

SAFE DRINKING WATER HOTLINE MONTHLY REPORT

December 2001

Safe Drinking Water Hotline: National Toll-Free No.:(800) 426-4791 or (877) EPAWATER 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	1,033
Average wait time (in seconds)	16
% of all calls answered in < 1 min	93.8
% of calls satisfied immediately	98.1
% of callbacks answered in 5 days	100
Total number of emails received	248
% of emails answered in 5 days	100
# of Times Callers Listened to Recorded Message About Local DW Quality	644
# of Times Callers Listened to Recorded Message About Arsenic Rule	44

Comparison to Previous Year

	Calls	Emails
December 2001	1,033	248
December 2000	3,053	348

Top Ten Question Topics

Topic	Questions (phone & email)	Percent of Total* Questions
Tap Water Testing	142	9
Local Drinking Water Quality	128	8
Household Wells	123	8
Lead	78	5
Radon	71	5
Other DW Background	70	5
Other EPA	68	4
Home Water Treatment Units	57	4
MCL List	50	3
Non-EPA Environmental	48	3

*1,522 total questions were answered by the Hotline (via telephone and email) in December 2001.

Top Ten Referrals

Inquiry Referred to:	Number of Referrals	Percent of Total* Referrals
EPA Internet	197	18
State Lab Certification	138	12
Local Water System	105	9
NSF/WQA/UL/NAIN	94	8
State PWSS	91	8
AGWT	70	6
Local Public Health	52	5
Other Hotlines	46	4
Non-EPA Internet	36	3
Regional Offices (combined)	35	3

*1,122 total referrals to other resources, agencies, and organizations were provided by the Hotline in December 2001.

Selected Questions and Answers

Q: When does EPA expect to promulgate the new standard for ARSENIC that was announced by the Administrator on October 31, 2001?

A: The 10ug/L standard for arsenic in drinking water was promulgated on January 22, 2001 (66 FR 6976). The announcement by the administrator informed the public of the Agency's decision to retain that level (10 ug/L) as the new maximum contaminant level (MCL) for arsenic in drinking water. Public Water systems will be required to meet this standard by January 2006.

Q: What is the estimated dollar cost per prevented cancer with the change of the ARSENIC MCL to 10 ppb?

A: In table III.E-10 of the final January 22, 2006 Arsenic Rule, the annual cost per cancer avoided (combined lung and bladder) ranges from \$4.8million down to \$3.2 million at 3% discount rate and ranges from \$5.5 to \$3.7 million at 7% discount rate. The ranges are based on lower and upper bound risk ranges (with the lesser dollar figure representing the upper bound).

Q: Is naturally occurring radioactive material (NORM) in drinking water addressed in the RADIONUCLIDES FINAL RULE? For example, regarding the MCL of 4 mrem/y for beta particles, is Pb210 included since it is a beta emitter and naturally occurring?

A: According to *Radionuclides Rule: A Quick Reference Guide*, June 2001 (EPA816-F-01-003), naturally occurring Lead-210 is not individually regulated but is included as one of the 168 individual beta particle and photon emitters. Monitoring of Lead-210 is required under the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule. Further action may be proposed at a later date.

Naturally occurring Potassium-40 is excluded from the gross beta activity standard. Naturally occurring Polonium-210 is included under the gross alpha particles standard and monitoring of Polonium-210 is also required under the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule.

Q: I understand that a motor vehicle waste disposal well not located within a ground water protection area or other sensitive ground water area is subject to closure or must obtain a permit in order to continue operation as required by the UNDERGROUND INJECTION CONTROL REGULATIONS FOR CLASS V INJECTION WELLS RULE, promulgated December 7, 1998. Are there any federal requirements for motor vehicle waste disposal wells not located within these specified areas?

A: The rule only applies to wells within those specified areas. However, 40 CFR §144.87(h) allows a State UIC director to impose some or all of the requirements promulgated by the December 7, 1998, rule as needed to provide protection to underground sources of drinking water. EPA expects states to determine what is best to provide the highest level of protection. The appropriate state UIC director should be contacted for information about requirements beyond those promulgated by the federal EPA.

Question of the Month

Q: According to EPA's final Radionuclide Rule Technical Fact Sheet, all new monitoring is to be conducted at each entry point to the distribution system. Does this mean the sample should be collected from the source (untreated water) coming into the treatment plant, or from a location after treatment prior to distribution?

A: The term "entry point to the distribution system" means the point at which the treated water enters the distribution system.

