

# City of Pocatello

## Water Department



*2012 Annual*  
*Drinking Water Quality Report*  
Public Water System #ID6030043

### Important Health Information

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised 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 can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC (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 (800-



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**More Information:**  
The annual water quality and chemical analysis reports are available on our website at [www.pocatello.us/water](http://www.pocatello.us/water) or through the Water Superintendent's Office

### Source Water Assessment

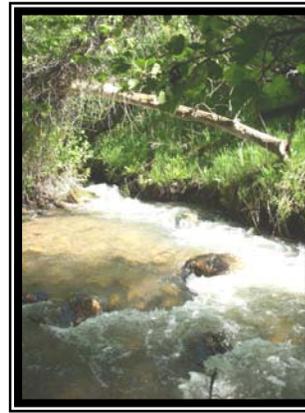
The 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act amendments created a new program of source water assessments. The source water assessment report for the City of Pocatello was completed in November 2000. The report describes the City of Pocatello's drinking water system, the boundaries of the zones of water contribution, and the associated potential contaminant sources located within these boundaries. The ultimate goal of the assessment is to provide data to the City of Pocatello to develop a protection strategy for our drinking water supply system.

Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua beber. Tradúzcalo ó hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

## Where Does My Water Come From?

Snow melt from the Mink Creek and Gibson Jack Watershed areas contribute the majority of the water that recharges the Lower Portneuf Valley Aquifer, from which Pocatello extracts its ground water using deep wells. There are currently 18 wells in production that are capable of producing more than 45 million gallons of water per day.

In order to serve customers who live on the benches surrounding Pocatello, water is pumped from the valley floor to 15 water storage facilities with a storage capacity of 23, 120,000 gallons.



## Substances that Might be in Drinking Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

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

### Contaminants that may be present in source water before we treat it include:

**Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife;

**Inorganic contaminants**, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial, or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming;

**Organic chemical contaminants**, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

**Pesticides and herbicides**, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses;

**Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

## Community Participation

The City of Pocatello Water Department encourages public interest and participation in our community's decisions affecting drinking water. Regular Pocatello City Council Meetings occur on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month beginning at 6:00 p.m., at 911 North 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the City Council Chambers. The agendas for these meetings are posted on the bulletin boards at City Hall, and on the Internet at <http://www.pocatello.us/>.

## Committed to Safe Drinking Water

The City of Pocatello provides its customers with drinking water that surpasses all State of Idaho and EPA drinking water health standards. The Safe Drinking Water Act requires every community water system to provide customers with a Consumer Confidence Report annually. Some information in this report is mandated but we also provide information that we think you, our customer, will find helpful.

Drinking water is our most precious resource and we are committed to provide a safe and adequate supply of water for our residential, commercial and industrial customers at the lowest practical cost, which is a bargain at two cents for ten gallons considering all that water provides—public health protection, fire protection, support for the economy, and quality of life.

Our customers play a significant role in maintaining the highest quality drinking water for the entire community and we appreciate the time you take to read this report, recognize your role and promote responsible action by everyone in the watershed.

For more information about this report or if you have questions relating to your drinking water, please contact the City of Pocatello Water Superintendent's Office at (208) 234-6174 or visit our web site at [www.pocatello.us/water](http://www.pocatello.us/water).

**Action Level (AL):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**Maximum Contamination Level (MCL):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the MCLG's as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

**Maximum Contamination Level Goal (MCLG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLG's allow for a margin of safety.

**Maximum Residual Disinfection Level (MRDL):** The highest level of disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contamination.

**Maximum Residual Disinfection 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 contamination.

**Inorganic Contaminants:** Chemical substances of mineral origin, such as lead and copper.

**Organic Contaminants:** Naturally occurring or synthetic substances containing mainly carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen. This includes most pesticides and industrial chemicals.

**ND:** Not detected in the water at the testing limits.

**Parts per billion (ppb) or micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{l}$ ):** Indicates the amount of a contaminant found in a billion parts of water.

**Parts per million (ppm) or milligrams per liter ( $\text{mg}/\text{l}$ ):** Indicates the amount of a contaminant found in a million parts of water. This is equivalent to finding one penny in \$10,000.

