

SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE MONTHLY REPORT

November 2001

Safe Drinking Water Hotline: National Toll-Free No.:(800) 426-4791 or (877) EPAWATE ☐ operated by Booz, Allen,Hamilton under Contract no. GS-10F-0090J ☐ See past SDW Hotline Monthly Reports at <http://intranet.epa.gov/ow/hotline> ☐ For more information, contact Harriet Hubbard, EPA Project

Monthly Summary of Hotline Service

| | |
|--|-------|
| Total number of calls answered | 1,333 |
| Average wait time (in seconds) | 16 |
| % of all calls answered in < 1 min | 93.2 |
| % of calls satisfied immediately | 97.3 |
| % of callbacks answered in 5 days | 100 |
| Total number of emails received | 356 |
| % of emails answered in 5 days | 100 |
| # of Times Callers Listened to Recorded Message About Local DW Quality | 966 |
| # of Times Callers Listened to Recorded Message About Arsenic Rule | 86 |

Top Ten Referrals

| Inquiry Referred to: | Number of Referrals | Percent of Total* Referrals |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| EPA Internet | 318 | 19 |
| State Lab Certification | 232 | 14 |
| NSF/WQA/UL/NAIN | 161 | 10 |
| State PWSS | 132 | 8 |
| AGWT | 118 | 7 |
| Local Water System | 112 | 7 |
| Other Hotlines | 103 | 6 |
| Local Public Health | 80 | 5 |
| Non-EPA Internet | 63 | 4 |
| FDA/IBWA | 46 | 3 |

Comparison to Previous Year

| | Calls | Emails |
|----------|-------|--------|
| Nov 2001 | 1,333 | 356 |
| Nov 2000 | 2,278 | 355 |

Top Ten Question Topics

| Topic | Questions (phone & email) | Percent of Total* Questions |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Tap Water Testing | 197 | 10 |
| Household Wells | 158 | 8 |
| Local Drinking Water Quality | 124 | 6 |
| Lead | 109 | 5 |
| Home Water Treatment Units | 108 | 5 |
| Arsenic | 105 | 5 |
| Other EPA | 95 | 5 |
| Other Drinking Water Background | 93 | 5 |
| Radon | 77 | 4 |
| Coliforms | 71 | 4 |

*2,014 total questions were answered by the Hotline (via telephone and email) in November 2001.

*1,693 total referrals to other resources, agencies, and organizations were provided by the Hotline in November 2001.

Selected Questions and Answers

Q: I was under the impression that the GROUNDWATER RULE was to go final in November 2001. Has it gone final?

A: The Groundwater Rule has not been finalized. The Unified Agenda, published on December 3, 2001, lists December 2002 as a final action date for the Groundwater Rule (66 FR 62388).

Q: How should the running annual average be calculated to determine trihalomethane maximum contaminant level (MCL) violations (under the current regulations and under the STAGE 1 DISINFECTANTS/ DISINFECTION BYPRODUCTS RULE) when a system did not monitor for one of the quarters included?

A: According to Tom Grubbs, with EPA's Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, 40 CFR 141.30(b)(1) requires systems to average all samples to determine a quarterly average. In 40 CFR 141.30(d), compliance is based on a running annual average. If only

three quarters of data are available, then the system averages only those 3 quarters to determine compliance with the MCL (plus, it has a monitoring violation for the quarter in which it did not monitor). Under the Stage 1 Disinfectants/ Disinfection Byproducts Rule (which will become effective for Subpart H Systems serving more than 10,000 on January 1, 2002 and for small Subpart H systems and ground water CWSs and NTNCWSs on January 1, 2004), the system would still average the 3 quarters of available data. However, the system would have a monitoring violation for each quarter that the sample would have been used to calculate compliance (i.e., all 4 quarters, not just the one in which the system did not monitor).

Q: Do states have reciprocal OPERATOR CERTIFICATION licensing? I am particularly interested in finding out if this is true for Florida and Ohio--will they honor each other's licensing of operators?

