

Water Lines

SDW Hotline Report

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Top Ten Topics

Topic	Questions (phone & e-mail)	Percent of Total* Questions
Local Drinking Water Quality	282	14
Consumer Confidence Reports	232	11
Tap Water Testing	213**	10
Lead	142	7
Home Water Treatment Units	86	4
Household Wells	84	4
Complaints About PWSs	78	4
MCL List	63	3
Other EPA	61	3
Bottled Water	52	3

*A total of 2,069 questions were answered by the Hotline (via telephone and e-mail) in May 2004.

**Citizens who obtain their drinking water from private household wells asked 11 percent of the tap water testing questions.

Calls	E-mails	Total***
1,369	200	1,569

***A single call or e-mail may generate multiple questions.

Published Monthly

See past reports at

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

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

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Operated by Booz Allen Hamilton
Under Contract #GS-10F-0090J

What's New

New Publications:

- Information about the Draft Contaminant Candidate List (CCL) is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/ccl/cclfs.html.
- Data and summary information for the 90th percent lead level for water systems serving more than 50,000 people is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lcrmr/lead_data.html.
- Underground Injection Control state grant guidance is now available at www.epa.gov/safewater/uic/pdfs/memo_uic_grants_2004.pdf.
- Information about drinking water research projects is available through the Drinking Water Research Information Network (DRINK) at www.epa.gov/safewater/drink/intro.html.
- Guidance and tentative allotments for FY 2005 public water system supervision (PWSS) state program grants are now available at http://www.epa.gov/safewater/pws/pdfs/grants_guidance_pwssupervision_2005.pdf.

Calendar:

Who?	What?	Where?	When?	More Information
EPA	Lead and Copper Rule Workshops	St. Louis, MO	May 11-12 and May 12-13	
NDWAC	Meeting	Arlington, VA	May 18-20	

Did You Know?

Public drinking water systems will need to invest \$150 billion over a 20-year period, beginning in 1999, to ensure clean and safe drinking water (Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water).

(EPA, Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water)

Monthly Trends

The Safe Drinking Water Hotline examined the top ten topic areas questioned by public water system (PWS) operators from January 1, 2004 through May 31, 2004 (see chart below). During that time period, PWS operators most frequently asked questions on drinking water security, consumer confidence reports (CCR), and Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulations (UCMR). The number of questions received in these topic areas may be associated with different regulatory deadlines. With the approaching June 30th, 2004 deadline to certify and submit a vulnerability assessment for systems serving a population of 3,301 to 49,999, many operators inquired about appropriate mailing instructions and certification requirements. The deadline to deliver consumer confidence reports to customers of community water systems (CWS) is July 1, and CWS operators requested guidance and clarification on their regulatory obligations. The UCMR sampling period expired in December 2003, but many PWS operators contacted the Hotline after that deadline for clarification of remaining obligations.

Topic	Questions (phone and e-mail)
Drinking Water Security*	111
Consumer Confidence Reports	98
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation (UCMR)	80
Surface Water Treatment Rules	39
Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts**	32
SDWA	30
Other Drinking Water/Background	25
Compliance and Enforcement	20
Capacity Development	17
Lead	17

* Drinking Water Security questions other than security planning grants

** Disinfectant and Disinfection Byproduct questions other than chlorine and total trihalomethanes

Frequently Asked Qs & As

This section provides answers to frequently asked questions not necessarily represented in one of the Top Ten Topic categories.

Q: I am aware of the efforts that communities can take to establish source water protection programs. What actions can individuals take to protect source water?

A: EPA has compiled a list of several actions that individuals can take to help protect sources of drinking water, such as disposing of harmful materials properly, using pesticides and fertilizers in moderate amounts, and creating a wildlife habitat. In addition, EPA has published a series of fact sheets on best management practices (BMPs) for activities that are likely to impact the sources of drinking water, such as septic systems, agricultural fertilizer, turfgrass and garden fertilizer application, and pet and wildlife waste. Each bulletin discusses how these activities can be managed to prevent contamination of drinking water. Links for the list of

actions for individuals and the BMP fact sheets are available at www.epa.gov/safewater/protect/protect.html.

Q: How many people are supplied by community water systems using groundwater?

A: In 2000, approximately 42,661 community water systems (CWS) relying on ground water served 85.9 million people (Public Water Systems: Facts and Figures; 2000). For other facts and figures, visit EPA's Web site for Public Drinking Water System Programs located online at www.epa.gov/safewater/pws/factoids.html.

Q: What are the key elements of the proposed Ground Water Rule?

