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# City of St. Helens Water Department

## 2003 Water Quality Report

### Water Quality

The City of St. Helens Water Department is providing this summary of the quality of the water provided to you during the past year. The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requires that utilities issue an annual "Consumer Confidence" report to customers in addition to other notices that may be required by law. This report details where our water comes from, what it contains, and the risks our water testing and treatment are designed to prevent.

City of St. Helens Water Department is committed to providing you with the safest and most reliable water supply. Informed customers are our best allies in maintaining safe drinking water.

We are required by the Oregon State Health Division to take 10 routine water samples monthly from designated areas throughout the city, testing for contaminants in the drinking water.

In 2003 the City of St. Helens Water Department's Drinking Water met or surpassed all federal and state drinking water standards.

We have been continuing to upgrade and improve our water quality and service by installing new water mains and having a leak detection survey done to help reduce water loss.

### Water Source

The St. Helens Water Department supplies the city with water from three Collector Wells located in Columbia City and one Ground Well located near Scappoose Bay Marina. Well #3 is located at the end of "K" Street near the bank of the Columbia River in Columbia City. Well #2 is located at the corner of "E" Street and Strand Street on the bank of the Columbia River. Well #1 is located 1/2 mile to the north. These locations are monitored and inspected daily. Well #2 has not been operated since Well #3 came on line in 2001.

In 2002, it was determined that Well #3 is under direct influence of surface water, so the City is working on plans to construct a water treatment facility that will use a new technology called membrane filtration process to disinfect and treat the water. The plant is scheduled to be completed in September 2005.

During the summer months when usage is higher, the City produces over 4 million gallons of water per day. This serves over 10,500 residents through 3,800 service connections. During the fall and winter months, this usage falls to just over 2 million gallons per day.

You can contact St. Helens City Hall at 503-397-6272 for information about the next opportunity for public participation in decisions about your drinking water.



## How to Read This Table

This report is based upon the most recent tests conducted by the City of St. Helens Water Department. Testing frequency is determined by the Oregon Health Division. Terms used in the Water Quality Table and in other parts of this report are defined here.

- **Maximum Contaminant Level or MCL:** 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 or MCLG:** 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.
- **Treatment Technique or TT:** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

The data presented in this report is from the most recent testing done in accordance with regulations. Test results can also be viewed on the Oregon Health Division's website at <http://170.104.158.16/inventory.php3> Our PWS Number is 4100724.

### Key to Table

MCL = Maximum Contaminant Level

MCLG = Maximum Contaminant Level Goal

ppm = parts per million or milligrams per liter (mg/l)

ppb = parts per billion or micrograms per liter (ug/l)

Contaminant	Date Tested	Violation	Detected Level	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Major Sources
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>							
Nitrate	4/17/03	NO	3.40	ppm	10	10	Fertilizer runoff; Leaching; Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium	4/17/03	NO	126.00	ppm	n/a	n/a	Naturally occurring

### Water Quality Table Footnotes

All contaminants tested were below the Maximum Contaminant Level and none were in violation. We did have violations for late reporting of nitrates and inorganics. None of these violations created a health risk.

## Mandatory Testing

The contaminants we monitor for are listed below. Only the two listed in the table above had detectable levels.

#### Microbiological Contaminants

Total Coliform Bacteria  
Fecal Coliform  
Turbidity

#### Radioactive Contaminants

Beta/photon emitters  
Alpha emitters  
Combined Radium

#### Inorganic Contaminants

Antimony  
Arsenic  
Barium  
Beryllium  
Cadmium  
Chromium  
Copper  
Cyanide  
Fluoride  
Lead  
Mercury (inorganic)

Nickel

Nitrate (as Nitrogen)  
Nitrite (as Nitrogen)  
Selenium

Sodium  
Sulfate  
Thallium

#### Synthetic Organic Contaminants

2,4D  
2,4,5-TP (Silvex)  
Alachlor  
Atrazine  
Benzo(a)pyrene (PAH)  
Carbofuran  
Chlordane  
Dalapon  
Di(2-ethylhexyl)adipate  
Di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate  
Dibromochloropropane  
Dinoseb

Diquat

Endothall  
Endrin  
Ethylene dibromide  
Glyphosate  
Heptachlor  
Heptachlor epoxide  
Hexachlorobenzene  
Hexachlorocyclopentadiene  
Lindane  
Methoxychlor  
Oxamyl (Vydate)  
PCBs (Polychlorinated)  
Pentachlorophenol  
Picloram  
Simazene  
Toxaphene  
**Volatile Organic Contaminants**  
Benzene  
Carbon Tetrachloride

