



Erie County

Margaretta District

2023 Water Quality Report

Erie County Water Division
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Dear Valued Customer,

The Erie County Water Division has prepared the following report to provide information to you, the consumer, on the quality of our drinking water for the year 2023. Included within this report is general health information, water quality test results, how to participate in decisions concerning your drinking water and water system contacts.

Water provided by Erie County Water meets or exceeds water quality standards set by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) and we have a current, unconditional license to operate our water system. If you have any questions or concerns about your drinking water, please call the Erie County Water Division, Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at (419) 627-7666.

We encourage public interest and participation in our community's decisions affecting drinking water. We are open and look forward to learning public opinion from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday at the Huron Basin Wastewater Treatment Plant, 554 River Road, Huron. Regular Erie County Commission meetings are also held every Thursday at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Chambers on the 3rd Floor of the Service Center at 2900 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky.

Overview

The Erie County Water Distribution System is split into six different Public water systems per the Ohio EPA:

- *Perkins District* - serving Perkins Township and parts of Huron, Milan, Groton, Margaretta, and Oxford Townships.
- *Margaretta District* - serving Margaretta Township and the villages of Bay View and Castalia.
- *Huron South* - serving Berlin Heights, and Berlin and Huron Townships
- *Huron East* - serving Huron and Vermilion Townships
- *Vermilion and Vermilion West* - serving Vermilion Township

The Erie County Water Division operates 10 pump stations and 8 water storage tanks which deliver water through 372 miles of water mains ranging in size from 4 inches to 24 inches. In 2023 Erie County Water distributed more than 2.1 billion gallons of water to its customers.

Substances Expected To Be In My Drinking Water

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. Erie County purchases treated water from the City of Sandusky, the City of Huron, the City of Vermilion and Northern Ohio Rural Water Authority. The sole source of drinking water comes from Lake Erie. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and can, in some cases, pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Contaminants that may be present in source water include, but are not limited to:

- *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 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;
- *Radioactive Contaminants* - which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Source Water Assessment - Where does your water come from?

Erie County purchases and distributes treated water from the City of Sandusky. The City of Sandusky Public Water System (PWS) uses surface water drawn from two intakes: a main intake located in Lake Erie and an emergency back-up intake located in Sandusky Bay. For the purpose of source water assessments, all surface waters in Ohio are considered to be susceptible to contamination. By their nature, surface waters are accessible and can be readily contaminated by chemicals and pathogens, with relatively short travel times from source to intake.

Although the water system's main intake is located offshore in Lake Erie, the proximity of several onshore sources increases the susceptibility of the source water to contamination. The City of Sandusky PWS's drinking water source protection area is susceptible to contamination from municipal sewage treatment plants, industrial wastewater, combined sewer overflows, home sewage disposal system discharges, open water dredge disposal operations, and accidental releases and spills, especially from commercial shipping operations and recreational boating.

The City of Sandusky PWS treats the water to meet drinking water quality standards, but no single treatment technique can address all potential contaminants. The potential for water quality impacts can be further decreased by implementing measures to protect Lake Erie. More detailed information is provided in the City of Sandusky Public Water System's Drinking Water Source Assessment report, which can be obtained by calling (419) 627-5815.

Additional Health Information

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration 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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline, toll free at (800) 426-4791.

Important Health Information About 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. The Erie County Water Division 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 www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Immuno-Compromised Persons

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than is the general population. Immune-compromised persons such as those with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, those who have undergone organ transplants, anyone with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly persons, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Erie County Water Quality Table

The table below shows the results of our water quality analyses. It includes all the contaminants that were actually detected in Erie County's drinking water. It also contains the name of each substance, the highest level allowed by regulation (MCL), the ideal goals for public health, the amount detected, the unusual sources of such contamination, and footnotes explaining our findings.

Water Quality, Definitions, And Measurement Units

You may find some of the table terms and abbreviations unfamiliar. To help you better understand the terminology, we're providing the following definitions and measurement units:

- **AL** – Action Level – The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a system must follow.
- **MCL** – Maximum Contaminant Level - The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the MCLG as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- **MCLG** – Maximum Contaminant Level Goal - The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected health risk. MCLG's allow for a margin of safety.
- **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 drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLG's do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
- **N/A** – Not Applicable.
- **NTU** – Nephelometric Turbidity Unit - A measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.
- **PPB** – Parts Per Billion - One part per billion (or micrograms per liter, ug/L), corresponds to one penny in \$10,000,000.
- **PPM** – Parts Per Million - One part per million (or milligrams per liter, mg/L), corresponds to one penny in \$10,000.
- **SMCL** – Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level - These are guidelines, not enforceable limits. They identify acceptable concentrations of contaminants which cause unpleasant tastes, odors, or colors in the water. SMCL's are for contaminants that will not cause adverse health effects.
- **TOC** – Total Organic Carbon - The value reported under "Level Found" is the lowest ratio between the percentages of TOC actually removed to the percentages of TOC required to be removed. A value of greater than one (1) indicates that the water system is in compliance with TOC removal requirements. A value of less than one (1) indicates a violation of the TOC removal requirements.
- **TT** – Treatment Technique - A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
- "**<**" – A symbol which means less than.
- "**>**" – A symbol which means greater than.

