

# Water Lines

## SDW Hotline Report

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### Top Ten Topics

Topic	Questions (phone & email)	Percent of Total* Questions
Tap Water Testing	212**	8
Local Drinking Water Quality	184	7
Lead	180	6
Household Wells	178	6
Security Planning Grants	171	6
Other DW Background	155	5
Consumer Confidence Report	121	4
Home Water Treatment Units	112	4
Arsenic	110	4
Other EPA	105	4

\*A total of 2,825 total questions were answered by the Hotline (via telephone and email) in April 2002.

\*\*Citizens who obtain their drinking water from private household wells asked 37% of the tap water testing questions..

Published Monthly

See past reports at

<http://intranet.epa.gov/ow/hotline>

Safe Drinking Water Hotline: National Toll-free No.: (800) 426-4791 or (877) EPAWATER

For More Information Contact:  
 Harriet Hubbard, EPA Project Officer  
 (202) 564-4621

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## What's New

### New Documents:

- *Long Term 1 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule: A Quick Reference Guidance*, EPA816-F-02-001, is now available at [www.epa.gov/safewater/mdbp/lt1eswtr-quick-ref.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/mdbp/lt1eswtr-quick-ref.pdf).
- *Lead and Copper Monitoring and Reporting Guidance for Public Water Systems*, EPA816-R-02-009, is now available at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lcrrm/finamonitoringguidance.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lcrrm/finamonitoringguidance.pdf).
- *Safe Drinking Water – Protecting America’s Public Health*, poster, EPA816-H-02-001, is now available by ordering from [www.epa.gov/safewater/publicoutreach/landscapeposter.html](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/publicoutreach/landscapeposter.html).
- EPA has updated the summary inventory and violations statistics for FY 2001. This information is available at [www.epa.gov/safewater/data/getdata.html](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/data/getdata.html).
- *Using DWSRF Funds to Comply with the New Arsenic Rule*, EPA816-F-02-004, is now available at [www.epa.gov/safewater/dwsrf/fund-arsenic.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwsrf/fund-arsenic.pdf).

### Add This to Your Calendar:

- On April 17, 2002, EPA requested comment on its six-year review of 69 NPDWRs that were established prior to 1997, including 68 chemical NPDWRs and the Total Coliform Rule. EPA will be holding a stakeholder meeting about the preliminary results of the six-year review. The stakeholder meeting is tentatively planned for the last week of May, but specific dates have not yet been set.
- The Safe Drinking Water Hotline is taking registrations for the Surface Water Treatment Rules training workshops (covering the newly promulgated Long Term I Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule and Filter Backwash Recycling Rule). The workshop will address how the Surface Water Rules are interrelated by presenting the requirements by treatment technology. These workshops are open to all regions, tribes, states, and training and technical assistance providers. Training dates are: May 16-17 in Chicago; May 29-30 in Boston; June 11-12 in Denver; and August 13-14 in a city yet to be determined.

## Did You Know?

Irrigation accounts for the largest use of ground water in the U.S. Some 49 billion gallons of ground water are used daily for agricultural irrigation from more than 561,000 wells. California leads the nation with 71,554 irrigation wells.

(National Ground Water Association)

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## Frequently Asked Qs & As

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**Q:** What is the difference between a variance and an exemption?

**A:** Variances generally allow a water system to provide drinking water that may contain contaminants at levels above the maximum contaminant level (MCL) on the condition that the quality of the drinking water is still protective of public health. An exemption, on the other hand, is intended to allow a system with compelling circumstances an extension of time before the system must comply with applicable SDWA requirements (63 FR 43834; August 14, 1998).

**Q:** What is the "Six-Year Review?"

**A:** The Safe Drinking Water Act requires EPA to conduct a periodic review of existing National Primary Drinking Water Regulations (NPDWRs). By statute, this review must be conducted at least every six years and is, therefore, referred to as the "six-year review." On April 17th, 2002, EPA published in the Federal Register and requested comment on its six-year review of 69 NPDWRs that were established prior to 1997, including 68 chemical NPDWRs and the Total Coliform Rule (67 FR 19030). The intended purpose of the review is to identify those NPDWRs for which current health risk assessments, changes in technology, and/or other factors provide a health or technical basis to support a regulatory revision that will improve or strengthen public health protection.