Chlorobenzene

o-Dichlorobenzene  
p-Dichlorobenzene  
1,2 - Dichloroethane  
1,1 - Dichloroethylene  
cis-1,2-Dichloroethylene  
trans-1,2-Dichloroethylene  
Dichloromethane  
1,2, - Dichloropropane  
Ethylbenzene  
Styrene  
Tetrachloroethylene  
1,2,4-Trichlorobenzene  
1,1,1 - Trichloroethane  
1,1,2 - Trichloroethane  
Trichloroethylene  
Toluene  
Vinyl Chloride  
Xylenes



## Lead and Copper Testing

Substance	Units	Goal	Action Level (AL)	90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Homes Exceeding Action Level	Complies?	Source of Contaminate
Copper	ppm	1.3	1.3	1.73	16	No	Corrosion of household plumbing
Lead	ppb	0	15	.003	1	Yes	Corrosion of household plumbing

The 90<sup>th</sup> percentile is the highest result found in 90% of the samples when they are listed in order from the lowest to the highest results. EPA requires testing for lead and copper at customers' taps most likely to contain these substances based on when the house was built. The EPA determined that the sample results exceeded the Action Level (AL), the City must take action in reducing the risk of leaching of lead and/or copper. The City did so by adding phosphate to the water to reduce lead & copper levels. Due to the population increase to 10,500, we are now required to take 60 lead and copper samples instead of 40.

## Additional Health Information

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes limits on the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA 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 (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 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 storm 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, stormwater runoff and residential uses.
- **Organic chemical contaminants**, including synthetic and volatile organics, 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.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than is 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 are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800)426-4791.

## More Information

**CITY HALL** – Hours 8:30 am – 5:00 pm Mon. – Fri. Phone 503-397-6272 Website [www.ci.st-helens.or.us](http://www.ci.st-helens.or.us)

**WATER DEPARTMENT** – Hours 8:00 am – 4:30 pm Mon. – Fri. Phone 503-397-3532

**AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY PHONE** – 503-397-1521

**REMEMBER** - Water meters are City property and should not be tampered with. If you have a water or sewer emergency (such as a broken pipe or leak), call the Water Department or the After Hours Emergency number. Someone is on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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**WATER SERVICE INFORMATION** – A deposit of \$30.00 will be required of consumers within the City limits and a deposit of \$40.00 will be required of customers outside the City limits of St. Helens before water service will be furnished. All users of City water inside or outside the City of St. Helens shall pay \$2.76 per month service charge for each water service meter in addition to the rate paid for water use.

Effective August 16, 2003, a Storm Drain Utility Fee was implemented in response to increased environmental requirements for storm water discharge, which has increased the City's maintenance and construction costs. The Storm Drain Utility fee has been set at \$4.54 per month per equivalent residential unit. For a single family dwelling, this is equal to \$9.08 per two-month billing cycle. Commercial rates are based on the number of EDUs for each business and are determined by taking the approximate total area (square feet) of impervious surface and dividing by 2,500.

**SENIOR CITIZEN SUBSIDY** – The monthly water service subsidy shall be up to a maximum of \$18.80 (1362 cu. ft.) per 2 month billing cycle for a home *within* the City limits that is occupied and either owned or rented by an individual over 65 years of age. An applicant for such a subsidy shall apply to the City Hall office and provide proof of age.

**DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS** – Upon failure to pay water charges due within the first ten days of a month, by the **15<sup>th</sup>** day of the month, the account shall be delinquent and a late charge of **\$5.00** shall be added and by the **25<sup>th</sup>** day of the month, the account shall be assessed a **\$20.00** delinquent fee and water service to the customer may be turned off.

**RESTORATION CHARGE** – A customer shall pay for restoration of water service when service has been **disconnected** because of non-payment. The customer shall then pay the sum of **\$20.00** for re-connection fee.

**OTHER WATER QUALITY INFORMATION** – In 2004, due to more stringent requirements, we received an order from the Oregon Health Division requiring us to filter our water. This problem will be solved when the new water treatment facility is completed in 2005. Until that time, the City will send out update notices every three months until we are in compliance.

Our backflow program helps prevent any potentially contaminated water from entering the City's water supply by having industrial, commercial or residential buildings install an approved backflow assembly. If you are considering installing a lawn sprinkler system, you are required to install an approved backflow assembly to help protect your drinking water and our water system. Contact our Building Department to find out more information.

If you have questions or need more information contact the City of St. Helens Water Department at 503-397-3532.

**City of St. Helens Water Department**  
P.O. Box 278  
St. Helens, OR 97051

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