A: The main purpose of the proposed Ground Water Rule (65 *FR* 30193; May 10, 2000) is to protect ground water sources of drinking water from disease-causing viruses and bacteria, such as *E. coli*, by requiring identification of problems in water systems that could lead to contamination. It also requires identification of sources of drinking water that are at risk of being contaminated. Systems with

sources identified as at risk must monitor for and take actions to remove or inactivate detected contaminants to prevent them from reaching drinking water consumers. More information about the proposed rule is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/gwr.html.

Q: How many public water systems (PWSs) will the proposed Ground Water Rule affect?

A: The Ground Water Rule will apply to 157,000 PWSs that use ground water as a source. Most of these are small systems, which may serve the same populations year-round, such as houses and apartment buildings, or provide drinking water only parts of the year, such as schools or campgrounds (*Technical Fact Sheet: Proposed Ground Water Rule*, EPA815-F-00-003; April 2000).

Q: The National Drinking Water Advisory Council (NDWAC) advises EPA on issues relating to drinking water. Who has EPA appointed as members of the NDWAC?

A: The NDWAC is comprised of members of the general public, state and local agencies, and private groups concerned with safe drinking water. A list of current members is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/ndwac/member.html. More information regarding the NDWAC can be obtained at www.epa.gov/safewater/ndwac/council.html.

Q: What electronic resources are available to help states meet the objectives of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA)?

A: The Drinking Water Academy's (DWA) electronic workshop offers online resources that can assist EPA, states, and Indian tribes to enhance program capabilities to meet the public health protection objectives of the SDWA. The electronic workshop provides training modules that give an introduction to the various aspects of the SDWA, presentations that cover proposed and final rules, and links to other sources of additional regulatory and implementation information. The training materials address such topics as the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations, public water system operation, the public water system supervision program, source water protection, and underground

injection control. The DWA's electronic workshop is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/dwa/electronic.html.

Q: When is a community water system required to notify new customers of ongoing violations?

A: Community water systems are required to distribute copies of the most recent public notice for all continuing violations, existing variances or exemptions, or other ongoing situations requiring a public notice to all new billing units or new customers prior to or at the time service begins (40 CFR 141.206(a)).

Q: Within 10 days of completing the public notification requirements in 40 CFR Subpart Q for an initial public notice and any repeat notices, a public water system (PWS) must submit to the primacy agency a representative copy of each type of notice distributed, published, posted, and made available to the persons served by the PWS and to the media. The PWS must also submit to the primacy agency a certification that it has fully complied with the public notification regulations (40 CFR 141.31(d)). Public notification regulations require community water systems (CWS) to provide copies of the most recent public notices for any continuing violation, the existence of a variance or exemption, or other ongoing situation requiring a public notice to all new billing units or new customers prior to or at the time service begins (40 CFR 141.206(a)). Is a community water system required to forward a copy of every new customer public notice to the primacy agency?

A: EPA does not intend for systems to forward to primacy agencies a copy of every public notice sent to new customers (65 FR 25982, 26007; May 4, 2000). By providing a certification statement, the community water system is stating that it will meet all future requirements for notifying new billing units of the violation or situation (*Public Notification Handbook*, EPA816-R-00-010; June 2000).

Monthly Summary of Hotline Service

Total number of calls answered	1,369
Total number of e-mails received	200
Average wait time (in seconds)	0:45
Percent of calls satisfied immediately	99.9%
Percent of all calls answered in < 1 min	80.9%
Percent of callbacks answered in 5 days	100%
Percent of e-mails answered in 5 days	100%
Number of times callers were transferred to the WSC Wellcare Hotline	287
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about CCRs	268
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about local drinking water quality for PWS customers	255
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about tap water testing and quality for household well owners	170
Number of times callers listened to recorded message about tap water testing for PWS customers	326

Comparison to Previous Year

	Calls	E-mails
May 2004	1,369	200
May 2003	1,962	235

Top Ten Referrals

Inquiry Referred to:	Number of Referrals	Percent of Total* Referrals
1. Local Water System	193	19
2. State Lab Certification	166	16
3. State PWSS	142	14
4. EPA Internet	125	12
5. NSF/WQA/UL	102	10
6. AGWT/WSC	54	5
7. Combined Regions	47	5
8. Local Public Health	41	4
9. FDA/IBWA	32	3
10. Other Hotlines	30	3

*A total of 1,040 referrals to other resources, agencies, and organizations were provided by the Hotline in May 2004.

