

2024 Water Quality Report

The Forsyth County Department of Water & Sewer is proud to supply clean, safe, reliable drinking water for all its customers.



In 2023, the year covered by this report, the water from your tap met all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state drinking water health standards. This water quality report details where your water comes from, what it contains and how it compares to standards set by the regulatory agencies.

Questions About Your Water...

SOURCE

Where does our water come from? The vast majority of Forsyth County's water comes from Lake Lanier and is treated by either Forsyth County or the City of Cumming. A small portion of Forsyth County's water comes from Fulton County (which withdraws water from the Chattahoochee River) or is obtained from local wells.

CONTAMINANTS

What is in our water?

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 (1-800-426-4791). Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide similar protection for public health. Sources of drinking water—both tap water and bottled water—include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs and wells. As water travels through the ground or over the surface of land, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some instances, radioactive material. Water also can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

YOUR WATER

More than 150,000 tests are conducted annually by the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and Forsyth County to ensure you have safe drinking water. These tests monitor tap water for organisms, minerals and organic substances that could cause disease or other adverse health effects. Testing is done for over 100 different contaminants including bacteria, metals, nitrates and pesticides.

The water quality data shown in the table on page 2 lists regulated drinking water contaminants monitored during 2023, the calendar year of this report. Presence of contaminants in water does not necessarily indicate the water poses a health risk.

PRECAUTIONS

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised persons such as patients with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, those 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 healthcare 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: 1-800-426-4791*.

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES OF WATER CONTAMINANTS:



MICROBIAL CONTAMINANTS such as viruses and bacteria come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, livestock operations and wildlife.



INORGANIC CONTAMINANTS such as salt and metals can be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic waste, water discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.



PESTICIDES OR HERBICIDES may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff and residential uses.



RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINANTS can be naturally occurring or the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.



ORGANIC CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production. They also can come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff and septic systems.

Guide to the Data Table

The table below lists all the information required by the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. To better understand what the table tells you about your drinking water, use the tips to the right:

A&B These columns are the highest levels of each contaminant considered safe in drinking water.

C This column is the average level of each contaminant found in your drinking water during sampling by the County.

D This column is the range of each contaminant level found during sampling by the County.

A B C D WATER QUALITY DATA TABLE

| Substance sampled (Unit of Measure) | MCLG | MCL | Your water | Range (low-high) | Sample date | Violation | Typical Source |
|---|--------------|-----|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------|---|
| Fluoride (ppm) | 4 | 4 | 0.68 | 0.00-1.08 | 2023 | No | Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories |
| Nitrate/Nitrite (ppm) | 10 | 10 | 0.34 | 0.34-0.34 | 2023 | No | Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks and sewerage; erosion of natural deposits |
| Turbidity (NTU) | NA | 5 | 0.17 | 0.05-0.73 | 2023 | No | Soil runoff |
| TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb) | NA | 80 | 36.18 | 5.0-75.8 | 2023 | No | By-product of drinking water chlorination |
| Total Coliform (% of positive samples monthly) | 0 | <5% | 0 | 0 | 2023 | No | Naturally present in the environment |
| Total Organic Carbon (ppm) | NA | NA | 1.24 | 1.1-1.6 | 2023 | No | Plant and animal material |
| Haloacetic Acid (ppb) | NA | 60 | 24.3 | 4.6-43.0 | 2023 | No | By-product of drinking water chlorination |
| Free Chlorine Residual (ppm) | 4 | 4 | 2.53 | 1.62-3.80 | 2023 | No | Water additive for disinfection |
| Substance sampled at the customer's tap (Unit of Measure) | Action Level | | 90th Percentile Sample Result* | | Sample date | Violation | Typical Source |
| Copper (ppm) | 1.3 | | 0.15 | | 2021 | No | Erosion of natural deposits; leaching; corrosion of household plumbing systems |
| Lead (ppb) | 15 | | 0 | | 2021 | No | Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits |

* The 90th percentile sample result must be below the Action Level to maintain compliance with the Lead and Copper rule.

