

# 2020 WATER QUALITY REPORT

## Boston Harbor

**This report contains important  
information about your  
drinking water.**



THURSTON COUNTY  
WASHINGTON

SINCE 1852





## Overlooking Boston Harbor.

Thurston County Public Works is pleased to present the Boston Harbor annual water quality report, in accordance with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and Washington Department of Health regulations.

This report provides detailed results from drinking water tests taken in 2019, and compares the results to federal and state standards. Results from 2020 tests will be published in 2021.

We are proud to provide you with high quality drinking water. If you have any questions about this report, or your water system, please contact us at (360) 867-2300 or visit us online at [co.thurston.wa.us/publicworks](https://co.thurston.wa.us/publicworks)

*Jennifer D. Walker*

Director, Thurston County Public Works

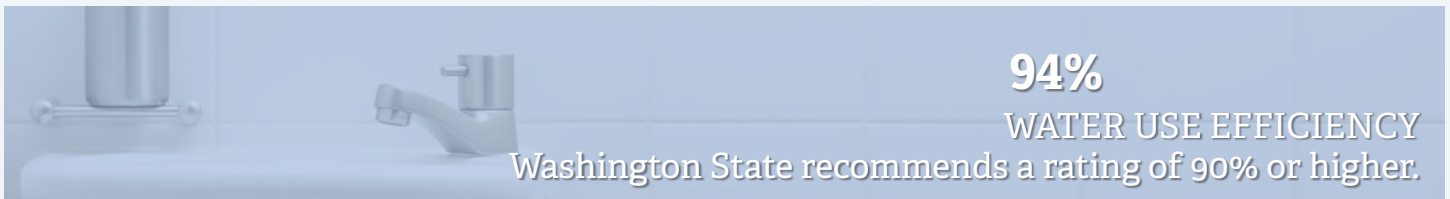
### **PARA NUESTROS CLIENTES HISPANOHABLANTE:**

Este informe proporciona los resultados de los análisis efectuados en el agua potable durante el año 2019. Dichos resultados demostraron que su agua potable cumplió con los normas de seguridad estatales y federales. De acuerdo a los requisitos en el procesamiento de los informes, los resultados del año 2020 serán enviados por el website [co.thurston.wa.us/publicworks](https://co.thurston.wa.us/publicworks) en el año 2021.



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# WATER SOURCE AND TREATMENT

Boston Harbor's drinking water comes from groundwater within the Upper Salmon Springs Drift - part of the Puget Sound aquifer system. The water is pumped from the aquifer through two 540-foot deep wells next to the water reservoir off Zangle Road.

To protect public health, your water is disinfected with chlorine. Disinfection is vital to eliminating bacterial and viral contaminants that can cause illness to you, your family, and your pets. Chlorine is particularly effective in killing the microbial organisms that cause cryptosporidiosis, cholera, giardia, salmonella, and other illnesses. By acting as a protective barrier, chlorine prevents recontamination of water while it is in your pipes.

Thurston County Public Works regularly conducts water quality testing to ensure the safety of your drinking water. We test for the following contaminants:

**Inorganic contaminants**, such as nitrates, salts, and metals, which can occur naturally or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, and farming.

**Copper and lead**, which can leach from your household plumbing system.

**Microbial contaminants**, such as bacteria, parasites, and viruses, that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agriculture, or wildlife.

**Pesticides and fertilizers**, which may come from agriculture, stormwater runoff, and residential uses.

**Organic chemical contaminants**, such as petroleum products and byproducts from industrial manufacturing.

**Radioactive contaminants**, which can occur naturally or are the result of oil and gas production.

**Disinfection byproducts**, which are compounds that form in the presence of chlorine or other disinfectants.





# WATER QUALITY AND HEALTH

Sources of drinking water (both tap 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, in some cases radioactive material, and substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Washington Department of Health and the EPA prescribe regulations that limit the

amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration and the Washington Department of Agriculture establish limits for bottled water contaminants that provide the same protection for public health.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population.

