

Belen Water Quality Report 2008

Spanish (Español)

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre la calidad de su agua potable. Por favor lea este informe o comuníquese con alguien que pueda traducir la información.

Is my water safe?

Last year, we conducted tests for over 80 contaminants. We only detected 12 of those contaminants, and found only 1 at a level higher than the EPA allows. As we told you at the time, our water exceeded drinking water standards. (For more information see the section labeled Violations at the end of the report.) This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies. We are committed to providing you with information because informed customers are our best allies.

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 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/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Water Drinking Hotline (800-426-4791).

Where does my water come from?

Water source comes from San Juan Aquifer; it is pumped from 5 wells at different locations. The City of Belen's water wells are daily maintained and inspected for proper operation. The city has made many improvements to our water supply system in the past and will continue to improve and upgrade its water production system.

Source water assessment and its availability

The Belen water system is well maintained and operated. Sourced of drinking water are generally protected from potential sources of contamination based on well construction, hydro geologic settings, system operation and management. The susceptibility rank of the entire water system HIGH, although throughout the United States it is common to find potential sources of contamination located atop wellheads. Continued regulatory oversight, wellhead protection plans, and other planning effort continue to be primary methods of protecting and ensuring high quality drinking water. The report was provided to the Belen water system, available at the state of New Mexico Environment Department Drinking Water Bureau, 525 Camino de los Marquez, Ste.4, Santa Fe NM 87505. Copies may also be requested by emailing the Drinking Water Bureau at SWAPP@nmenv.state.nm.us or by calling toll free (1-877-654-8720).

Why are there contaminants in my drinking 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 (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791). 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. Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, that 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 storm water 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 storm water 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 storm water runoff, and septic systems; and 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 prescribes regulations that 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.

How can I get involved?

City Council meetings are held at city hall at 100 South Main Street, every first and third Monday of the month at 6:00pm. Please report any unusual activity around the City well or fire hydrants, by calling either City hall (505-864-8221) or the Belen Dispatch (505-865-2039)

Conservation Tips

Did you know that the average U.S. household uses approximately 350 gallons of water per day? Luckily, there are many low-cost or no-cost ways to conserve water. Water your lawn at the least sunny times of the day. Fix toilet and faucet leaks. Take short showers - a 5 minute shower uses 4 to 5 gallons of water compared to up to 50 gallons for a bath. Turn the faucet off while brushing your teeth and shaving; 3-5 gallons go down the drain per minute. Teach your kids about water conservation to ensure a future generation that uses water wisely. Make it a family effort to reduce next month's water bill!

Additional Information for Lead

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. Belen 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 Quality Data Table

The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the calendar year of this report. The presence of contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done in the calendar year of the report. The EPA or the State requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.

<u>Contaminants</u>	<u>MCLG</u> or <u>MRDLG</u>	<u>MCL,</u> <u>TT, or</u> <u>MRDL</u>	<u>Your</u> <u>Water</u>	<u>Range</u> <u>Low</u> <u>High</u>		<u>Sample</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>Violation</u>	<u>Typical Source</u>
Disinfectants & Disinfection By-Products								
(There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.)								
Chlorine (as Cl ₂) (ppm)	4	4	0.43	0	1.05	2008	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	NA	60	1.6	ND	1.6	2008	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	NA	80	2.8	ND	2.8	2008	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Inorganic Contaminants								
Arsenic (ppb)	0	10	24	ND	24	2008	Yes	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Chromium (ppb)	100	100	13	ND	13	2008	No	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; Erosion of natural deposits
Cyanide [as Free Cn] (ppb)	200	200	5	ND	5	2008	No	Discharge from plastic and fertilizer factories; Discharge from steel/metal factories
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	1.72	0.86	1.72	2008	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	10	10	1.8	0.56	1.8	2008	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Radioactive Contaminants								
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	0	15	7.1	5.02	7.1	2007	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Radium (combined 226/228) (pCi/L)	0	5	0.4	0.23	0.4	2007	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Uranium (ug/L)	0	30	6	4	6	2007	No	Erosion of natural deposits

<u>Contaminants</u>	<u>MCLG</u>	<u>AL</u>	<u>Your</u> <u>Water</u>	<u>Sample</u> <u>Date</u>	<u># Samples</u> <u>Exceeding AL</u>	<u>Exceeds</u> <u>AL</u>	<u>Typical Source</u>
Inorganic Contaminants							
Copper - action level at consumer taps (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.06	2008	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

Unit Descriptions	
<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
ug/L	ug/L : Number of micrograms of substance in one liter of water
ppm	ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/L)
ppb	ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (µg/L)
pCi/L	pCi/L: picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)
NA	NA: not applicable
ND	ND: Not detected
NR	NR: Monitoring not required, but recommended.

Important Drinking Water Definitions	
<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
MCLG	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.
MCL	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.
TT	TT: Treatment Technique: A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
AL	AL: Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
Variances and Exemptions	Variances and Exemptions: State or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.
MRDLG	MRDLG: Maximum residual disinfection 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.
MRDL	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.
MNR	MNR: Monitored Not Regulated
MPL	MPL: State Assigned Maximum Permissible Level

Violations and Exceedances

Arsenic

Some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years could experience skin damage or problems with their circulatory system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer. Violation occurred in December 2009. The City is currently in the process of requesting approval from the state for a point of use filtration system. This arsenic violation does not affect the general population of the City of Belen, only the industrial park south of Belen. This is a separate system that feeds the industrial park and is not tied into Belen's community main water sources. The City is currently working on a system to reduce arsenic levels to acceptable amounts.

For more information please contact:

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