

Ketchikan Gateway Borough

Mountain Point Water System

2008 Water Quality Report

Is my water safe?

The answer to this question is simple: YES. The Mountain Point Water System is committed to adhering to the standards set by the regulating organizations. However, all sources of drinking water are subject to potential contamination by elements that are naturally occurring. Those elements can be microbes, organic or inorganic chemicals. All drinking water can reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some of these. Last year, we conducted tests for over 80 contaminants. We only detected 6 of those contaminants, and found only 1 at a level higher than the EPA allows. As we told you at the time, our water temporarily exceeded drinking water standards. (For more information see the section labeled Violations at the end of the report.) This report is an overview 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?

Our water source is Forks Creek located in the Mountain Point area of the South Tongass Service Area. Water flows to the water plant where it is filtered by four high pressure multimedia sand filters. The water is disinfected and treated with soda ash to reduce the corrosion in the distribution system. The water is stored in two storage tanks which also provide ample contact time for disinfection. One storage tank is located at the water plant and stores 215,000 gallons. The other storage tank is located at Fawn Mountain School and stores 800,000 gallons.

Source water assessment and its availability

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation completed a Source Water Assessment (SWA) for our public drinking water on September 2003. A SWA is a study and report unique to each water system that provides basic information about the area that provides water to the community. The assessment provides owners and operators of a public drinking water system with information on exactly where their water supply comes from and what condition(s) and/or practices may pose a future potential threat to its quality. This information can then be used to develop long-term strategies to protect your drinking water source in the future. The SWA identified potential landslide and logging areas, stream bank erosion, paved streets and septic systems as potential sources of contamination for our drinking water source. A copy of the SWA is available at our Public Works office, the Ketchikan Public Library, and at the Ketchikan Gateway Borough's website: www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/publicworks/publicworks.htm.

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 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; 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?

There is a new opportunity to receive information about your water using the FlashAlert™ newswire. This service provides Mountain Point water quality notices, news releases, and water advisory board meeting locations and times. Please subscribe for this service at www.FlashAlert.net. South Tongass Service Area water advisory board meetings are scheduled on the first Wednesday of selected months at 5:30 PM in the Borough Assembly Chambers located at 1900 First Avenue, Ketchikan, Alaska. You may also visit the Ketchikan Gateway Borough's website at: www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/news/news.htm for meeting locations and times.

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. Fix toilet and faucet leaks. Take short showers – a 5 minute shower uses between 10-25 gallons of water compared to up to 70 gallons for a bath. Turn the faucet off while brushing your teeth and shaving; 2 gallons go down the drain per minute. Teach your kids about water conservation to ensure a future generation that uses water wisely. Visit the EPA's website for other interesting facts at: www.epa.gov/watersense/water/simple.htm.

Other Information

Total Coliform Bacteria testing results are missing for the months of January and April 2008. Although this is not a violation, the Alaska Department of Conservation has required us to report this to you.

Variance and Exemptions

The Mountain Point Water System was required to initially sample for synthetic organic compounds (SOC's). Samples that do not detect a contaminant during an initial compliance period are granted a 'waiver' from testing through an application process. Systems may apply for an SOC waiver that would waive source sampling for the 3-year compliance period. Our system has applied for and been granted a synthetic organic compounds (SOC) waiver which includes asbestos and pesticides from the Alaska Department of Conservation.

Surface water treatment rule filtration and disinfection violations

Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches. When we have these treatment technique violations we issue "Boil Water Notices" so that the public is aware of possible filtration and disinfection violations.

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. Mountain Point 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> , or <u>TT</u> , or <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.)							
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	NA	60	0.39	ND 89.6	2008	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	NA	80	87.3	64.1 114	2008	Yes	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Radioactive Contaminants							
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	0	15	0.54	NA	2008	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Radium (combined 226/228) (pCi/L)	0	5	0.94	NA	2008	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	0.547	2008	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead - action level at consumer taps (ppb)	0	15	9	2008	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

Unit Descriptions	
<u>Term</u>	<u>Definition</u>
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.
Variations and Exemptions	Variations 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:

TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes]

Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer. The Mountain Point Water System routinely monitors for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Testing results we received in March 2008 show that our system exceeded the standard, or maximum contaminant level (MCL), for Total Trihalomethanes. The Ketchikan Gateway Borough has lowered the amount of disinfection used which has lowered this disinfection by-product, a common occurrence during disinfection. We are also in the pre-construction stage of connecting into the Whitman Lake Reservoir, which should eliminate these violations in the future.

For more information please contact:

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1900 First Avenue
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Email: publicworks@borough.ketchikan.ak.us

Phone: (907) 247-5541
Fax: (907) 247-8265

Web: www.borough.ketchikan.ak.us/publicworks/publicworks.htm



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