

Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for 2023
Town of Secretary
April, 2024
PWSID 0090007

We're pleased to present to you this year's Annual Water Quality Report. This report is designed to inform you about the water quality and services we deliver to you every day. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water. Our water source is a ground source which consists of four (4) deep wells. Two of these wells draw from the confined Piney Point Formation and our two new wells that draw from the Federalburg formation.

This report shows our water quality and what it means.

We have a source water protection plan available from our office that provides more information such as potential sources of contamination. This plan is also available from Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Dorchester County Public Library.
https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Water/water_supply/Source_Water_Assessment_Program/Pages/c_l.aspx. For more information call 1-800-633-6101.

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 microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact Yvonne Pritchett at Town Hall, 410-943-3113. We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled town meetings held on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm at Secretary's Town Hall.

The Town of Secretary routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. This table shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1st to December 31st, 2023. As water travels over the land or underground, it can pick up substances or contaminants such as microbes, inorganic and organic chemicals, and radioactive substances. All drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. It's important to remember that the presence of these contaminants does not necessarily pose a health risk.

In this table you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l) - one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.

Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter - one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000.

Parts per trillion (ppt) or Nanogram per liter - one part per trillion corresponds to one minute in 2,000,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000,000.

Action Level - the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Maximum Contaminant Level - The "Maximum Allowed" (MCL) is 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 - The "Goal"(MCLG) is 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.

| TEST RESULTS | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|----------------|------------------|------|--------|---|
| Contaminant | Violation Y/N | Level Detected | Unit Measurement | MCLG | MCL | Likely Source of Contamination |
| Inorganic Contaminants | | | | | | |
| Arsenic (average) (range) (2023) Highest Level Detected | N | 0.0-8.2 6 | ppb | n/a | 10 | Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; runoff from glass and electronics production wastes |
| Copper (distribution) (2022) | N | 0.079 | ppm | 1.3 | AL=1.3 | Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives |
| Fluoride (2021) | N | 0.3 | ppm | 4 | 4 | Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories |
| Disinfection and Disinfection By-products | | | | | | |
| Chlorine (2023) | N | 1-1.3 | ppm | 4 | 4 | Water Additive used to control microbes |
| TTHM (distribution) [Total trihalomethanes] (2023) | N | 9 | ppb | 0 | 80 | By-product of drinking water chlorination |
| Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (distribution) (2023) | N | 4 | ppb | 0 | 60 | By-product of drinking water chlorination |

Note: Test results are for year 2023 or as indicated; not all contaminants are required to be tested for annually. These are our most recent results.

Our 2 new wells drilled into the Aquifer have been shown through testing to be free or very low in arsenic contamination. These were placed into service during 2009. These wells are currently being blended with our older wells which have produced water with an arsenic level below the MCL of 10 ppb entering our distribution system. We are continuing to test for arsenic on a quarterly basis as required by Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE).

Arsenic - While your drinking water meets EPA standards for arsenic, it does contain low levels of arsenic. EPA's standard balances the current understanding of arsenic's possible health effects against the costs of removing arsenic from drinking water. EPA continues to research the health effects of low levels of arsenic, which is a mineral known to cause cancer in humans at high concentrations and is linked to other health effects such as skin damage and circulatory problems.

PFAS – short for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances – refers to a large group of more than 4,000 human-made chemicals that have been used since the 1940s in a range of products, including stain- and water-resistant fabrics and carpeting, cleaning products, paints, cookware, food packaging and fire-fighting foams. These uses of PFAS have led to PFAS entering our environment, where they have been measured by several states in soil, surface water, groundwater, and seafood. Some PFAS can last a long time in

the environment and in the human body and can accumulate in the food chain.

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) conducted a PFAS monitoring program for Community Water Systems from 2020 to 2022. The results are available on MDE's website: <https://mde.maryland.gov/PublicHealth/Pages/PFAS-Landing-Page.aspx>.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized regulations for 6 PFAS compounds in drinking water in April 2024. The MCLs for PFOA and PFOS are each 4.0 parts per trillion (ppt). The MCLs for PFNA, PFHxS, and HFPO-DA (GenX chemicals) are each 10 ppt. Additionally, a mixture of two or more

of the following chemicals (PFNA, PFHxS, HFPO-DA, and PFBS) will be regulated with a Hazard Index of 1 (unitless) to determine if the combined levels of these PFAS pose a risk and require action.

The 5th Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR5) began testing for 29 PFAS compounds and lithium in 2023, and testing will run through 2025. The UCMR5 should test all community water systems with populations of at least 3300 people. Three randomly selected systems in Maryland with populations less than 3300 people will also be tested under the UCMR5. Detections greater than the minimum reporting levels for each constituent should be reported in the CCR.

All sources of drinking water are subject to potential contamination by substances that are naturally occurring or man made. These substances can be microbes, inorganic or organic chemicals and radioactive substances. All 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 the 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 at 1-800-426-4791.

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. Secretary is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in your home. You share the responsibility for protecting yourself and your family from the lead in your home plumbing. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Before drinking tap water, flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. You can also use a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead in drinking water. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact The Town of Secretary at 410-943-3113. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

MCL's are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated contaminants, 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.

The Maryland Rural Water Association's State Circuit Rider assisted with the completion of this report.

Thank you for allowing us to continue providing your family with clean, quality water this year. In order to maintain a safe and dependable water supply we sometimes need to make improvements that will benefit all of our customers. These improvements are sometimes reflected as rate structure adjustments. Thank you for understanding.

Please call our office if you have questions about this report.