Water Quality Table – MARGARETTA DISTRICT						Source Water – Lake Erie – City of Sandusky Water Treatment Plant		
Contaminants	Date Tested	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Level Found	Range	Typical Source of Contaminants	Violation
Inorganic Contaminants								
¹ Nitrate	Monthly	ppm	10	10	1.2	0.0-1.18	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits	NO
² Fluoride	Daily	ppm	4	4	0.82	0.82-1.12	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth	NO
Barium	2023	ppm	2	2	0.015	0.021-0.021	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits	NO
Copper*	2023	ppm	AL=1.3	1.3	0.071	N/A	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	NO
Lead*	2023	ppb	AL=15	0	1.6	N/A	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	NO
Microbiological Contaminants								
³ Turbidity	Continuous	NTU	0.30	<0.10	0.21	0.03-0.21	Soil runoff; sediment from the lake bottom	NO
Turbidity (% meeting standard)	2023	%	N/A	TT	100%	100%	Soil runoff; sediment from the lake bottom	NO
Total Organic Carbon (TOC)	Monthly	Ratio	N/A	TT removal >1	1.4	0.9-2.4	Naturally present in the environment	NO
Volatile Organic Contaminants								
TTHM's (Total Trihalomethanes)	Quarterly	ppb	80	0	58.78	25.6-81.9	By product of drinking water chlorination	NO
HAA5 (Haloacetic Acid)	Quarterly	ppb	60	0	26.55	12.2-42.7	By product of drinking water chlorination	NO
Residual Disinfectants								
Free Chlorine	Continuous	ppm	MRDL 4	MRDLG 4	1.5	0.8-1.8	Water additive used to control microbes	NO
Unregulated Contaminants								
Manganese	Weekly	ppb	smcl=50	N/A	0.0173	0-0.04	Erosion of natural deposits	NO
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR4) (Testing not required in 2023)								
Haloacetic Acids HAA5	Quarterly	ppb	N/A	N/A	N/A	17.9-37.8	By-product of drinking water chlorination	NO
Haloacetic Acids HAA6Br	Quarterly	ppb	N/A	NA	N/A	9.0-14.4	By-product of drinking water chlorination	NO
Haloacetic Acids HAA9	Quarterly	ppb	N/A	N/A	N/A	24.5-49.8	By-product of drinking water chlorination	NO
Water Quality Table – Important Health Information								
¹ Nitrate: Infants below the age of 6 months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue baby syndrome.								
² Fluoride: Some people who drink water containing fluoride in excess of the MCL over many years could get bone disease, including pain and tenderness of the bones. Fluoride in drinking water at half the MCL or more may cause mottling of children's teeth, usually in children less than nine years old. Mottling, also known as dental fluorosis, may include brown staining and/or pitting of the teeth. It occurs in developing teeth before they erupt from the gums.								
³ Turbidity: Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water and is an indication of the effectiveness of the filtration system. The turbidity limit set by the EPA is 0.3 NTU in 95% of the daily samples and shall not exceed 5 NTU at any time.								
⁹⁰ th%: Results from 20 samples collected for lead and copper in 2023 were used to calculate the 90th percentile. None of the 20 homes sampled exceeded the Action Level for an individual tap water sample of 15 ppb. State Law requires 90% of homes test less than 15 ppb for lead. None of the 20 homes sampled exceeded the copper MCLG of 1.3 ppm.								

Backflow Prevention and Cross-Connection Control - Backflow refers to when water flows in the opposite direction through its intended system. It creates the potential for contaminants from private plumbing systems to enter the main water distribution system through a cross-connection. A cross-connection is a link between a possible source of contamination, such as a garden hose that's submerged in a bucket, and any public potable water system. The installation of a backflow preventer protects the drinking water system from possible contamination. Clean drinking water is every consumer's business. By taking the proper precautions, you can help us protect our drinking water. For more information on backflow prevention and cross-connection control, please view our pamphlet at www.eriecounty.oh.gov/BackflowPrevention.aspx or call the Erie County Water Division at (419) 627-7666.