



# ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

Consumer Confidence Report for testing performed in 2023 and reported in May 2024

181 NW Highland Drive  
Shoreline, WA 98177

### Office Hours

Monday through Friday  
9:00 am to 5:00 pm

206-362-2100 ext. 103  
[www.highlandsutility.org](http://www.highlandsutility.org)

### Our Commissioners

Dave Hanower  
John Harris  
Karl D'Ambrosio

### Our Staff

Paul Konrady, P.E.  
District Administrator

Nate Burkemoor  
Utility Operator

## Overview of Your Water

Your water quality falls safely within Washington State's Department of Health (DOH) guidelines and significantly below the federal EPA's levels.

### WHERE IS YOUR WATER FROM?

Highlands Utility District purchases our water from Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), which is sourced from the Tolt and Cedar River Watersheds. Our community's water comes primarily from the Tolt River Watershed.

### WHO OVERSEES YOUR WATER QUALITY?

Your drinking water is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which sets drinking water quality standards, establishes testing methods and monitoring requirements for water utilities, sets maximum levels for water contaminants, and requires utilities to give public notice whenever a violation occurs.

### WHO TESTS YOUR WATER?

Your drinking water is tested by SPU.

### WHAT IS YOUR WATER TESTED FOR?

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 is available by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline 800.426.4791.

### WHEN IS YOUR WATER TESTED?

Out of roughly 100 EPA-regulated contaminants, some parameters are tested continuously, some are tested daily, some are tested weekly, some monthly, some quarterly, and some annually—all in accordance with federal and state regulations.

### HOW IS YOUR WATER TESTED?

Over 200 compounds are tested and not detected; most of this monitoring occurs once every several years. Tests are done before and after treatment and while your water is in the distribution system. The tables presented on the following page list all of the contaminants detected in the most recent required water testing and compare them to the limits and goals set by the EPA and the DOH to ensure your tap water is safe. Not shown are more than 200 additional contaminants that were tested for, but not detected, in your drinking water.

If you would like to see a list of these other compounds, or if you have other water quality questions, do not hesitate to contact us at 206-362-2100, ext.103.



*From mountains...*



*To rivers...*



*To your watershed*



# Table 1: Water Quality Testing Results for 2023

Compounds that were not detected in 2023 are not included in these charts.

Types of Detected Compounds	Units	Primary Source	Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Max. Allowed (MCL)	Levels in the Cedar River Watershed		Levels in the Tolt Watershed		Meets EPA Stds.?
					Average	Range	Average	Range	
<b>RAW WATER</b>									
Total Organic Carbon	ppm	Naturally present in the environment	NA	TT	0.76	0.42 to 1.12	1.26	0.99 to 2.49	Yes
<b>FINISHED WATER SOURCE</b>									
Turbidity	NTU	Soil runoff	NA	TT	0.38	0.19 to 3.5	0.04	0.02 to 0.12	Yes
Arsenic	ppb	Erosion of natural deposits	0	10	0.4	0.3 to 0.6	0.3	0.2 to 0.4	Yes
Barium	ppb	Erosion of natural deposits	2000	2000	1.5	1.3 to 1.7	1.2	1.4 to 1.4	Yes
Bromate*	ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	0	10	0.7	ND to 11	0.1	ND to 2.0	Yes
Fluoride	ppm	Water additive to promote strong teeth	4	4	0.7	0.5 to 0.8	0.7	0.6 to 0.8	Yes
Nitrate	ppm	Erosion of natural deposits	10	10	0.1	One sample	0.1	One sample	Yes
<b>SPECIFIC SAMPLES FROM HIGHLANDS UTILITY DISTRICT'S DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM</b>									
Total Trihalomethanes	ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	NA	80	One Sample: 38			Yes	
Haloacetic Acids (5)	ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	NA	60	One Sample: 28			Yes	
Chlorine	ppm	Water additive to control microbes	MRDLG =4	MRDL =4	Highest Monthly Average: 0.46 Range: 0.37 to 0.60			Yes	

\*Seattle Public Utilities is required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not your drinking water meets health standards. In October 2023, a bromate sample was not analyzed for the Tolt supply, and therefore SPU cannot be sure of the quality of your drinking water during that time. However, based on historical data and results since October 2023, Tolt bromate levels are generally non-detect.

# Table 2: Lead and Copper Monitoring Results for the Tolt Watershed in 2023

Samples are taken every three years; the next sampling will be in 2026. None of the samples were collected in the Highlands service area.

Lead and Copper Sampling Program and Units	Ideal Goal MCLG	Action Level <sup>1</sup>	Results of 2023 Samplings <sup>2</sup>	# Homes Exceeding Action Level	Typical Sources in Drinking Water
Lead, ppb	0	15	3.0	0 of 55	Corrosion of household plumbing systems. Samples collected in homes within the Tolt water service area.
Copper, ppm	1.3	1.3	0.18	0 of 55	

<sup>1</sup> The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow. <sup>2</sup> 90th percentile: 90 percent of the samples were less than the values shown.

## Table Definitions

**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 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:** 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.

**MRDLG: Maximum Residual Disinfectant 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.

**TT: Treatment Technique:** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**NTU: Nephelometric Turbidity Unit:** Turbidity is a measure of how clear the water looks. The turbidity MCL that applied to the Cedar supply in 2023 is 5 NTU, and for the Tolt supply it was 0.3 NTU for at least 95% of the samples in a month. 100% of Tolt samples in 2023 were below 0.3 NTU.

