022

