

# Water Lines

## SDW Hotline Report

Published Monthly

See past reports at  
<http://intranet.epa.gov/ow/hotline>

Safe Drinking Water Hotline: National Toll-free No.: (800) 426-4791 or (877) EPAWATER

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

### Top Ten Topics

Topic	Questions (phone & email)	Percent of Total* Questions
Tap Water Testing	197**	9
Local Drinking Water Quality	171	8
Lead	136	6
Household Wells	135	6
Other DW Background	124	6
Other EPA	103	5
Arsenic	97	4
Home Water Treatment Units	96	4
Non-EPA Environmental	92	4
Radon	83	4

\*A total of 2,217 questions were answered by the Hotline (via telephone and email) in January 2002.

\*Citizens who obtain their drinking water from private household wells asked 28% of the tap water testing questions.

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## What's New

### New Documents:

- Small System Requirements For The Stage 1 Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts Rule, Small Entity Compliance Guidance, October 2001, EPA815-R-01-025, is now available at [www.epa.gov.gov/safewater/smallsys/s1ddbpr.pdf](http://www.epa.gov.gov/safewater/smallsys/s1ddbpr.pdf)

### Add This to Your Calendar:

- The 28<sup>th</sup> annual convention and exhibition of the Water Quality Association will take place in New Orleans, LA, March 5-9, 2002. This conference will offer more than 70 hours of educational seminars covering topics from bioterrorism to arsenic.

## Security Qs & As

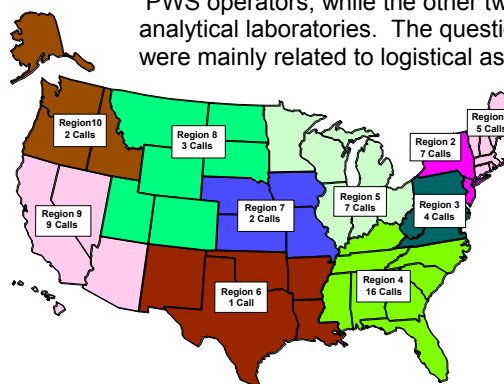
**Q:** *How can I find out EPA is doing to protect the nation's water infrastructure?*

**A:** EPA's Water Protection Task Force, with assistance from EPA Regions and external partners, is working to improve the security of the nation's drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. Many questions about Water Protection Task Force related issues (e.g., vulnerability assessments, water utility security) are answered on EPA's drinking water security Internet site ([www.epa.gov/safewater/security/secfs.html](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/security/secfs.html)). Related questions that are not addressed on the Web site may be directed to the Task Force via email, at [protection.water@epa.gov](mailto:protection.water@epa.gov).

## Monthly Trends

In January 2002, the Hotline saw an increase in calls related to the unregulated contaminant monitoring rule (UCMR). As illustrated in the chart below, callers in EPA Regions 4 and 9 asked the most questions about UCMR. The majority of the UCMR questions received were posed by operators of public water systems (PWSs). For example, ten of the twelve callers from North Carolina (in Region 4) and California (in Region 9) were

PWS operators, while the other two callers were employees of analytical laboratories. The questions asked by these callers were mainly related to logistical aspects of electronic reporting,



including requests for ID numbers, and inquiries about registration/pre-registration. Other UCMR questions related to small system monitoring equipment, cost reimbursement for small systems, and monitoring schedule requirements.

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## ? of the Month

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**Q:** *What is the applicability of the proposed Ground Water Rule?*

**A:** The requirements of the proposed Ground Water Rule would apply to all public water systems served solely by ground water. This rule also would apply to any system that mixes surface and ground water if the ground water is added directly to the distribution system and provided to consumers without treatment. Systems supplied by ground water under the direct influence of surface water would not be regulated under this rule, as proposed.

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## Frequently Asked Qs & As

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**Q:** *EPA proposed to authorize or permit the use of selected strains of bacterial spores, such as those of *Bacillus subtilis* or other spore-forming bacilli, as indicator organisms for disinfectant evaluation for destruction of *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia* cysts in drinking water treatment. Does the Interim Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule have any provision for this process?*

**A:** According to Dr. Paul Berger, OGWDW, bacterial endospores have been examined as an indicator of filter efficiency for systems using surface water. The endospores are somewhat smaller than the Crypto oocyst, and efficient removal of the endospores would imply effective oocyst removal. Also, *Clostridium perfringens* endospores have been evaluated as an indicator of fecal contamination in groundwater sources but, in at least one recent study, other indicators were found to be more effective. The team developing changes to the Surface Water Treatment Rule has determined that the endospores were not under consideration as a monitoring tool because the CT values for Crypto are sufficiently well defined to obviate the need for endospore use.

