

Frequently Asked Questions

What causes discolored water?

Rusting galvanized pipe in some plumbing is usually the cause of discolored water. If this is the case, the water clears after running a bit. Discolored water may indicate the presence of iron and/or elevated levels of lead and copper.

How often is the water tested?

EWU tap water is tested every month for bacteria, and as directed by the Department of Health for copper and lead. The next lead/copper tests will be done in August of 2017. Every building on campus is tested for bacteria at least twice a year. No tests in 2016 came back positive. Because we chlorinate, we test for disinfection byproducts. We tested four times in 2016 and all came back within DOH parameters. At this time all tests are up to date with Department of Health regulations.

If you have any questions about your water or this report:

- ◆ Contact Jim Butler, Water System Manager at (509) 359-6561
- ◆ See this report on the web at <http://bit.ly/2dVjS49>
- ◆ Call EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-4791

We encourage you to become informed and involved in water protection. Water system tours can be arranged by calling (509) 359-2245.



2016 Annual Drinking Water Report

Eastern Washington University is pleased to report that our water meets or exceeds all standards set for quality and safety.



We are committed to providing you with safe, high-quality water, and we want you to understand the efforts we make to continually protect our water resources.

This brochure is a summary of the quality of water provided in 2016. Included are analytical test results and information on how these results compare to federal safety standards.

Origin of Our Water

EWU provides drinking water from two drilled wells. Well 1R is located in the Plant Utilities building and pumps up to 450 gallons per minute at a depth of 834 feet. Well 2R was drilled in 2015 and went online June 2016. It produces 900 gallons per minute at a depth of 1145 feet. Both wells pump from a groundwater aquifer.

Our water has been chlorinated since 2010. Beginning 2016, water from both wells travels through a new building where it is chlorinated, then to the reservoir tower before it is distributed throughout campus.

To ensure your tap water remains safe to drink, there are 375 backflow assemblies installed to protect our water system. A Cross Connection Control Specialist and four Backflow Assembly Testers, employed by the university, perform tests on all assemblies and repair/replace as required annually. A report is submitted to the Department of Health yearly.



Safe Drinking Water Act

The Safe Drinking Water Act, among other things, requires all public water systems to issue an annual report explaining what substances are in the water and in what amounts.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Washington State Department of Health set standards for the amounts of various substances that are acceptable for drinking water safety. Eastern Washington University tests frequently for the presence of these substances.



Substances in the Water

As water travels through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animal or human activity. It can be reasonably expected that all drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may contain at least small amounts of some substances.



Information on Detected Substances

Substances listed below were detected above laboratory detection limits on the dates indicated. All are below levels allowed by federal and state agencies. Note that in the 2009 to 2014 drinking water reports, the highest amount of lead detected was incorrectly reported in ppb. This has since been corrected to mg/L.

Substance	Lowest Amt Detected	Highest Amt Detected	Lab Detection Limit	MCL	MCLG	Likely Source of Substance
Nutrients						
Nitrate (mg/L)	ND	1.25 9/22/16	0.5	10.0	10.0	Erosion of natural deposit Runoff from fertilizer
Metals						
Lead (mg/L)	ND	.170 4/15/12	.001	TT ⁽¹⁾ ; Action Level = 0.015	0.0	Corrosion of plumbing systems Erosion of natural deposits
Copper (mg/L)	ND	.895 8/10/14	.001	TT; Action Level = 1.3	1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
Other Minerals						
Arsenic (mg/L) ⁽²⁾	ND	ND 9/22/16	0.001	.010	0.0	Naturally occurring element in the earth's crust

⁽¹⁾ *TT is the abbreviation for Treatment Technique. Lead and copper are regulated by a treatment technique that requires systems to control the corrosiveness of their water. If more than 10% of tap water samples exceed the action level, water systems must take additional steps. The action level for copper is 1.3 mg/L, and for lead it is 0.015 mg/L.*

⁽²⁾ *While your drinking water does contain low levels of arsenic, it currently meets EPA's revised water standard for arsenic. There is a small chance that some people who drink water containing low levels of arsenic over many years could develop circulatory disease, cancer, or other health problems. Most types of cancer and circulatory diseases are due to factors other than exposure to arsenic. EPA's standard balances the current understanding of arsenic.*

In 2016, there were 156 coliform (bacteriological) tests done throughout the campus and zero came back positive. Now that we chlorinate, daily chlorine readings are taken at random sites around campus to ensure we have at least a trace of chlorine in all buildings. Since 2014, less than 10% of lead and copper concentrations in all tested water samples have been more than the EPA action levels. The next scheduled lead and copper testing will take place in the summer of 2017. We do not have to do corrosion control at this time.

- ◆ **Not Detected (ND)** - Laboratory analysis indicates that the substance is not present at levels above the laboratory detection limit.
- ◆ **Parts per million (ppm) or milligrams per liter (mg/l)** - One part per million corresponds to one minute in two years; a single penny in \$10,000; or one half of an aspirin tablet in a full bathtub of water (approximately 50 gallons).
- ◆ **Parts per billion (ppb)** - One part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years or a single penny in \$10 million.
- ◆ **Action Level (AL)** - The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements for a water system.
- ◆ **Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)** - The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLG as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- ◆ **Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)** - The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health.

The annual public forum was held May 24, 2017 for the purpose of keeping the public informed about our water use efficiency and conservation practices; and to solicit public input on other ways to achieve our water conservation goals.

It is important to remember that the presence of these substances does not necessarily pose a health risk. However, some people may be more vulnerable to substances in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk for 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 microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline.

(800) 426-4791



In April of 2016, Well 1R was tested for volatile organic chemicals (VOC). In September of 2016 Well2R was tested for inorganic chemicals (IOC) and nitrate. All tests were non-detectable (ND) or below DOH action levels.