**Picocuries per liter (pCi/l):** A measure of radioactivity.

## Water Conservation

The City is promoting voluntary water restrictions at this time. With minimal winter precipitation, and as we move into the warmer months ahead, we encourage everyone to use water wise landscape planning. Avoid watering between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Some cool ways your landscape can survive the summer heat:

Grass mowing – never cut more than one-third of the height. Not sure? Set your mower to its highest setting. Taller grass cools the soil, encourages deep roots and reduces stress. Mowing grass too short slows root growth and makes the grass more susceptible to heat and drought.

Check irrigation systems – replace clogged drip emitters and repair leaks.

Mulch plant roots – it improves soil, reduces moisture loss and keeps roots cool.

Remove weeds – they compete with plants for water.

Fertilize non-native plants – follow product label recommendations.

Prune sparingly – branches keep plants shaded and cooler in summer.

Replant lost plants – if plants have died or are not performing well, plant new ones – preferably low water-use varieties – before the summer heat sets in.

The internet is a valuable resource for water conservation methods and xeriscaping, which is drought tolerant landscape methods. We would encourage everyone to use this information and share it with your friends and neighbors. Each of us can Slow The Flow and Save For Tomorrow.

## Water Testing

The Federal Safe Drinking Water Act requires water agencies to meet health-based water quality standards. Last year the City of Pocatello Water Department conducted approximately 1,600 tests for more than 100 different constituents in your drinking water, in accordance with Federal and State regulations.

Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in the water quality data table is from testing performed in 2011. The State allows us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentration of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Only those substances on the EPA's primary (regulated) contaminant list that are detected in the drinking water are listed on the table.



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# Sampling Results

Substance	Year Sampled	EPA's Standards		Pocatello's Results		Possible Sources	Violation
		MCL	MCLG	Minimum	Maximum		
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>							
Arsenic (ppb)	2010	10	0	2.00	4.00	Erosion of natural deposits.	No
Barium (ppm)	2010	2	2	0.08	0.17	Discharge from drilling wastes; erosion of natural deposits.	No
Chromium (ppb)	2010	100	100	ND	9.0	Erosion of natural deposits.	No
Nitrate (ppm) (Running Annual Average = 5.6)	2011	10	10	1.73	8.52	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits.	No
Selenium (ppb)	2010	50	50	ND	3.0	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from mines.	No
<b>Radionuclides</b>							
Alpha Emitters (pCi/l)	2010	15	N/A	0.12	9.31	Erosion of natural deposits.	No
Beta/Photon Emitters (pCi/l)	2009	50	N/A	4.16	8.46	Decay of natural and manmade deposits.	No
Radium 226 and 228 Combined (pCi/l)	2010	5	N/A	0.78	2.27	Erosion of natural deposits.	No
Uranium (ppb)	2010	30	0	1.82	1.82	Erosion of natural deposits.	No
<b>Volatile Organic Contaminants</b>							
Tetrachloroethylene (ppb)	2009	5	0	ND	0.99	Discharge from factories & dry cleaners.	No
Trichloroethylene (ppb)	2011	5	0	ND	0.85	Discharge from metal degreasing sites and other factories.	No
<b>Lead &amp; Copper Sampling at Residential Water Taps</b>							
Lead (ppb) 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile for lead = 4.0 ppb AND number of sites above the AL = 0	2010	AL = 15	0			Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.	No
Copper (ppm) 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile for copper = 0.512 ppm AND number of sites above the AL = 0	2010	AL = 1.3	1.3			Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.	No
<b>Disinfection By Products</b>							
TTHM's [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	2011 (Running Annual Average = 7.50 ppb)	80	N/A	2.13	14.0	By-product of drinking water disinfection.	No
Total Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	2011 (Running Annual Average = 2.56 ppb)	60	N/A	1.14	3.83	By-product of drinking water disinfection.	No
<b>Maximum Residual Disinfection Level</b>							
Chlorine (ppm)	2011 (Annual average = 0.28)	MRDL = 4	MRDLG = 4	0.01	1.00	Water additive used to control microbes.	No

## Health Effects

### Lead health effects and ways to reduce exposure:

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The City of Pocatello is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components.

When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your drinking water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

**Nitrate in drinking water** at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant, you should ask advice from your health care provider.

**Note:** The MCL for Beta/Photon emitters is 4mRem/year. EPA considers 50 pCi/l to be the level of concern for beta particles. Because Beta particle results were below 50 pCi/L, no testing for individual beta particle constituents was required.