**Q:** *What is the availability of funding for research to develop new technology for the removal of Arsenic under the new Arsenic Rule?*

**A:** In an October 31, 2001, letter to the conferees on the Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development and Independent Agencies appropriations measure, Administrator Whitman wrote that "EPA plans to provide \$20 million over the next two years for research and development of more cost-effective technologies to help small systems meet the new [10 ppb arsenic] standard." The Agency is planning how to conduct this activity. Callers may leave contact

information with the Hotline, and monitor the EPA drinking water arsenic Web site for updates.

**Q:** The Drinking Water Contaminant Candidate List (CCL) at [www.epa.gov/OGWDW/ccl/cclfs.html](http://www.epa.gov/OGWDW/ccl/cclfs.html) was last updated 7/23/01. The site states that by 8/01 EPA will review 5 or more contaminants for inclusion in the list. Was manganese selected and, if so, what is the timeframe for determining a primary standard.

**A:** According to Julie Du, EPA's lead scientist for manganese, manganese is currently still on the CCL. A proposal whether or not to regulate will be published in the Federal Register soon.

**Q:** *The EPA Web site lists key features of the Ground Water Rule. It reads, "States may waive source water monitoring for sensitive systems if there is a hydrogeologic barrier to fecal contamination". What is considered a hydrogeologic barrier?*

**A:** The proposed Ground Water Rule published in the May 10, 2000, Federal Register states, "A hydrogeological barrier is defined as the physical, biological and chemical factors, singularly or in combination, that prevent the movement of viable pathogens from a contaminant source to a public supply well" (65 FR 30194; 30222). A confining layer is one example of a hydrogeological barrier. A confining layer is defined as, "a layer of material that is not very permeable to ground water flow which overlies an aquifer and acts to prevent water movement into the aquifer" (65 FR 30194, 30225; May 10, 2000).

**Q:** *On October 31, 2001, EPA Administrator Whitman announced that the arsenic in drinking water standard would be 10 parts per billion (ppb). Will there be a Federal Register notice to this effect?*

**A:** No additional Federal Register notice is necessary; the requirements associated with the arsenic in drinking water standard are in the final rule that was published on January 22, 2001 (66 FR 6976).

**Q:** *Is it true that because the MCL for arsenic is expressed in parts per million (mg/L of water) as 0.01 mg/L, and not 0.010 mg/L, arsenic sampling results of 11, 12, 13, and 14 ppb may be rounded to 10 ppb?*

**A:** No. In the June 22, 2000, proposed rule, EPA proposed a requirement that was promulgated in the January 22, 2001, final rule that arsenic sampling results above 10 ppb (0.010 mg/L) be reported to the nearest 1 ppb. Thus, according to Dick Reading, OGWDW, 11 (0.011 mg/L) ppb is 11 ppb. And 10.4 ppb (0.0104 mg/L) would round down to 10 ppb whereas 10.5 ppb would round up to 11 ppb.

### Monthly Summary of Hotline Service

Total number of calls answered	1,641
Total number of emails received	367
Average wait time (in seconds)	0:16
Percent of calls satisfied immediately	97.4
Percent of all calls answered in < 1 min	91.9
Percent of callbacks answered in 5 days	100
Percent of emails answered in 5 days	100
Number of Times Callers Listened to Recorded Message About Local DW Quality	999
Number of Times Callers Listened to Recorded Message About Arsenic Rule	84

### Comparison to Previous Year

	Calls	Emails
January 2002	1,641	367
January 2001	2,701	506

### Top Ten Referrals

Inquiry Referred to:	Number of Referrals	Percent of Total* Referrals
1. EPA Internet	265	17
2. State Lab Certification	203	13
3. NSF/WQA/UL/NAIN*	152	10
4. Local Water System	139	9
5. State PWSS	138	9
6. AGWT/WSC**	80	5
7. Local Public Health	75	5
8. Other Hotlines	71	5
9. Non-EPA Internet	54	4
10. FDA/IBWA	40	3