Lead and Copper testing is conducted every three years.
Next Lead/Copper testing: Summer 2024

WATER TERMINOLOGY

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 allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best treatment technology.

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 using disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL):

The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that adding a disinfectant is necessary to control microbial contaminants.

Action Level (AL):

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

Parts per Million (ppm):

One part per million is equivalent to one minute in two years or one penny in \$10,000.

Parts per Billion (ppb):

One part per billion is equivalent to one minute in 2,000 years or one penny in \$10,000,000.

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU):

Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of water. We monitor turbidity because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.

Non Detect (ND):

The contaminant was not present or was below the detection limits of the testing procedure.

Not Applicable (NA):

This does not apply to the contaminant listed.

Learn More About Water Issues

Be an active part of your community and learn more about water issues in Forsyth County by attending the Board of Commissioners meetings, held the first and third Thursday of each month. Meetings begin at 5 p.m. at 110 E. Main Street, Suite 220, Cumming, Georgia 30040.

Lead and Copper Service Line Inventory



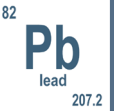
The EPA's Revised Lead and Copper Rule requires water distribution systems to develop and submit to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) a service line inventory (SLI) for all customers by October 16, 2024. Forsyth County Department of Water and Sewer (FCDWS) has been actively engaged in this process over the past two years, documenting service line materials when replacing water meters as part of the FCDWS Water Meter Upgrade Project (<https://www.forsythco.com/meterupgrades>). Additionally, information available from the County's Tax Assessors office and Geographic Information System is being reviewed to identify structures that may contain lead service lines (LSL) based on the year of construction. So far, no LSLs have been identified by the FCDWS.

It should be noted that due to a nation-wide ban on the use of LSLs in the late 1980s, homes and other buildings built in 1990 or later are not considered to contain LSLs. Further, water samples collected in the past by FCDWS have not exceeded the Action Level for lead. Customers who own properties built prior to 1990 are strongly encouraged to have their service lines inspected by a licensed plumber and report their findings to the FCDWS at 110 E. Main Street, Suite 150, Cumming, GA or by calling Customer Service at 770-781-2160. Meanwhile, the County will continue to evaluate the distribution system for the presence of LSLs and notify affected customers if any are identified.

Since each service line from a water meter to a house/building belongs to the property owner (see graphic below), customers are asked to complete the following Water Service Line survey by July 31, 2024 at (www.forsythco.com/r/water-service-line-survey).

This will help FCDWS finalize the LSL documentation required by EPA and EPD.