Immunocompromised 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, may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/Centers for Disease Control

guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

**EPA SAFE  
DRINKING  
WATER  
HOTLINE  
800-426-4791**



# BOSTON HARBOR WATER QUALITY IN 2019

Boston Harbor's drinking water is monitored and tested extensively throughout the year. After testing nearly 200 chemical compounds, only a few were detected - they are presented in the following tables. Some of the information is older because not all contaminants are tested for each year. If you would like a complete list of the chemical compounds tested but not detected, please call Thurston County Public Works at 360-867-2300.

## READING THE REPORT TABLES

### CONTAMINANT TESTED

CONTAMINANT	VIOLATION (Y/N)	HIGHEST LEVEL DETECTED	ACTION LEVEL (AL)	IDEAL GOAL (MCLG)	LIKELY SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
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**Contaminant**  
tells you the  
chemical sampled.

**Highest Level Detected**  
shows you the highest  
amount of the contaminant  
detected during sampling.

**Ideal Goal**  
shows you the  
contamination level the  
county strives to stay below.

**Violation**  
tells you whether or not the  
amount of contaminant present  
in the sample exceeded state  
and federal standards.

**Maximum Level Allowed or  
Action Level**  
shows you the greatest amount of a  
contaminant allowed before treatment  
is required or regulations are exceeded.

**Likely Source of  
Contamination**  
tells you the likely  
origin of the  
contaminant.

## DEFINITIONS AND UNITS OF MEASURE

### Action Level (AL)

The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

### Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)

The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set at very stringent levels. To understand possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink two liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.

### Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)

The “goal” is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. These goals 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 (e.g. chlorine).

### 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.

### Micrograms Per Liter (ugl)

A unit of measurement equivalent to parts per billion. One part per billion is roughly one second in 32 years.

### Milligrams Per Liter (mg/l)

A unit of measurement equivalent to parts per million. One part per million is roughly one second in two years.

### Treatment Technique (TT)

A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

## WATER QUALITY REPORT TABLES

### COPPER & LEAD (2018 DATA)

CONTAMINANT	VIOLATION (Y/N)	HIGHEST LEVEL DETECTED	ACTION LEVEL (AL)	IDEAL GOAL (MCLG)	LIKELY SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
Copper	N	0.085mg/l	1.3 mg/l	0 mg/l	Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
Lead	N	0.0022 mg/l	0.015 mg/l	0 mg/l	Corrosion of household plumbing systems.

In Washington State, lead in drinking water comes primarily from materials and components used in household plumbing. The more time water has been sitting in pipes, the more dissolved metals, such as lead, it may contain. Elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially in pregnant women and young children.

To help reduce potential exposure to lead: for any drinking water tap that has not been used for 6 hours or more, flush water through the tap until the water is noticeably colder before using for drinking or cooking. You can use the flushed water for watering plants, washing dishes, or general cleaning. Only use water from the cold-water tap for drinking, cooking, and especially for making baby formula. Hot water is likely to contain higher levels of lead. If you are concerned about lead in your water, have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water is available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline 1-800-426-4791 or online at [epa.gov/safewater/lead](https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).



## INORGANIC CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS (2018 DATA)

CONTAMINANT	VIOLATION (Y/N)	HIGHEST LEVEL DETECTED	MAXIMUM LEVEL ALLOWED (MCL)	IDEAL GOAL (MCLG)	LIKELY SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
Nitrates	N	<2 mg/l (average level detected over one sample period)	10 mg/l	0 mg/l	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks; sewage; and erosion of natural sources.

## MICROBIAL CONTAMINANTS (2019 DATA)

CONTAMINANT	VIOLATION (Y/N)	HIGHEST LEVEL DETECTED	TREATMENT TECHNIQUE	IDEAL GOAL (MCLG)	LIKELY SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
Fecal indicators ( <i>E. coli</i> )	N	No detect (23 samples taken)	Chlorination	n/a	Human and animal fecal waste.

## CHEMICAL BYPRODUCTS OF DISINFECTION (2019 DATA)

CONTAMINANT	VIOLATION (Y/N)	HIGHEST LEVEL DETECTED	MAXIMUM RESIDUAL DISINFECTANT LEVEL (MRDL)	IDEAL GOAL (MRDLG)	LIKELY SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
Trihalomethanes	N	57.50 ug/l	80 ug/l	n/a	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection.
Haloacetic acids	N	39.68 ug/l	60 ug/l	n/a	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection.