**Q:** When are public water systems required to be in compliance with the 10 ppb MCL for arsenic?

**A:** The 10 ppb arsenic value is effective January 23, 2006 (66 FR 6976, 6993; January 22, 2001).

**Q:** Under the UIC program, how is the term "well" defined?

**A:** 40 CFR §146.4 defines a well as "a bored, drilled, or driven shaft whose depth is greater than the largest surface dimension; or, a dug hole whose depth is greater than the largest surface dimension; or, an improved sinkhole; or, a subsurface fluid distribution system."

**Q:** What is the deadline for states to complete "other sensitive ground water" delineation requirements established by the December 7, 1999 rule regarding Class V Injection Wells?

**A:** States must delineate other sensitive ground water areas by January 1, 2004, unless EPA grants a one-year extension (40 CFR 144.87(c)). Motor vehicle waste disposal wells within other sensitive ground water areas must close or receive a permit by January 1, 2007 (or January 1, 2008, if granted an extension). If a state does not complete the delineation by the January 1, 2004 deadline (or by January 1, 2005, if granted an extension), all motor vehicle waste disposal wells are subject to the permit/closure requirements (40 CFR 141.87(f)).

**Q:** Can Indian Tribes receive primacy for the Underground Injection Control Program?

**A:** Section 1451 of the Safe Drinking Water Act authorizes the Administrator to delegate primary enforcement responsibility for a UIC program to eligible Indian Tribes. Indian Tribes must first establish eligibility to be treated as a state before being eligible to apply for primacy enforcement responsibility.

**Q:** Does the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) regulate the amount of lead in pipes, plumbing fixtures and faucets?

**A:** Yes. The SDWA requires that after June 19, 1986 only lead free pipe, solder, or flux may be used in the installation or repair of a public water system, or any plumbing in residential or non-residential facility providing water for human consumption, which is connected to a public water system. Lead free under the SDWA means that solders and flux may not contain more than 0.2 percent lead, and pipe, pipe fittings, and well pumps may not contain more than 8.0 percent lead (40 CFR §141.43).

By amending Section 1417 of the SDWA in 1996, Congress incorporated a performance standard into the law for endpoint devices intended to dispense water for human consumption. Section 1417(e) of the SDWA states that "lead free" with regard to plumbing fittings and fixtures intended to dispense water for human consumption means those fittings and fixtures that are in compliance with a voluntary standard established pursuant to the Act. This standard, NSF Standard 61, Section 9, relates to the amount of lead leached from a product while "lead free" relates to lead content.

**Q:** Do the UIC regulations have a definition for the term “aquifer” that specifies well yield or some other hydrogeologic characteristic?

**A:** The UIC regulations at 40 CFR §146.4 define an aquifer as “a geological formation, group of formations, or part of a formation that is capable of yielding a significant amount of water to a well or spring.” Federal regulations do not specify well yield as a parameter for this definition.

**Q:** Can a small public water system (PWS) receive an extension of the compliance date for the Arsenic Rule if the PWS will not be able to complete needed capital improvement projects in five years?

**A:** According to the January 22, 2002, final Arsenic Rule, all systems have 5 years to achieve compliance. Exemptions for an additional 3 years can be made available to qualified systems. For those qualified systems serving 3,300 persons or less, up to 3 additional 2-year extensions to the exemption are possible, for a

total exemption duration of 9 years. When added to the 5 years provided for compliance by the rule, this allows up to 14 years for small systems serving up to 3,300 people to achieve compliance (66 FR 6976, 6988).

**Q:** For initial compliance determination with the Radionuclides Rule, can a PWS composite the samples from all of its wells?

**A:** No. Systems are allowed to composite samples temporally, but not spatially. To fulfill quarterly monitoring requirements for gross alpha particle activity, radium-226, radium-228, or uranium, a system may composite up to four consecutive quarterly samples from a single entry point if analysis is done within a year of the first sample (40 CFR 141.26(a)(4)). States will treat analytical results from the composite as the average analytical result to determine compliance with the MCLs and the future monitoring frequency.

