

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT

PWSID: 1240001

City of Albert Lea 2015 Drinking Water Report

The City of Albert Lea is issuing the results of monitoring done on its drinking water for the period from January 1 to December 31, 2015. The purpose of this report is to advance consumers' understanding of drinking water and heighten awareness of the need to protect precious water resources.

Source of Water

The City of Albert Lea provides drinking water to its residents from a groundwater source: three wells ranging from 300 to 350 feet deep, that draw water from the Cedar Valley-Galena and Cedar Valley-Maquoketa aquifers.

The Minnesota Department of Health has made a determination as to how vulnerable our systems' source(s) of water may be to future contamination incidents. If you wish to obtain the entire source water assessment regarding your drinking water, please call 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 (and press 5) during normal business hours. Also, you can view it on line at www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/swa.

Call Brad Pirsig 507-377-4378 if you have questions about the City of Albert Lea drinking water or would like information about opportunities for public participation in decisions that may affect the quality of the water.

Results of Monitoring

The results contained in the following table indicate an exceedance of a federal standard. Some other contaminants were detected in trace amounts that were below legal limits. The table that follows shows the contaminants that were detected in trace amounts last year. (Some contaminants are sampled less frequently than once a year; as a result, not all contaminants were sampled for in 2015. If any of these contaminants were detected the last time they were sampled for, they are included in the table along with the date that the detection occurred.)

Key to abbreviations:

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—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.

MRDL—Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level.

MRDLG—Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal.

AL—Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirement which a water system must follow.

90th Percentile Level—This is the value obtained after disregarding 10 percent of the samples taken that had the highest levels. (For example, in a situation in which 10 samples were taken, the 90th percentile level is determined by disregarding the highest result, which represents 10 percent of the samples.) Note: In situations in which only 5 samples are taken, the average of the two with the highest levels is taken to determine the 90th

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percentile level.

pCi/l—PicoCuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity).

ppm—Parts per million, which can also be expressed as milligrams per liter (mg/l).

ppb—Parts per billion, which can also be expressed as micrograms per liter (µg/l).

N/A—Not Applicable (does not apply).

Contaminant (units)	MCLG	MCL	Level Found		Typical Source of Contaminant
			Range (2015)	Average /Result*	
Alpha Emitters (pCi/l)	0	15.4	6.4-9.5	9.5	Erosion of natural deposits.
Arsenic (ppb) (02/24/2011)	0	10	N/A	1.3	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes.
Barium (ppm) (02/24/2011)	2	2	N/A	.29	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.
Combined Radium (pCi/l)	0	5.4	4-4.4	4.4	Erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	.92-1	1.07	State of Minnesota requires all municipal water systems to add fluoride to the drinking water to promote strong teeth; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.
Nitrate (as Nitrogen) (ppm)	10.4	10.4	.14-.51	.51	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits.
TTHM (Total trihalomethanes) (ppb)	0	80	1.3-1.9	1.9	By-product of drinking water disinfection.

*This is the value used to determine compliance with federal standards. It sometimes is the highest value detected and sometimes is an average of all the detected values. If it is an average, it may contain sampling results from the previous year.

Contaminant (units)	MRDLG	MRDL	****	*****	Typical Source of Contaminant
Chlorine (ppm)	4	4	.1-.9	.65	Water additive used to control microbes.

****Highest and Lowest Monthly Average.

*****Highest Quarterly Average.

Contaminant (units)	MCLG	AL	90% Level	# sites over AL	Typical Source of Contaminant
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Contaminant (units)	MCLG	AL	90% Level	# sites over AL	Typical Source of Contaminant
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	1.79★	6 out of 30	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.
Lead (ppb)	0	15	3	0 out of 30	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.

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. City of Albert Lea 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>.

★ We are in exceedance of the action level for copper. Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's Disease should consult their personal doctor. In response to this issue, we performed a corrosion control study and/or have taken actions to make the water less likely to absorb materials such as copper from your plumbing.