Customer Profiles

Customer	Calls	E-mails
Analytical Laboratories	21	5
Citizen - Private Well	101	25
Citizen - PWS	844	79
Consultants/Industry/Trade (DW)	71	3
Consultants/Industry/Trade (Other)	66	28
Environmental Groups	3	3
EPA	16	0
Other Federal Agency	9	2
Government, Local	9	5
Government, State	21	8
Government, Tribal	0	1
Spanish Speaking	0	0
International	4	12
Media	2	1
Medical Professional	5	0
Public Water System	117	10
Schools/University	23	17
Other	57	1
TOTALS	1,369	200

Daily Call Data

	Total Calls Answered	Average Wait Time mm:sec
3-May	66	01:34
4-May	65	00:46
5-May	73	01:13
6-May	50	00:58
7-May	59	00:34
10-May	75	00:50
11-May	65	00:43
12-May	55	00:16
13-May	72	00:52
14-May	52	00:42
17-May	81	00:44
18-May	78	00:36
19-May	66	00:20
20-May	61	00:17
21-May	44	01:07
24-May	57	01:01
25-May	64	00:34
26-May	63	00:33
27-May	85	00:37
28-May	59	00:31
TOTALS	1,369	00:45

Topic Categories

Category	Calls	E-mails
Microbials/Disinfection Byproducts		
Chlorine	21	3
Coliforms	36	4
Cryptosporidium	37	0
Disinfection/Disinfection Byproducts (Other)	16	1
Disinfection – Home Water	14	2
Other Microbials	37	0
Storage – Home Water	2	0
Surface Water Treatment (SWTR, ESWTR, LT1FBR)	13	2
Trihalomethane (THM)	8	0
Inorganic Chemicals (IOC)/Synthetic Organic Chemicals (SOC)		
Arsenic	10	1
Fluoride	10	4
Methyl- <i>tertiary</i> -butyl-ether (MTBE)	6	2
Perchlorate	13	0
Phase I, II & V	9	3
Sodium Monitoring	2	0
Sulfate	1	0
Lead and Copper		
Copper	27	0
Lead	138	4
Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA)/Lead Ban	4	0
Radionuclides		
Radionuclides (Other)	13	2
Radionuclides (Radon)	28	4
Secondary DW Regulations		
Secondary DW Regulations	44	5
SDWA Background/Overview		
Definitions & Applicability	17	6
MCL List	52	11
Other Background	29	13
SDWA	30	1

Category	Calls	E-mails
Water on Tap	2	1
Other DW Regulations		
Analytical Methods (DW)	20	8
Contaminant Candidate List/ Drinking Water Priority List	1	0
Consumer Confidence Report (DW)	226	6
DW Primacy (PWS)	3	0
Operator (PWS) Certification	1	0
Other Drinking Water Security	37	10
Public Notification (PWS)	23	0
Security Planning Grants	7	0
State Revolving Fund (DW)	6	3
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR)	20	0
Other Drinking Water		
Additives Program	6	2
Bottled Water	48	4
Complaints about PWS	63	15
Compliance & Enforcement (PWS)	22	12
Home Water Treatment Units	71	15
Infrastructure/Cap. Development	6	1
Local DW Quality	253	29
Tap Water Testing	203	10
Treatment/BATs (DW)	9	2
Drinking Water Source Protection		
Ground Water Rule	4	1
Sole Source Aquifer	0	0
Source Water/Wellhead Protection	8	11
UIC Program	15	4
Out of Purview		
Household Wells	62	22
Non-Environmental	28	3
Non-EPA Environmental	16	4
Other EPA (Programs)	48	13
TOTALS	1,825	244

EPA DISCLAIMER

Answers to questions in the Safe Drinking Water Hotline monthly report are intended to be purely informational and are based on SDWA provisions, EPA regulations, guidance, and established policy effective at the time of publication. The answers given reflect EPA staff's best judgment at the time and do not represent a final or official EPA interpretation. This report does not substitute for the applicable provisions of statutes and regulations, guidance, etc., nor is it a regulation itself. Thus, it does not impose legally-binding requirements on EPA, States, or the regulated community. An answer to a question in this report may be revised at any time to reflect EPA's revisions to existing regulations, changes in EPA's approach to interpreting its regulations or statutory authority, or for other reasons. EPA may provide a different answer to a question in this report in the future.

Also, an answer provided in this report may not apply to a particular situation based upon the circumstances. Any decisions regarding a particular case will be made based on the applicable statutes and regulations. Therefore, interested parties are free to raise questions and objections about the appropriateness of the application of an answer in this report to a particular situation, and EPA will consider whether or not the recommendations or interpretations in the answer are accurate and appropriate in that situation. The information in this report is not intended, nor can it be relied upon, to create any rights enforceable by any party in litigation with the United States.

SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE MONTHLY REPORT
May 2004

APPENDIX A: FEDERAL REGISTER SUMMARIES

NOTICES

**“Public Water System Supervision Program Revision for the State of Arkansas”
May 4, 2004 (69 FR 24598)**

EPA gave notice that the state of Arkansas is revising its approved Public Water System Supervision Program. Arkansas has adopted the Long Term 1 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule drinking water regulations. EPA has determined that these revisions are no less stringent than the corresponding federal regulations. Therefore, EPA intends to approve this state’s program revision.