

# 2013 Annual Water Quality Report



Fulton County Department of Water Resources  
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Atlanta, GA 30303  
<http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/>

Water testing performed from  
January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012  
WSID GA 1210005

Important information about your drinking water.

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre la calidad de su agua beber. Tradúscalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

## Help Us Serve You Better

Water quality and safety are sometimes difficult to understand and the information in this brief report may not answer all of your questions. For additional information, questions or concerns, please contact Corlette Banks at 404-612-7400 or email us at [director.dwr@fultoncountyga.gov](mailto:director.dwr@fultoncountyga.gov) during normal business hours. Additional copies of this report are available at your public library.

*Front Cover Artwork courtesy of Chelsea Yuan, Wilson Creek Elementary School, 2013 Water Art Calendar Contest Honorable Mention Winner*

## Fulton County @Your Service - Delivering safe, reliable water



The Fulton County Department of Water Resources is proud to provide water distribution, wastewater collection, stormwater management, and public education services to our customers 24-hours a day, 365 days each year.

Water is essential to every aspect of the health of our communities and it is our goal to provide you with quality service at a great value. Fulton County has the lowest combined water/sewer rates in metro Atlanta, and no rate increases are anticipated for a 5 year period.

We want to keep you informed about your drinking water. Informed customers are our best allies, and we are dedicated to giving you the information you need to make knowledgeable decisions. You can participate through public hearings, notice of which is posted at the Government Center in our website at [www.fultoncountyga.gov](http://www.fultoncountyga.gov) under "Events".

For questions or problems regarding water services, please call 770-640-3040; for sewer system problems or questions, call 404-612-3061 in the North Fulton area or 404-612-3163 for South Fulton. For billing or reconnection questions, please contact the Finance Department's main customer service line at 404-612-6830.

## The facts about drinking water

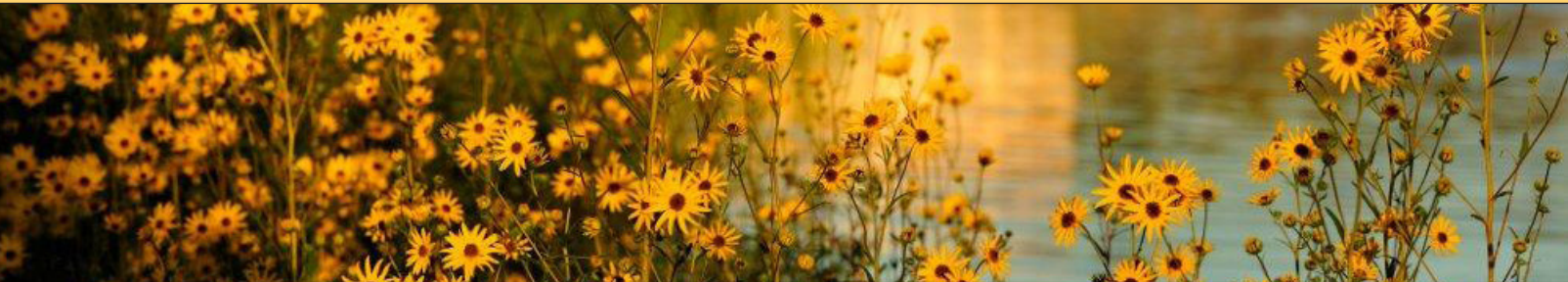


Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's 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;
- 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.



## Award winning performance

The Atlanta-Fulton County Water Resources Commission (AFCWRC) Water Treatment Facility, jointly-owned by Fulton County and the City of Atlanta and operated by joint venture partner, Veolia Water/Kharfra, has earned several awards in 2012, including:

- American Water Works Association (AWWA) Phase 3 Director's Award in recognition of our commitment to providing the highest quality of drinking water. One of only three Water Treatment Plants in Georgia to earn this honor.
- Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP) Platinum Award, in recognition of complete and consistent compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act.
- National Safety Council Occupation Excellence Achievement Award.
- Georgia Department of Labor Award of Excellence in recognition of exceptional workplace safety.



## Partnering to conserve

Water conservation is important to provide a safe, reliable supply of water for our communities today and in the future. Fulton County does its part to conserve by minimizing water loss through a proactive leak detection and meter replacement program, work order and repair system, and integrated billing system. In 2012 the County's non-revenue water loss was 6.4% of total consumption—very low when compared with other utilities and well below the widely accepted industry standard goal of 10%.

To encourage conservation within the community, Fulton County offers water efficiency programs for residents, schools and businesses including:

- Toilet Rebate Program
  - Homes built prior to 1993—must replace high water use toilets with qualifying high-efficiency toilets,
  - Up to \$200 in rebates; 3,407 toilets rebated since 2008,
  - Over 53,000 gallons per day (gpd) in water savings,
  - Multi-family program for apartment complexes, townhomes, and condominiums on a master meter to begin in the fall.
- Interactive Educational Programs, Workshops, and Tours
  - A variety of educational programs about water conservation and water quality for students and participants of all ages,
  - Examples include water efficient landscaping and Fats, Oil and Grease (FOG) workshops and community cleanups.
- Water Art Calendar Contest
  - Students submit original artwork promoting best water conservation and water quality,
  - Contest is open to all Fulton County students, grades, K-12 attending public, private, charter, and home-schooled.

To learn more about Fulton County's conservation programs and what you can do to save and protect our water supply, visit our website at [www.fultoncountyga.gov](http://www.fultoncountyga.gov).

# Making Sure Your Water is Safe

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 Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).



## Reducing Exposure to 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. AFCWRC 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>.