*1,538 total referrals to other resources, agencies, and organizations were provided by the Hotline in January 2002.*

\* National Sanitation Foundation  
Water Quality Association  
Underwriter's Laboratory  
National Antimicrobial Information Network

\*\*\*American Ground Water Trust  
Water Systems Council

### Customer Profiles

Customer	Calls	Emails
Analytical Laboratories	39	7
Citizen - Private Well	234	50
Citizen - PWS	674	115
Consultants/Industry/Trade (DW)	115	7
Consultants/Industry/Trade (Other)	90	47
Environmental Groups	12	1
EPA	35	1
Other Federal Agency	23	3
Government, Local	14	8
Government, State	36	11
Government, Tribal	0	0
Spanish Speaking	1	4
International	3	31
Media	7	1
Medical Professional	9	3
Public Water System	250	23
Schools/University	50	50
Other	49	5
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,641</b>	<b>367</b>

### Daily Call Data

	Total Calls Answered	Average Wait Time mm:sec
2-Jan	64	00:14
3-Jan	71	00:23
4-Jan	69	00:15
7-Jan	66	00:10
8-Jan	69	00:12
9-Jan	76	00:11
10-Jan	77	00:10
11-Jan	89	00:16
14-Jan	94	00:22
15-Jan	98	00:18
16-Jan	79	00:08
17-Jan	64	00:13
18-Jan	60	00:18
22-Jan	99	00:22
23-Jan	99	00:21
24-Jan	80	00:10
25-Jan	77	00:16
28-Jan	86	00:13
29-Jan	91	00:25
30-Jan	63	00:27
31-Jan	70	00:20
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,641</b>	<b>00:16</b>

**Topic Categories**

Category	Calls	Emails
<b>Microbials/Disinfection Byproducts</b>		
Chlorine	17	7
Coliforms	37	9
Cryptosporidium	24	1
Disinfection/Disinfection Byproducts (Other)	23	3
Disinfection – Home Water	14	2
Other Microbials	7	0
Surface Water Treatment (SWTR, ESWTR, LT1FBR)	28	2
Trihalomethane (THM)	22	1
<b>Inorganic Chemicals (IOC)/Synthetic Organic Chemicals (SOC)</b>		
Arsenic	83	14
Fluoride	20	8
Methyl- <i>tertiary</i> -butyl-ether (MTBE)	14	2
Perchlorate	5	0
Phase I, II & V	32	9
Sodium Monitoring	5	0
Sulfate	1	0
<b>Lead and Copper</b>		
Copper	10	3
Lead	130	6
Lead Contamination Control Act (LCCA)/Lead Ban	7	0
<b>Radionuclides</b>		
Radionuclides (Other)	19	10
Radionuclides (Radon)	72	11
<b>Secondary DW Regulations</b>		
Secondary DW Regulations	37	8
<b>SDWA Background/Overview</b>		
Definitions & Applicability	28	2
MCL List	54	10
Other Background	102	22
SDWA	20	3

Category	Calls	Emails
Water on Tap	13	6
<b>Other DW Regulations</b>		
Analytical Methods (DW)	29	18
Contaminant Candidate List/ Drinking Water Priority List	1	2
Consumer Confidence Report (DW)	51	8
DW Primacy (PWS)	2	0
Operator (PWS) Certification	6	2
Public Notification (PWS)	8	1
State Revolving Fund (DW)	8	1
Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR)	69	5
<b>Other Drinking Water</b>		
Additives Program	5	4
Bottled Water	37	15
Complaints about PWS	22	3
Compliance & Enforcement (PWS)	11	3
Home Water Treatment Units	73	23
Infrastructure/Cap. Development	3	2
Local DW Quality	137	34
Tap Water Testing	178	19
Treatment/BATs (DW)	29	9
<b>Drinking Water Source Protection</b>		
Ground Water Rule	5	2
Sole Source Aquifer	1	0
Source Water/Wellhead Protect.	23	9
UIC Program	7	3
Out of Purview		
Household Wells	119	16
Non-Environmental	30	26
Non-EPA Environmental	58	34
Other EPA (Programs)	77	26
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,813</b>	<b>404</b>

**Did You Know?**

Approximately 42 million people in the U.S. obtain water from their own private drinking water supplies, primarily drawn from ground water through private wells.