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## Monthly Trends

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Following the events of September 11, 2001, the public's interest in maintaining safe drinking water has increased significantly. The issue of water security is also of concern to public water systems (PWSs). To address this issue, PWSs have been given the opportunity to seek financial assistance to complete vulnerability assessments. Congress appropriated funds to EPA to aid in the improvement of the safety and security of the nation's drinking water supply. In April 2002, EPA solicited grant applications from large publicly owned systems (regularly serving populations over 100,000) through a Request for Applications (RFA) for a portion of the appropriated funds. The Hotline received numerous questions regarding the security planning grants. This is reflected in the Top Ten Topics list with Security Planning Grants being the fifth most frequent topic. The Hotline received 171 questions on security planning grants, which represented six percent of the total questions received for the month of April.

## Monthly Summary of Hotline Service

Total number of calls answered	2,165
Total number of emails received	259
Average wait time (in seconds)	0:27
Percent of calls satisfied immediately	97.5%
Percent of all calls answered in < 1 min	86.1%
Percent of callbacks answered in 5 days	100%
Percent of emails answered in 5 days	100%
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about local DW quality	1,266
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about arsenic rule	99

## Comparison to Previous Years

	Calls	Emails
April 2002	2,165	259
April 2001	2,564	570

## Top Ten Referrals

Inquiry Referred to:	Number of Referrals	Percent of Total* Referrals
1. EPA Internet	355	17%
2. State Lab Certification	244	12%
3. State PWSS	193	9%
4. NSF/WQA/UL	192	9%
5. Local Water System	190	9%
6. Regional Offices	125	6%
7. Local Public Health	122	6%
8. Other Hotlines	102	5%
9. Arsenic	100	5%
10. AGWT/WSC	75	4%

\*2,108 total referrals to other resources, agencies, and organizations were provided by the Hotline in April 2002.

## Customer Profiles

Customer	Calls	Emails
Analytical Laboratories	36	3
Citizen - Private Well	402	32
Citizen - PWS	928	77
Consultants/Industry/Trade (DW)	139	3
Consultants/Industry/Trade (Other)	83	38
Environmental Groups	14	0
EPA	43	0
Other Federal Agency	18	4
Government, Local	18	4
Government, State	47	9
Government, Tribal	3	1
Spanish Speaking	0	0
International	2	28
Media	5	0
Medical Professional	3	1
Public Water System	355	16
Schools/University	47	40
Other	22	3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,165</b>	<b>259</b>

## Daily Call Data

	Total Calls Answered	Average Wait Time mm:sec
1-Apr	98	00:13
2-Apr	85	00:17
3-Apr	87	00:16
4-Apr	86	00:15
5-Apr	92	00:13
8-Apr	102	00:50
9-Apr	116	00:27
10-Apr	99	00:29
11-Apr	100	00:31
12-Apr	84	00:23
15-Apr	91	00:17
16-Apr	104	00:27
17-Apr	88	00:22
18-Apr	118	00:54
19-Apr	90	00:12
22-Apr	116	00:51
23-Apr	104	00:49
24-Apr	101	00:40
25-Apr	113	00:31
26-Apr	82	00:12
29-Apr	102	00:13
30-Apr	107	00:14
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,165</b>	<b>00:27</b>

**Hotline Statistics**

**Topic Categories**

Category	Calls	Emails
<b>Microbials/Disinfection Byproducts</b>		
Chlorine	18	4
Coliforms	79	9
Cryptosporidium	48	1
Disinfection/Disinfection Byproducts (Other)	22	2
Disinfection – Home Water	6	4
Other Microbials	15	2
Surface Water Treatment (SWTR, ESWTR, LT1FBR)	37	5
Trihalomethane (THM)	14	2
<b>Inorganic Chemicals (IOC)/Synthetic Organic Chemicals (SOC)</b>		
Arsenic	100	10
Fluoride	15	3
Methyl- <i>tertiary</i> -butyl-ether (MTBE)	25	0
Perchlorate	4	0
Phase I, II & V	78	4
Sodium Monitoring	8	1
Sulfate	8	0
<b>Lead and Copper</b>		
Copper	19	0
Lead	174	6
Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA)/Lead Ban	6	2
<b>Radionuclides</b>		
Radionuclides (Other)	21	2
Radionuclides (Radon)	80	2
<b>Secondary DW Regulations</b>		
Secondary DW Regulations	81	6
<b>SDWA Background/Overview</b>		
Definitions & Applicability	35	1
MCL List	38	14
Other Background	148	7
SDWA	28	3