## What's In Our Water?

Included in this report are tables depicting contaminants that have been detected in our water. They are, in all cases, below the levels prescribed by the EPA but, nevertheless, are present. They pose no known health risk at these levels. We have listed a few definitions to help you understand the information in the tables.

- 90th Percentile:** Calculation that determines compliance with the regulation for copper and lead. If this number is less than the action level then the system is compliant.
- Action Level:** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- Exemptions:** A State or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.
- Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):** 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.
- Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG):** 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.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL):** The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbiological contaminants.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG):** 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.
- NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Unit):** The unit used to express a measurement of turbidity.
- Parts per billion (ppb):** One part per billion is the same as one penny in 10 million dollars.
- Parts per million (ppm):** One part per million is the same as one penny in 10 thousand dollars.
- TT (Treatment Technique):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
- Turbidity:** Measurement of the cloudiness of the water. A good indicator of water quality and effectiveness of disinfectants.

# Maintaining Excellent Water Quality

We may take it for granted, but Fulton County's drinking water is one of the many things that makes our region special and adds to our quality of life. Therefore, maintaining excellent water quality is one of our highest priorities. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires an annual water quality report from all community water systems nationwide. Here in Fulton County, we're pleased to share that the quality of our water is excellent, having met or exceeded the standards and requirements set by the EPA.

Additionally, Fulton County received a source water assessment report for our source of drinking water, the Chattahoochee River. The assessment has ranked the Chattahoochee River watershed to have a medium risk of potential pollutant loads. This surface water supply is processed at the Atlanta/Fulton County Water Resources Commission treatment plant located in the city of Johns Creek. The complete report is available for review on our website at <http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/pw-water-services/pw-education-outreach/2838-annual-drinking-water-quality-reports>.

| Water Quality Monitoring Results<br>(Testing Period: January 1 - December 31, 2012) |  |  |   |  |                               |   |
|---|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------|---|
| EPA Regulated Substances or Contaminants Monitored in the Water Plant               |  |  |   |  |                               |   |
| Substance (units)   | Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)  | Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)2                 | Highest Level Detected  | Range Detected (Lowest to highest)   | Does Water meet EPA standard? | Typical Source  |
| Fluoride (ppm)  | 4  | 4  | 0.70  | 0.67 - 0.70  | YES                           | Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth                     |
| Nitrate (ppm) (measured as Nitrate-Nitrite)   | 10   | 10   | 0.55  | N/A  | YES                           | Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits |
| Substance (units)   | EPA Highest Level Allowed (MCL)  | Treatment Technique (TT)                         | Amount Detected   | Range Detected (lowest to highest amount)                                      | Does Water meet EPA standard? | Typical Source  |
| Total Organic Carbon [TOC] (ratio)  | TT   | TT=>1  | 1.37  | 1.00--1.37   | YES                           | Naturally present in the environment  |
| Turbidity (NTU)   | TT   | TT=1   | 0.42  | N/A  | YES                           | Soil runoff   |
|   | N/A  | TT=% samples less than 0.3 NTU                   | 100% (lowest monthly percentage)                              | N/A  | YES                           | Soil runoff   |
| EPA Regulated Substances or Contaminants Monitored in the Distribution System       |  |  |   |  |                               |   |
| Substance (units)   | Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL)   | Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG) | Highest Amount Detected                                       | Range Detected (lowest to highest)   | Does Water meet EPA standard? | Typical Source  |
| Chlorine (ppm)  | 4  | 4  | 1.16  | 0.20--1.16   | YES                           | Water additive used to control microbes   |
| Substance (units)   | Action Level (AL) or MCL (90% of the samples collected must be at or below the AL) | Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)            | 90th percentile (90% of samples taken were below this amount) | # of samples above action level (AL) (No more than 5 samples above AL allowed) | Does Water meet EPA standard? | Typical Source  |
| Copper (ppb) (collected in June 2012)   | 1300   | 1300   | 170   | 0 out 50 samples taken   | YES                           | Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits                        |
| Lead (ppb) (collected in June 2012)   | 15   | 0  | 2.5   | 0 out 50 samples taken   | YES                           | Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits                        |
| Substance (units)   | Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)  | Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)            | Highest of Positive Samples Reported                          | % of Positive Samples in the Total Number of Samples Collected                 | Does Water meet EPA standard? | Typical Source  |
| Total Coliform (% positive samples in total # of samples collected per month)       | 5% monthly samples are positive  | 0  | 0   | 0  | YES                           | Naturally present in the environment  |
| Fecal Coliform or E. coli bacteria (# of positive samples)                          | 0  | 0  | 0   | N/A  | YES                           | Human or animal fecal waste   |
| Substance (units)   | Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)  | Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)            | Highest Level Detected Average                                | Range Detected (lowest to highest)   | Does Water meet EPA standard? | Typical Source  |
| Haloacetic Acid HAA5 (ppb)  | 60   | N/A  | 24.5  | 2.6--29.0  | YES                           | By-product of drinking water chlorination   |
| Trihalomethane TTHM (ppb)   | 80   | N/A  | 44  | 19.9--54.5   | YES                           | By-product of drinking water chlorination   |

Stage 2 Monitoring for TTHM/HAA5 began May 2012. Data is based on averages of three quarters.  
 Waivers (exemptions) were extended to the County by the State in 2011 through 2013 for the following contaminants: Arsenic, Asbestos, Cyanide, Radium and Synthetic Organic Compounds. Synthetic Organic Compounds (SOCs) are man made products such as pesticides, gasoline components, PCB (Polychlorinated bi-phenyls; formerly used in rubber, dyes, heaters, etc.), phenols, and dioxin.