

# City of St. Helens Water Department

## 2006 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 microbiological contaminants in the drinking water.

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 a new water treatment facility located in Columbia City and one Ground Well located near Scappoose Bay Marina. The Scappoose Bay well only operates during very high usage days in the summer. There are two wells on the banks of the Columbia River in Columbia City that supply water to the treatment plant.

The water treatment facility is a membrane plant that works by running water through a series of synthetic filters that capture sediment, germs and organisms. These filter systems are fully computer-controlled for automatic backwashing and cleaning. There are no chemical additions, except for standard chlorine disinfection and acidity controls. The system requires very little daily hands-on operational duties aside from the computer-controlled monitoring of water quality. That differs from the traditional sand filtration or chemical treatment plants that require constant operational tasks to operate. The investment in systems, controls and the more expensive synthetic filters will be more than offset over the life of the plant by greatly reduced staff and maintenance requirements.

During the summer months when usage is higher, the City produces over 4 million gallons of water per day. This serves over 11,500 residents through over 4,000 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 with questions or 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://170.104.158.45/> Our PWS Number is 4100724.

### Key to Table

MCL = Maximum Contaminant Level

MCLG = Maximum Contaminant Level Goal

TT = Treatment Technique

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

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

NTU = Nephelometric Turbidity Unit

Contaminant	Date Tested	Range	Detected Level	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Violation	Major Sources
		Min. - Max.						
Sodium	4/17/03	n/a	126.0	ppm	n/a	n/a	NO	Naturally occurring
Sulfate	12/8/05	n/a	7.0	ppm	250.0	n/a	NO	Naturally occurring
Nitrate	11/3/05	n/a	1.5	ppm	10.0	n/a	NO	Naturally occurring
Uranium	4/3/03	n/a	0.04	ppb	30.0	n/a	NO	Natural or Industrial
TTHMs	Quarterly	3.2 – 25.1	12.4(avg)	ppb	80	n/a	NO	Disinfection Byproduct
HAAs	Quarterly	ND – 7.3	3.4(avg)	ppb	60	n/a	NO	Disinfection Byproduct
Turbidity	Daily	.02 - .25	.25	NTU	TT = 0.3	n/a	NO	Soil Runoff, Sediment

### Water Quality Table Footnotes

All contaminants tested were below the Maximum Contaminant Level and none were in violation.

## Mandatory Testing

The contaminants we monitor for are listed below. Only the ones 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

TTHMs

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	0.68	0	Yes	Corrosion of household plumbing
Lead	ppb	0	15.5	3	0	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 previously added phosphate to the water to reduce lead & copper levels but the newly constructed Water Filtration Facility has a new method of ph control to address this issue. 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.

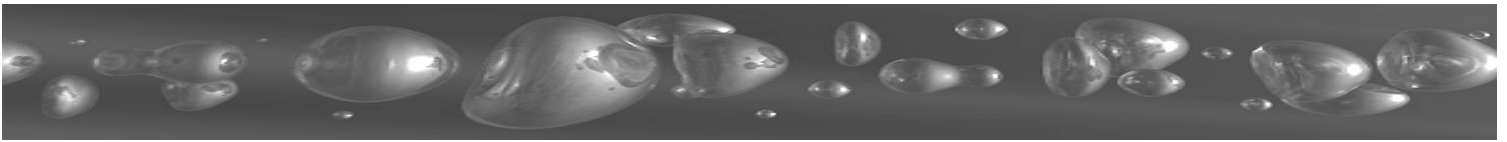
## More Information

**CITY HALL (Billing)** – 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 (Maintenance)** – 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.



**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 \$4.76 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 \$6.90 per month per equivalent residential unit. For a single family dwelling, this is equal to \$13.80 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 \$32.56 (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

**OTHER WATER QUALITY INFORMATION** –

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 at 503-397-6272.

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



**City of St. Helens Water Department**  
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