A: According to Jenny Jacobs, with EPA's Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, EPA allows states to decide for themselves whether or not to have reciprocity agreements with other states; usually this process is done on a case-by-case basis. There is no comprehensive list of the states that have reciprocity agreements with other states. The best thing to do for now is to contact the operator certification program managers in states of interest. To find out if Ohio honors the certification you have received from Florida, you should contact Kirk Leifheit or Gary Cutler at the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; both can be reached at (614) 644-2752. To find out if Florida accepts certification from other States, contact Tim Banks at the Florida Department of Environmental Protection at (850) 488-8163, email: banks.t@dep.state.fl.us.

Q: Where in the regulations does it say states must initiate and complete a SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT PROGRAM?

A: Source Water Assessment Program regulations have not been promulgated. The Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, P.L. 104-182, added Section 1453 directing EPA to require states to develop and submit Source Water Assessment Programs to EPA for approval. Because each state develops and implements their

own assessment program, EPA published guidance describing how the states should carry out a source water assessment program, rather than promulgating federal regulation.

Q: We are a motor vehicle repair shop operating a MOTOR VEHICLE WELL. How do we find out if our well is in a ground water protection area and if we are in a protected area, do we need a permit?

A: States are required to make their local source water assessments widely available to the public through a variety of methods after the assessments are complete. You can find out if your Class V well is in a ground water protection area by contacting the State agency responsible for the State Source Water Assessment and Protection Program in your area. You may call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline to find out who to call in your State for this information (40 CFR §144.87(d)). Once a local assessment for a ground water protection area is complete, every existing motor vehicle waste disposal well owner in that ground water protection area has one year to close the well or to apply for and receive a permit (40 CFR §144.87(a)).

Question of the Month

Q: If the ground water in a certain area contains ten times the national average amount of arsenic, do the cows that drink it pass it through to their milk?

A: The Safe Drinking Water Hotline can only provide information about the regulations and programs developed in response to the Safe Drinking Water Act. We recommend that you contact your local Agriculture Extension Service or Farm Bureau for assistance in answering this question.

Chart of the Month

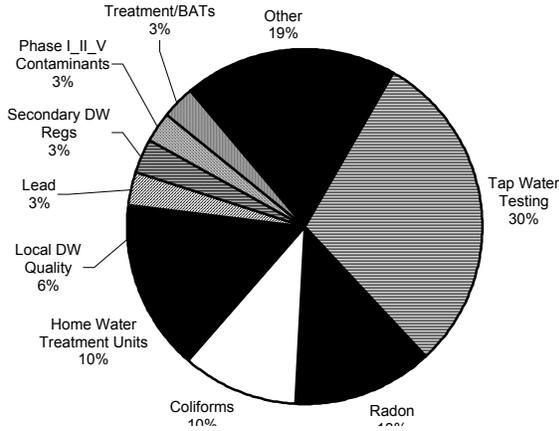


Figure 1. Additional Topics Discussed with People Who Asked For Information About Household Wells

The Hotline answered questions specifically about household wells from 158 people during the month of November 2001. One hundred thirty seven of these people also asked questions about additional topics as depicted in the chart above. By far, the most frequent additional topic discussed with callers who requested general information about household wells was how to have their drinking water tested.

Note: the "other" category in this chart comprises home water disinfection, bottled water, wellhead protection, radionuclides (other than radon), and drinking water additives.

What's New?

Add this to your calendar:

EPA's Fourth Annual National Customer Service Conference, originally scheduled for November 28-30, 2001, has been postponed to August 5, 6, and 7, 2002. The event will take place at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, in Washington D.C.

CUSTOMER PROFILES

| CUSTOMER | Calls | Emails |
|------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Analytical Laboratories | 25 | 9 |
| Citizen - Private Well | 289 | 54 |
| Citizen - PWS | 572 | 98 |
| Consultants/Industry/Trade (DW) | 95 | 27 |
| Consultants/Industry/Trade (Other) | 59 | 26 |
| Environmental Groups | 8 | 3 |
| EPA | 21 | 2 |
| Other Federal Agency | 10 | 2 |
| Government, Local | 17 | 2 |
| Government, State | 24 | 3 |
| Government, Tribal | 0 | 0 |
| Spanish Speaking | 2 | 2 |
| International | 1 | 27 |
| Media | 3 | 1 |
| Medical Professional | 3 | 0 |
| Public Water System | 79 | 23 |
| Schools/University | 70 | 74 |
| Other | 55 | 3 |
| TOTALS | 1,333 | 356 |