Chart of the Month

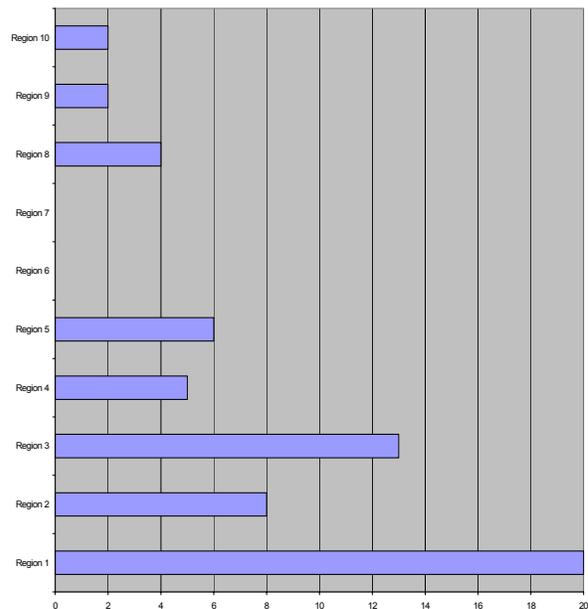


Figure 1. Radon Questions by EPA Region

The Hotline answered 71 questions (via telephone and email) specifically about radon in drinking water. This chart represents a breakdown of radon questions by EPA Region where state information was available (eleven of the 71 inquirers did not indicate the state in which they lived). People in the northeast U.S. presented the Hotline with the majority of the radon questions. While people in Region 1 presented the most questions about radon, the two individual states

most highly represented by radon inquirers (Connecticut and New York) were in Region 2.

What's New?

New Documents:

Two new guidance documents for the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation (UCMR) are now available online.

Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation Reporting Guidance, November 2001 (EPA815-R-01-029). Available at:

http://www.epa.gov/safewater/standard/ucmr/reporting_guidance.pdf

Reference Guide for the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Regulation, October 2001 (EPA815-R-01-023). Available at:

http://www.epa.gov/safewater/standard/ucmr/reference_guide.pdf

CUSTOMER PROFILES

CUSTOMER	Calls	Emails
Analytical Laboratories	25	4
Citizen - Private Well	213	34
Citizen - PWS	430	62
Consultants/Industry/Trade (DW)	82	15
Consultants/Industry/Trade (Other)	55	25
Environmental Groups	14	0
EPA	16	4
Other Federal Agency	11	3
Government, Local	16	5
Government, State	23	15
Government, Tribal	0	1
Spanish Speaking	1	2
International	1	14
Media	3	0
Medical Professional	2	2
Public Water System	65	14
Schools/University	28	46
Other	48	2
TOTALS	1,033	248

DAILY CALL DATA

	Total Calls Answered	Average Wait Time mm:sec
3-Dec	79	0:09
4-Dec	73	0:24
5-Dec	57	0:10
6-Dec	78	0:22
7-Dec	57	0:13
10-Dec	63	0:15
11-Dec	58	0:08
12-Dec	49	0:07
13-Dec	61	0:27
14-Dec	52	0:12
17-Dec	47	0:09
18-Dec	71	0:18
19-Dec	50	0:12
20-Dec	54	0:11
21-Dec	41	0:37
26-Dec	38	0:06
27-Dec	33	0:09
28-Dec	40	0:36
31-Dec	32	0:31
TOTALS	1,033	0:17

TOPIC CATEGORIES

CATEGORY	Calls	Emails
Microbials/Disinfection Byproducts		
Chlorine	9	6
Coliforms	24	7
Cryptosporidium	9	0
Disinfection/Disinfection Byproducts (Other)	14	3
Disinfection – Home Water	9	3
Other Microbials	13	0
Surface Water Treatment (SWTR, ESWTR, LT1FBR)	26	3
Trihalomethane (THM)	6	2
Inorganic Chemicals (IOC)/Synthetic Organic Chemicals (SOC)		
Arsenic	39	8
Fluoride	7	2
Methyl-tertiary-butyl-ether (MTBE)	8	3
Phase I, II & V	19	10
Sodium Monitoring	1	1
Sulfate	6	2
Lead and Copper		
Copper	10	1
Lead	70	8
Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA)/Lead Ban	4	0

Radionuclides		
Radionuclides (Other)	18	5
Radionuclides (Radon)	64	7
Secondary DW Regulations		
Secondary DW Regulations	31	7
SDWA Background/Overview		
Definitions & Applicability	18	4
MCL List	33	17
Other Background	55	15
SDWA	10	10
Water on Tap	12	4
Other DW Regulations		
Analytical Methods (DW)	16	9
Contaminant Candidate List/ Drinking Water Priority List	2	0
Consumer Confidence Report (DW)	36	6
DW Primacy (PWS)	1	0
Operator (PWS) Certification	3	1
Public Notification (PWS)	8	2
State Revolving Fund (DW)	2	2
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR)	39	3
Other Drinking Water		
Additives Program	3	2
Bottled Water	25	4
Complaints about PWS	20	4
Compliance & Enforcement (PWS)	12	4
Home Water Treatment Units	50	7
Infrastructure/Cap. Development	4	2
Local DW Quality	104	24
Tap Water Testing	132	10
Treatment/BATs (DW)	20	11
Drinking Water Source Protection		
Ground Water Rule	1	1
Sole Source Aquifer	0	0
Source Water/Wellhead Protect.	12	5
UIC Program	7	1
Out of Purview		
Household Wells	106	17
Non-Environmental	27	18
Non-EPA Environmental	32	16
Other EPA (Programs)	51	17
TOTALS	1,228	294