EFFECTS OF LEAD IN WATER



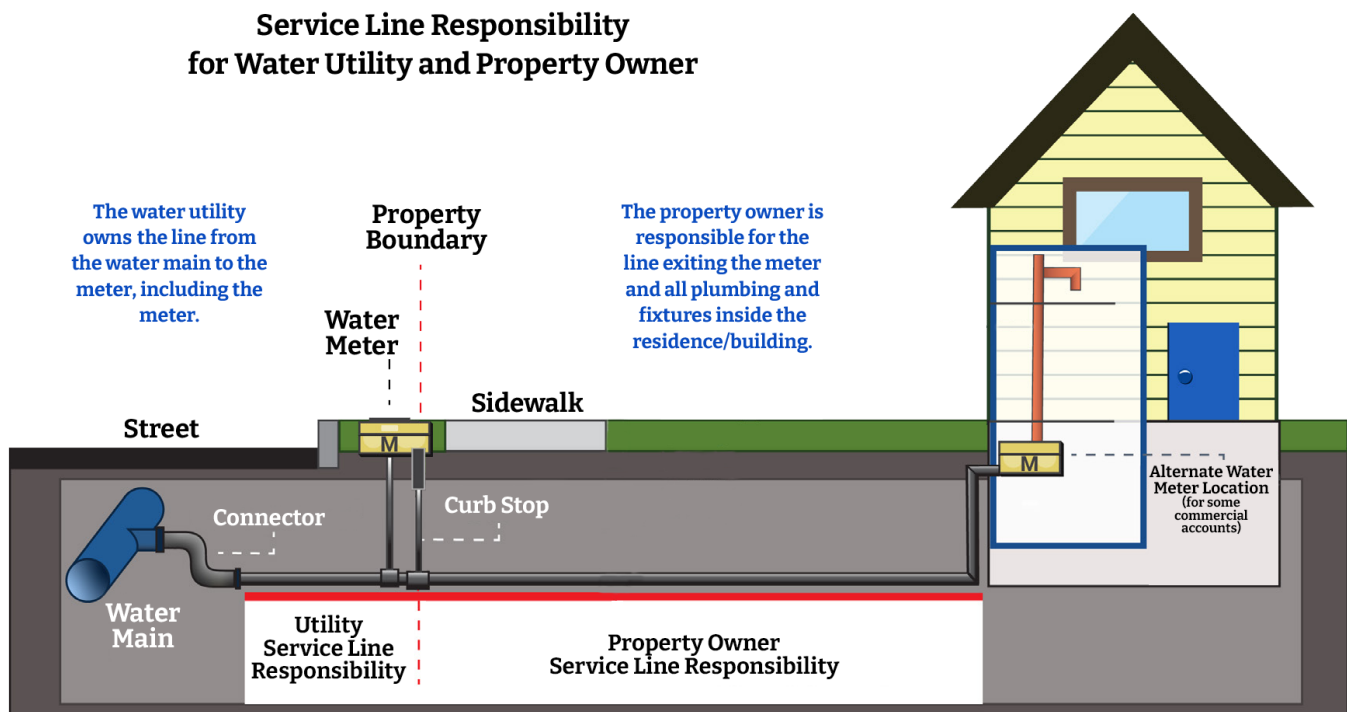
If present, elevated lead levels can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Forsyth County Department of Water & Sewer is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing the tap for 30 seconds to two minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may want to have it tested. Information about lead in water, testing methods and steps to take to minimize lead exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at:

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>

Survey Link: www.forsythco.com/r/water-service-line-survey

Información relacionada disponible en español: <https://espanol.epa.gov/plomo>

Service Line Responsibility for Water Utility and Property Owner



Modified from: Fact Sheet For Developing and Maintaining a Service Line Inventory (US EPA June, 2023)

In 2020, the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District completed a *Source Water Assessment Plan* for Forsyth County that itemized potential sources of water pollution within the Lake Lanier watershed.

Source Water Assessment Plans:

- Delineate the watershed area for each public drinking water source
- Contain an inventory of potential sources of contamination within that watershed
- Determine the susceptibility of the water supply to contamination within the watershed assessment area

The Forsyth County Source Water Assessment Plan is available for review at www.forsythco.com

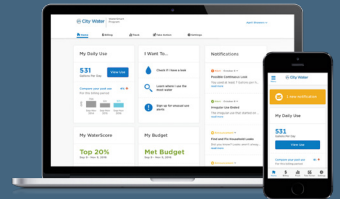


WaterSmart

We are excited to offer WaterSmart to Forsyth County water customers, a free online portal to help you better manage your water usage, get leak alerts and potentially avoid water damage to your property!

Using WaterSmart is easy. Just follow these three steps:

1. **Log on:** www.forsythco.com/watersmart
2. **Register.** Use the 12 digits of the account number (ex. 123456-123456) on your water bill and the ZIP code of your service address.
3. **Personalize.** Answer the simple profile survey to see how your water use compares with similar properties.



PFAS

PFAS (Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) are a group of man-made chemicals that have been used in industry and consumer products worldwide since the 1940s, particularly in products that resist grease, water and oil. Although some types of PFAS are no longer used, various products may still contain PFAS.

The EPA has recently established a national primary drinking water regulation for PFAS that sets enforceable limits and requires monitoring of public water supplies.

Your drinking water provided by the Forsyth County Department of Water and Sewer (FCDWS) continues to meet all federal and state water quality requirements. Recent PFAS testing of Forsyth County's finished water in August 2023 was found to be below EPA's Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 4 parts per trillion.



For additional information:

<https://www.epa.gov/pfas>