

Banks County Water Quality Report –2010

Last year the Banks County Water Works conducted over 55,508 laboratory tests for more than 80 drinking water parameters. We are proud to inform you that the Banks County water system did not have any violations of water quality parameters during 2010. Included in this report is information about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies. Your water department is committed to providing our community with clean, safe and reliable drinking water for all of us. For more information about your water or this report please call Steve Reece at (706) 677-6889.

Your water comes from a 55-acre reservoir located between Hwy. 441 and Apple Pie Ridge Road. This source provides ample volumes of water to our community. This reservoir is protected from activities, which could potentially cause contamination of this water source. The water gravity flows to the treatment plant where treatment chemicals are added to remove impurities from the water, then filtered and finally chlorinated to disinfect the water.

Your Board of Commissioners meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6: 30 p.m. at the courthouse boardroom. Your participation or comments are welcome at these meetings.

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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-4791.

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 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) 426-4791.

Be Water Wise! Everyone wants to help conserve our valuable resources. **Water** is one of our most valuable resources. We could not live without it!

Our distribution system continues to grow. Over 296 miles of water lines have been installed since our inception. **Banks County Water Works** is currently researching several options to supplement our current water sources to ensure safe and reliable sources in the future.

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, in some cases, 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 which 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 storm runoff; industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.

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

* **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 storm water runoff, and septic systems.

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

* **Lead contaminants** 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 associated with service lines and home plumbing. Banks County Water 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 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>.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

WATER QUALITY DATA

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the 2010 calendar year. The presence of these contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done January 1 -December 31, 2010. EPD requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not

expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of the data, though representative of the water quality, is more than one year old.

Terms & Abbreviations used below:

- **Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG):** the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
- **Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):** the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- **Action Level (AL):** the concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- **N/A - not applicable, ND - not detectable at testing limit, ppb - parts per billion or micrograms per liter, ppm - parts per million or milligrams per liter, NTU- Nephelometric Turbidity Units – measure of clarity of water, TT -Treatment Technique – a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.**

Inorganic Contaminant Table

Parameter	MCL	MCLG	Banks Co. Water Syst.	Range of Detection	Sample Date	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source
Nitrate (ppm)	10.0	10.0	0.36	N/A	2010	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, erosion of natural deposits
Nitrite (ppm)	1.0		0.36	N/A	2010	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4.0	4.0	1.2	0.84 – 1.2	2010 →	No	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth

Organic Contaminant Table

Parameter	MCL	MCLG	Banks Co. Water Syst.	Range of Detection	Sample Date	Violation Yes/No	Typical Source
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes (ppb)	80	N/A	30.8	16.5 - 54	2010	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	60	N/A	32.6	0 - 41 →	2010	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection

Disinfectants and Disinfection By-products Table

Parameter	MCL	MCLG	Result	Range	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source
Chlorine (PPM)	4.0	4.0	2.5	2.0-2.5	2010	no	Disinfectant Drinking water

Turbidity Table

Parameter	MCL	MCLG	Result	Range	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source
Turbidity	TT=5 NTU	0	0.20NTU	N/A	2010	NO	Soil runoff and corrosion
	TT = Percentage of samples < 0.3 NTU		100%	N/A			

About Nitrate: 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 for advice from your health care provider.

Is our water system meeting other rules that govern our operations? EPD and EPA require us to test our water on a regular basis to ensure quality and safety. We here at the Banks County Water System are working hard to make sure that you will have an uninterrupted supply of clean safe drinking water for now and in the future.