Monitoring may have been done for additional contaminants that do not have MCLs established for them and are not required to be monitored under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Results may be available by calling 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 during normal business hours.

Monitoring for unregulated contaminants as required by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rules (40 CFR 141.40) was conducted in 2015. Results of the unregulated contaminant monitoring are available upon request from Cindy Swanson, Minnesota Department of Health, at 651/201-4656.

Compliance with National Primary Drinking Water Regulations

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.

Contaminants 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, 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

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and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. 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 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 at 1-800-426-4791.

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 microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.



(<http://www.health.state.mn.us/index.html>)

Statement for Non-English Speaking CCR Customers

For systems that serve a population with a significant number of people who do not speak English, please consider including one or more of the statements below in your CCR.

Statement in English:

This report contains very important information. Translate or ask someone who understands it.

Spanish:

Información importante. Si no la entiende, haga que alguien se la traduzca ahora.

Hmong:

Nov yog ntaub ntawv tseem ceeb. Yog koy tsi to taub, nrhiav neeg pab txhais rau koh kom sai sai.

Printable PDF:

The printable PDF below is being offered for your convenience:

- [For Non-English Speaking Customers \(PDF: 72KB/1 page\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/com/ccr/statement.pdf)
(<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/com/ccr/statement.pdf>)

651-201-5000 Phone
888-345-0823 Toll-free

Information on this website is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities upon request.

Updated Tuesday, March 31, 2015 at 08:52AM

Warning: Beware of Water Treatment Scams

It is important you are made aware that false claims, deceptive sales pitches, or scare tactics have been used by some water treatment companies. Every person has a right to decide what is best for themselves and their family, and you may choose to install additional water treatment to further lower the levels of contaminants of emerging concern, chlorine, and other chemicals in your water. However, you should be extremely cautious about purchasing a water treatment system. If you are considering the purchase of a home water treatment system, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) recommends the following:

- Make sure the treatment system/device you are considering is certified to achieve the results being claimed. Reliable certifiers include: NSF International, Underwriters Laboratories (UL), and the Water Quality Association (WQA).
- Make sure the treatment system/device actually addresses whatever issue you are concerned about – no one system will treat all water quality problems.
- Work with a reputable water treatment company.
- Verify that the installation is done by a licensed plumber or licensed water conditioning contractor (as required by state law). Such plumbers and contractors are licensed through the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (<http://www.dli.mn.gov/ccld/PlumbingLookup.asp>).
- Compare water treatment systems and prices.
- If you live in a city, contact your local water system for more information regarding your water quality.
- If you are contacted by a company to test your water and they say they are working with the city or a state agency, ask for their contact person at the city or state.
- Make sure you understand how to properly use and maintain the system; otherwise it may not work properly and, in some cases, can even make your water quality worse. Be wary of companies claiming their system is maintenance-free.

Beware of any sales pitch that involves one or more of the following:

- Reciting a list of recent groundwater contamination problems across the state, regardless of whether the contamination actually affects the resident or not.
- Conducting a series of in-home “water quality tests” that the salesperson claims indicate the presence of contamination, when in fact they may simply indicate the presence of naturally occurring minerals in the water.
- Misrepresenting state and federal drinking water standards, claiming the resident’s water exceeds those standards, and implying the water is unsafe to drink.
- Offering a “one-time only” offer of a water treatment system at a “greatly reduced” price, when in fact the systems may be sold at inflated prices.

Anyone who believes they have been provided false or misleading information or that they have been subjected to unfair or high-pressure tactics in the course of a sales visit should contact the Minnesota Attorney General’s office Consumer Complaints division at 651-296-3353 or 800-657-3787 or online at:

<http://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Complaint.asp>

MDH has more information about drinking water and home water treatment systems on their website at:

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/wells/index.html>

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/pou.html>



Environmental Health Division
Drinking Water Protection Section
P.O. Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-201-4700