Category	Calls	Emails
Water on Tap	51	1
<b>Other DW Regulations</b>		
Analytical Methods (DW)	26	4
Contaminant Candidate List/ Drinking Water Priority List	10	1
Consumer Confidence Report (DW)	117	4
DW Primacy (PWS)	2	0
Operator (PWS) Certification	3	2
Public Notification (PWS)	16	3
Security Planning Grants	161	10
State Revolving Fund (DW)	4	3
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR)	45	2
<b>Other Drinking Water</b>		
Additives Program	7	1
Bottled Water	54	3
Complaints about PWS	23	7
Compliance & Enforcement (PWS)	10	2
Home Water Treatment Units	98	14
Infrastructure/Cap. Development	4	4
Local DW Quality	157	27
Tap Water Testing	198	14
Treatment/BATs (DW)	17	3
<b>Drinking Water Source Protection</b>		
Ground Water Rule	13	4
Sole Source Aquifer	2	1
Source Water/Wellhead Protect.	16	10
UIC Program	11	1
Out of Purview		
Household Wells	160	18
Non-Environmental	17	14
Non-EPA Environmental	53	24
Other EPA (Programs)	90	15
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,472</b>	<b>282</b>

**SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE MONTHLY REPORT**

April 2002

**APPENDIX A: FEDERAL REGISTER SUMMARIES**

**PROPOSED RULES**

**“National Primary Drinking Water Regulations; Announcement of the Results of EPA’s Review of Existing Drinking Water Standards and Request for Public Comment”  
April 17, 2002 (67 FR 19030)**

The SDWA requires EPA to conduct a periodic review of existing National Primary Drinking Water Regulations (NPDWRs). EPA is requesting public comment on the results of its review of 69 NPDWRs that were established prior to 1997, including 68 chemical NPDWRs and the Total Coliform Rule (TCR). The intended purpose of the review is to identify those NPDWRs for which current health risk assessments, changes in technology, and/or other factors, provide a health or technical basis to support a regulatory revision that will improve or strengthen public health protection. Based on its review, and pending an evaluation of public comments, the Agency preliminarily believes that the 68 chemical NPDWRs remain appropriate at this time, and that the TCR should be revised. EPA must receive public comments on this action by June 17, 2002.

**NOTICES**

**“Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Disinfectants/Disinfection Byproducts, Chemical and Radionuclides Rules: Lead and Copper Rule Amendment”  
April 9, 2002 (67 FR 17070)**

EPA announced that it is planning to submit the following continuing ICR entitled, “Disinfectants/Disinfection Byproducts, Chemical and Radionuclides Rules: Lead and Copper Rule Amendment,” EPA ICR No. 1896.03; OMB Control No. 2040-0204. The current expiration date of this ICR is September 30, 2002. Before submitting the ICR to OMB for review and approval, EPA is soliciting comments on specific aspects of the proposed information collection.

**“U.S. EPA Science Advisory Board; Notification of Public Advisory Committee Meeting”  
April 16, 2002 (67 FR 18614)**

The EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) will meet on Wednesday, May 8, 2002, in a publicly accessible conference call convened in the SAB Conference Room (Room 6013, USEPA, Ariel Rios Building, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20004). The purpose of the meeting is to take action on an estimated six reports from its Committees and Subcommittees, most likely including: “USEPA’s LTESWTR/Stage II DBP Rule Proposal; An SAB report”, prepared by the Drinking Water Committee (DWC), for the Office of Water.

**“Meeting of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council; Notice of Public Meeting”  
April 19, 2002 (67 FR 19436)**

EPA announced that a meeting of the National Drinking Water Advisory Council established under the Safe Drinking Water Act, will be held on May 8, 2002, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and May 9, 2002, from 8:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, in Room 1133, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20460. The Council will hear presentations and have discussions on topics important to the Environmental Protection Agency's national drinking water program, including: the states' perspectives on drinking water program implementation; the Agency's approach to developing future contaminant candidate lists; progress and key issues regarding water infrastructure protection activities; updates on key regulatory activities; and arsenic rule implementation, including exemptions, unreasonable risk to health, and point-of-use devices.

**“EPA Science Advisory Board; Notification of Public Advisory Committee Meetings:  
Affordability Criterion for Drinking Water Treatment Technologies for Small Systems”  
April 26, 2002 (67 FR 20765)**

Notice was given of a meeting of the Environmental Economics Advisory Committee (EEAC) of the EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) to review the Agency's affordability criterion for small systems under the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996.