**NA:** Not applicable.

**ND:** Not detected.

**ppm:** 1 part per million = 1 mg/L = 1 milligram per liter.

**ppb:** 1 part per billion = 1 ug/L = 1 microgram per liter.

**1 ppm:** = 1000 ppb.



## About Lead and Copper Monitoring

Our regional water supply does not contain lead or copper. However it is possible that lead levels at your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of materials used in your home's plumbing.

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. Highlands Utility District 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 at 1.800.426.4791 or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

### PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL CONCERNS

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 microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1.800.426.4791.

## About Your Water Quality

Sources of drinking water (both tap 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 human activity. In Seattle's surface water supplies, potential sources of contamination include:

- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses, bacteria, and protozoa from wildlife;
- Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which are naturally occurring; and
- Organic contaminants, which result from chlorine combining with the naturally occurring organic matter.

In order to ensure tap water is safe to drink, the Environmental Protection Agency and/or the Washington state board of health prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration and/or the Washington state department of agriculture regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health. Additional information about your water can be obtained from:

**Seattle Public Utilities:** 206.684.3000  
[www.seattle.gov/util/MyServices/Water/Water\\_Quality](http://www.seattle.gov/util/MyServices/Water/Water_Quality)

**Washington State Department of Health:** 800.521.0323  
[www.doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/drinking-water](http://www.doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/drinking-water)

**Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Hotline:**  
800.426.4791 • [www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater) • [www.epa.gov/sdwa](http://www.epa.gov/sdwa)

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:**  
[www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/public/understanding\\_ccr.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/public/understanding_ccr.html)

## Important Reminders:

- **Next Utility District Public Meeting:** Wednesday June 12, 2024 starting at 10:00 am at the District Office
- **Summer Water Rates in Effect:** May 15–September 15, 2024



Spray-type sprinklers



Rotor-type sprinklers

## Tune Up Your Irrigation System

Remember to inspect your irrigation system before summer arrives: next to a leaky toilet, it's usually the #1 culprit in high water bills.

### SPRAY-TYPE SPRINKLERS:

1. Remove the nozzle from each head and clean the screen with an old toothbrush.
2. Turn on the sprinklers and look for partially blocked nozzles. If the fan-shaped spray of water is not even and uniform, a grain of sand is likely stuck in the nozzle. Use a toothpick to clear it out, or better yet, replace the nozzle.
3. Using the adjustment screw on top of each nozzle to adjust the water direction. If the heads are creating a lot of mist, turn the screw clockwise. After adjusting, make sure the spray still goes all the way to the next sprinkler.

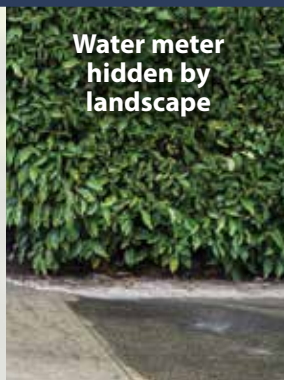
### ROTOR / ROTATOR-TYPE SPRINKLERS:

1. Turn on each valve, one at a time, and carefully inspect for wet spots that could indicate a leaking pipe. Repair any leaks.
2. Replace the controller battery.
3. Straighten any sprinkler heads that are leaning to the side (leaning heads create dry spots and waste water).
4. Replace broken or malfunctioning sprinklers with the same brand and model as other sprinklers on the same valve circuit; NOTE: most manufacturers use different flow rates in their sprinkler heads; be sure to get the same brand and model.

For an in-depth explanation of all irrigation systems and tune-up steps, visit: [www.irrigationtutorials.com/faq/tune-up.htm](http://www.irrigationtutorials.com/faq/tune-up.htm)

### PLEASE CHECK YOUR WATER METERS AND FIRE HYDRANTS:

- Trim away shrubs and ground cover.
- Please don't plant something that will grow over a meter or hydrant.
- Please don't install landscape bricks, rocks, or retaining walls that block access to meters or hydrants.



Water meter hidden by landscape



## PFAS and Your Water

PFAS (perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a large group of man-made chemicals that do not break down naturally.

From non-stick cookware and stain-resistant carpets, to firefighting foam, PFAS began appearing in everyday products in the 1950s and have been building up in our environment ever since. Today PFAS are found in the bloodstreams of people and animals, in a variety of food products, and in the environment.

In 2021, the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) enacted legislation that requires Washington's more than 2,430 public water systems to test for PFAS in drinking water by December 2025. In 2024, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a final federal rule to regulate six PFAS in drinking water.

Highlands Utility District sources all of our drinking water from Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). Although PFAS were not previously regulated and routine testing was not required prior to 2023, SPU conducted testing in 2015, 2018, and 2023:

- In 2015, SPU tested its Tolt and Cedar River surface water sources for six types of PFAS with no detection.
- In October 2018, SPU tested the Tolt and Cedar water supplies using a more sensitive sampling method for 14 types of PFAS. Test results again showed no detection of PFAS.
- In March 2023, samples collected from the Cedar and Tolt treatment facilities finished waters in June, July, October, and December 2023 showed no detections for 29 PFAS compounds.

To learn more about PFAS testing and drinking water regulations, as well as the measures that Washington state is taking to restrict PFAS in products, visit the state's DOH website:

[www.doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/contaminants/pfas](http://www.doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/contaminants/pfas)

You can also learn more about PFAS from the EPA's website:

[www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-explained](http://www.epa.gov/pfas/pfas-explained)