## CONTAMINANTS (2018 DATA)

CONTAMINANT	VIOLATION (Y/N)	HIGHEST LEVEL DETECTED	TREATMENT TECHNIQUE	IDEAL GOAL (MCLG)	LIKELY SOURCE OF CONTAMINATION
Synthetic Organic Compounds & Radionuclides	N	Under minimum (2 samples taken)	n/a	n/a	Herbicides and pesticides.
Volatile Organic Contaminates	N	Under minimum (2 samples taken)	Coated filter media	n/a	Gasoline, solvents and cleaners.





# 2019-2020 PROJECTS



## WATER FILTRATION SYSTEM UPGRADE

The system was upgraded to increase water treatment filter capacity, handle more gallons per minute and meet peak water demand. New advances in water filter media allowed for increase in filtering capacity without increasing the size of the water treatment building.



## WATER FILTRATION BUILDING UPGRADE

Boston Harbor's water treatment facility building was given an exterior makeover. New roof, gutters, security doors, and a carport were added increasing the life of the building.



## PREVENT BACKFLOW

Did you know that water from your drain could end up flowing into Boston Harbor's drinking water system? When your water system loses pressure, used water from your plumbing fixtures - such as sprinklers, hot tubs, and swimming pools - can get drawn back into the drinking water pipes and contaminate the whole neighborhood's water supply. If you have recently installed a swimming pool, hot tub, or sprinkler system please contact us at [tcutilities@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:tcutilities@co.thurston.wa.us) to learn more about how you can help keep our water system safe by using a backflow prevention device.

## PICK UP PET POOP

Did you know that Thurston County dogs generate around six tons of pet waste every single day? Make sure your pooch's waste doesn't lay around to wreak havoc on the environment or the bottom of people's shoes. Pet poop contains bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can make their way into your drinking water supply. Make sure to scoop it, bag it, and trash it - every dog, every poo, every time.



## KEEP STORMWATER CLEAN

Storm drains prevent flooding in our streets and neighborhoods by draining rain water into the nearest body of water. Along the way, rain water can pick up pollutants on streets and in storm drains - polluting our drinking water sources with paint, oil, toxic chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides, soaps, yard waste, and litter. Keep storm drains and ditches clear of yard waste and litter. Use common sense lawn care practices described at [co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg/index.html](http://co.thurston.wa.us/health/ehcsg/index.html). And, never hose or dump anything into the storm drain.





# TIPS TO SAVE WATER & MONEY

## KITCHEN.

- Use a dishwasher in lieu of hand washing dishes.
- Install an instant water heater so you don't waste water waiting for it to heat up.

## BATHROOM.

- Upgrade older toilets with WaterSense® models and install aerators on all your faucets.
- Shorten your shower by a minute or two and you'll save up to 150 gal/month.

## LAUNDRY.

- Consider purchasing a high efficiency washing machine to save water and energy.
- When doing laundry, make sure to match water level to the size of the load.

## OTHER INDOOR.

- Run your washer and dishwasher only when full - could save you up to 1000 gal/month.
- Monitor your water bill for unusually high use. It can help you discover leaks.

## LANDSCAPING.

- Use native plants in your yard to significantly reduce irrigation needs.
- Aerate your lawn periodically to allow greater water percolation.

## OTHER OUTDOOR.

- Use a commercial car wash to save water and prevent soaps from entering storm drain.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean patios, sidewalks, and driveways.

## WATER SAVING RESOURCES.

- Check out [wateruseitwisely.com](http://wateruseitwisely.com) for 100+ water and energy saving tips.
- Visit [gracelinks.org/1297/how-to-save-water](http://gracelinks.org/1297/how-to-save-water) for even more water-saving tips.



# CONTACT US



**360-867-2300**



**[co.thurston.wa.us/publicworks](http://co.thurston.wa.us/publicworks)**



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**Olympia, WA 98512**



**[@Thurston\\_PW](https://twitter.com/Thurston_PW)**



**Water service: Kevin Patching, [kevin.patching@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:kevin.patching@co.thurston.wa.us)**  
**Customer service & billing: [tcutilities.co.thurston.wa.us](http://tcutilities.co.thurston.wa.us)**

If you are a Boston Harbor property manager, please pass this information on to your tenant or guest. Thank you!

