

Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

Town of Charlestown, Maryland (PWSID: 0070029)

Consumer Confidence Report for 2023

Spanish (Español)

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre la calidad de su agua potable. Por favor lea este informe o comuníquese con alguien que pueda traducir la información.

Is my water safe?

Last year, as in years past, your tap water met all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state drinking water health standards. Charlestown vigilantly safeguards its water supplies and once again we are proud to report that our system has not violated a maximum contaminant level or any other water quality standard.

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?

The source of our drinking water is two wells into the upper Potomac aquifer, which lies about 200 feet below the earth's surface. An aquifer is an underground body of water, which is tapped by drilling wells and pumping the water to the surface for distribution. The 200 feet of earth between surface sources and this aquifer helps to purify the water before it actually reaches the aquifer, making it easier for us to treat before we pump it into your water distribution system.

Source water assessment and its availability

There are several sources of potential contamination to Charlestown's water supply. There is an underground heating oil tank at the elementary school. The tank at the school was installed in August 1995, tested and passed on 9/19/08. Additional testing will be done within the next five years. There was a potential water well site as well as a MDE (Maryland Department of the Environment) monitoring well that could lead to contamination. Also of concern is rail traffic utilizing the Amtrak lines. It was determined through a Wellhead Protection (WHP) study that Charlestown's water supply is susceptible to volatile organic compounds (e.g. solvents and gasoline), but is not susceptible to inorganic compounds, synthetic organic compounds, radionuclides, or microbiological contaminants. We have a Source Water Assessment report on file at the Town Hall. This report may be reviewed during regular business hours which are 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Why are there contaminants in my drinking water?

The Charlestown Water Department routinely monitors for over (90) regulated contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. A list of the contaminants tested is available at Town Hall. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground it can pick up substances or contaminants such as microbes, inorganic chemicals and radioactive substances. 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).

What are PFAS? When and how will they be monitored?

PFAS – short for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances – refers to a large group of more than 4,000 human-made chemicals that have been used since the 1940s in a range of products, including stain- and water-resistant fabrics and carpeting, cleaning products, paints, cookware, food packaging and fire-fighting foams. These uses of PFAS have led to PFAS entering our environment, where they have been measured by several states in soil, surface water, groundwater, and seafood. Some PFAS can last a long time in the environment and in the human body and can accumulate in the food chain. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) conducted a PFAS monitoring program for Community Water Systems from 2020 to 2022. The results are available on MDE's website: <https://mde.maryland.gov/PublicHealth/Pages/PFAS-Landing-Page.aspx>.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed regulations for 6 PFAS compounds in drinking water in March 2023. The MCLs for PFOA and PFOS are proposed to be 4.0 parts per trillion (ppt). The proposal for HFPO-DA (GenX), PFBS, PFNA and PFHxS is to use a Hazard Index of 1.0 (unitless) to determine if the combined levels of these PFAS pose a risk and require action.

The 5th Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR5) began testing for 29 PFAS compounds and lithium in 2023, and testing will run through 2025. The UCMR5 should test all community water systems with populations of at least 3300 people. Three randomly selected systems in Maryland with populations less than 3300 people will also be tested under the UCMR5. Detections greater than the minimum reporting levels for each constituent should be reported in the CCR.

How can I get involved?

We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled board meetings. They are held on the 2nd Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. and 4th Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. of each month.

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. Water your lawn at the least sunny times of the day. Fix toilet and faucet leaks. Take short showers - a 5-minute shower uses 4 to 5 gallons of water compared to up to 50 gallons for a bath. Turn the faucet off while brushing your teeth and shaving; 3-5 gallons go down the drain per minute. Teach your kids about water conservation to ensure a future generation that uses water wisely. Make it a family effort to reduce next month's water bill!

For Additional Information please contact:

Bryan Lightner, Town Administrator
241 Market Street, P.O. Box 154, Charlestown, MD 21914
Phone: 410-287-6173, email: blightner@charlestownmd.org

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Water Quality Data Tables

The tables below list the drinking water contaminants that we detected during January 1st – December 31st 2023 monitoring period and some previously detected contaminants. The presence of contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. 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 frequently change.

Regulated Contaminants Detected							
Contaminant	Year Sample Collected	Highest Level Detected	MCLG or MRDLG	MCL, MRDL or AL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Lead	2023	2	0	15 (AL)	ppb	N	Corrosion of household plumbing; erosion of natural deposits.
Copper	2023	0.4	1.3	1.3 (AL)	ppm	N	Erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives; corrosion of household plumbing.
Chlorine	2023	0.9	4 (MRDLG)	4 (MRDL)	ppm	N	Water additive used to control microbes.
Combined Radium 226/228	2019	0.9	0	5	pCi/L	N	Erosion of natural deposits.
Gross Alpha excluding Radon and Uranium	2019	0.9	0	15	pCi/L	N	Erosion of natural deposits.

Violations

None of the detected contaminants exceeded the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCLs) and there were no violations issued in 2023.

Additional Information for Lead

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. The Charlestown Water Department is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in your home. You share the responsibility for protecting yourself and your family from the lead in your home plumbing. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Before drinking tap water, flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. You can also use a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead in drinking water. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact Bryan Lightner, Town Administrator, at 410-287-6173 or by email at blightner@charlestownmd.org. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Unit Descriptions	
Term	Definition
ppm	parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/L)
ppb	parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (ug/L)
ppt	parts per trillion, or nanograms per liter (ng/L)
pCi/L	picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)
NA	not applicable
ND	not detected
NR	Monitoring not required, but recommended

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Important Drinking Water 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 that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
AL	Action Level: the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow
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	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.



**The Commissioners of Charlestown are dedicated to providing top quality water to every tap.
We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community,
our way of life and our children's future.**