DAILY CALL DATA

| | Total Calls Answered | Average Wait Time mm:sec |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1-Nov | 70 | 0:16 |
| 2-Nov | 54 | 0:15 |
| 5-Nov | 77 | 0:26 |
| 6-Nov | 77 | 0:16 |
| 7-Nov | 53 | 0:14 |
| 8-Nov | 79 | 0:13 |
| 9-Nov | 38 | 0:12 |
| 12-Nov | 71 | 0:22 |
| 13-Nov | 77 | 0:16 |
| 14-Nov | 15 | 0:17 |
| 15-Nov | 68 | 0:08 |
| 16-Nov | 49 | 0:23 |
| 19-Nov | 84 | 0:29 |
| 20-Nov | 69 | 0:08 |
| 21-Nov | 61 | 0:15 |
| 22-Nov | 0 | 0:00 |
| 23-Nov | 25 | 0:06 |
| 26-Nov | 64 | 0:19 |
| 27-Nov | 75 | 0:24 |
| 28-Nov | 82 | 0:12 |
| 29-Nov | 81 | 0:14 |
| 30-Nov | 64 | 0:12 |
| TOTALS | 1,333 | 0:16 |

TOPIC CATEGORIES

| CATEGORY | Calls | Emails |
|--|-------|--------|
| Microbials/Disinfection Byproducts | | |
| Chlorine | 19 | 5 |
| Coliforms | 62 | 9 |
| Cryptosporidium | 24 | 1 |
| Disinfection/Disinfection Byproducts (Other) | 25 | 5 |
| Disinfection – Home Water | 17 | 3 |
| Other Microbials | 10 | 4 |
| Surface Water Treatment (SWTR, ESWTR, LT1FBR) | 11 | 6 |
| Trihalomethane (THM) | 5 | 0 |
| Inorganic Chemicals (IOC)/Synthetic Organic Chemicals (SOC) | | |
| Arsenic | 81 | 24 |
| Fluoride | 14 | 4 |
| Methyl- <i>tertiary</i> -butyl-ether (MTBE) | 9 | 2 |
| Phase I, II & V | 31 | 14 |
| Sodium Monitoring | 3 | 0 |
| Sulfate | 5 | 1 |
| Lead and Copper | | |
| Copper | 12 | 1 |
| Lead | 102 | 7 |
| Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA)/Lead Ban | 9 | 1 |
| Radionuclides | | |
| Radionuclides (Other) | 23 | 5 |
| Radionuclides (Radon) | 66 | 11 |
| Secondary DW Regulations | | |
| Secondary DW Regulations | 43 | 11 |
| SDWA Background/Overview | | |
| Definitions & Applicability | 12 | 4 |
| SDWA | 19 | 1 |
| MCL List | 35 | 15 |
| Other Background | 77 | 21 |
| Water on Tap | 21 | 5 |
| Other DW Regulations | | |
| Analytical Methods (DW) | 18 | 9 |
| Contaminant Candidate List/ Drinking Water Priority List | 4 | 0 |
| Consumer Confidence Report (DW) | 48 | 5 |
| DW Primacy (PWS) | 1 | 0 |
| Operator (PWS) Certification | 4 | 4 |
| Public Notification (PWS) | 9 | 1 |
| State Revolving Fund (DW) | 6 | 2 |
| Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR) | 1 | 1 |

| Other Drinking Water | | |
|---|--------------|------------|
| Additives Program | 3 | 1 |
| Bottled Water | 37 | 13 |
| Complaints about PWS | 20 | 5 |
| Compliance & Enforcement (PWS) | 8 | 3 |
| Home Water Treatment Units | 79 | 29 |
| Infrastructure/Cap. Development | 3 | 2 |
| Local DW Quality | 95 | 29 |
| Tap Water Testing | 168 | 29 |
| Treatment/BATs (DW) | 33 | 13 |
| Drinking Water Source Protection | | |
| Ground Water Rule | 10 | 2 |
| Sole Source Aquifer | 1 | 1 |
| Source Water/Wellhead Protect. | 12 | 8 |
| UIC Program | 16 | 3 |
| Out of Purview | | |
| Household Wells | 134 | 24 |
| Non-Environmental | 19 | 28 |
| Non-EPA Environmental | 30 | 23 |
| Other EPA (Programs) | 78 | 17 |
| TOTALS | 1,602 | 412 |