

# South Saint Paul

## 2017 DRINKING WATER REPORT

This report contains important information about your drinking water. Have someone translate it for you, or speak with someone who understands it.

Información importante. Si no la entiende, haga que alguien se la traduzca ahora.

## Making Safe Drinking Water

Your drinking water comes from a groundwater source: four wells ranging from 339 to 500 feet deep, that draw water from the Prairie Du Chien-Jordan, Jordan and Jordan-St.Lawrence aquifers.

South Saint Paul works hard to provide you with safe and reliable drinking water that meets federal and state water quality requirements. The purpose of this report is to provide you with information on your drinking water and how to protect our precious water resources.

Contact Pat Dunn, Public Works Director, at 651.554.3225 or [pdunn@sspmn.org](mailto:pdunn@sspmn.org) if you have questions about South Saint Paul's drinking water. You can also ask for information about how you can take part in decisions that may affect water quality.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets safe drinking water standards. These standards limit the amounts of specific contaminants allowed in drinking water. This ensures that tap water is safe to drink for most people. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulates the amount of certain contaminants in bottled water. Bottled water must provide the same public health protection as public tap 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 Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

## South Saint Paul Monitoring Results

This report contains our monitoring results from January 1 to December 31, 2017.

We work with the Minnesota Department of Health to test drinking water for more than 100 contaminants. It is not unusual to detect contaminants in small amounts. No water supply is ever completely free of contaminants. Drinking water standards protect Minnesotans from substances that may be harmful to their health.

Learn more by visiting the Minnesota Department of Health's webpage [Basics of Monitoring and Testing of Drinking Water in Minnesota](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/sampling.html) (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/sampling.html>).

## How to Read the Water Quality Data Tables

The tables below show the contaminants we found last year or the most recent time we sampled for that contaminant. They also show the levels of those contaminants and the Environmental Protection Agency's limits. Substances that we tested for but did not find are not included in the tables.

We sample for some contaminants less than once a year because their levels in water are not expected to change from year to year. If we found any of these contaminants the last time we sampled for them, we included them in the tables below with the detection date.

We may have done additional monitoring for contaminants that are not included in the Safe Drinking Water Act. To request a copy of these results, call the Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## Definitions

- **AL (Action Level):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- **EPA:** Environmental Protection Agency
- **MCL (Maximum contaminant level):** 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.
- **MCLG (Maximum contaminant level goal):** 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.
- **Level 1 Assessment:** A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system.
- **Level 2 Assessment:** A Level 2 assessment is a very detailed study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why an E. coli MCL violation has occurred and/or why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system on multiple occasions.
- **MRDL (Maximum residual disinfectant level):** The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
- **MRDLG (Maximum residual disinfectant level goal):** 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.
- **NA (Not applicable):** Does not apply.
- **NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Units):** A measure of the cloudiness of the water (turbidity).
- **pCi/l (picocuries per liter):** A measure of radioactivity.
- **ppb (parts per billion):** One part per billion in water is like one drop in one billion drops of water, or about one drop in a swimming pool. ppb is the same as micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{l}$ ).
- **ppm (parts per million):** One part per million is like one drop in one million drops of water, or about one cup in a swimming pool. ppm is the same as milligrams per liter ( $\text{mg}/\text{l}$ ).
- **PWSID:** Public water system identification.
- **TT (Treatment Technique):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

- **Variations and Exemptions:** State or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.

### Water Quality Data Tables

<b>LEAD AND COPPER – Tested at customer taps.</b>						
<b>Contaminant</b> (Date, if sampled in previous year)	<b>EPA's Action Level</b>	<b>EPA's Ideal Goal (MCLG)</b>	<b>90% of Results Were Less Than</b>	<b>Number of Homes with High Levels</b>	<b>Violation</b>	<b>Typical Sources</b>
<b>Copper (09/27/16)</b>	90% of homes less than 1.3 ppm	0 ppm	0.2 ppm	0 out of 30	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing.
<b>Lead (09/27/16)</b>	90% of homes less than 15 ppb	0 ppb	2.6 ppb	0 out of 30	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing.

<b>OTHER SUBSTANCES – Tested in drinking water.</b>						
<b>Substance</b> (Date, if sampled in previous year)	<b>EPA's Limit (MCL)</b>	<b>EPA's Ideal Goal (MCLG)</b>	<b>Highest Average or Highest Single Test Result</b>	<b>Range of Detected Test Results</b>	<b>Violation</b>	<b>Typical Sources</b>
<b>Fluoride</b>	4.0 ppm	4.0 ppm	0.83 ppm	0.41 - 0.90 ppm	NO	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive to promote strong teeth.

<b>INORGANIC &amp; ORGANIC CONTAMINANTS – Tested in drinking water.</b>						
<b>Contaminant (Date, if sampled in previous year)</b>	<b>EPA's Limit (MCL)</b>	<b>EPA's Ideal Goal (MCLG)</b>	<b>Highest Average or Highest Single Test Result</b>	<b>Range of Detected Test Results</b>	<b>Violation</b>	<b>Typical Sources</b>
<b>Nitrate</b>	10.4 ppm	10 ppm	3 ppm	0.00 - 3.00 ppm	NO	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits.
<b>Barium (12/02/14)</b>	2 ppm	2 ppm	0.13 ppm	N/A	NO	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposit.
<b>Combined Radium (2015)</b>	5.4 pCi/l	0 pCi/l	1.7 pCi/l	N/A	NO	Erosion of natural deposits.

**Potential Health Effects and Corrective Actions (If Applicable)**

Fluoride: Fluoride is nature's cavity fighter, with small amounts present naturally in many drinking water sources. There is an overwhelming weight of credible, peer-reviewed, scientific evidence that fluoridation reduces tooth decay and cavities in children and adults, even when there is availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste and mouth rinses. Since studies show that optimal fluoride levels in drinking water benefit public health, municipal community water systems adjust the level of fluoride in the water to a concentration between 0.5 to 1.5 parts per million (ppm), with an optimal fluoridation goal between 0.7 and 1.2 ppm to protect your teeth. Fluoride levels below 2.0 ppm are not expected to increase the risk of a cosmetic condition known as enamel fluorosis.

## Some People Are More Vulnerable to Contaminants in Drinking Water

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. The developing fetus and therefore pregnant women may also be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water. These people or their caregivers should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/Centers for Disease Control (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 at 1-800-426-4791.

## Learn More about Your Drinking Water

### Drinking Water Sources

Minnesota's primary drinking water sources are groundwater and surface water. Groundwater is the water found in aquifers beneath the surface of the land. Groundwater supplies 75 percent of Minnesota's drinking water. Surface water is the water in lakes, rivers, and streams above the surface of the land. Surface water supplies 25 percent of Minnesota's drinking water.

Contaminants can get in drinking water sources from the natural environment and from people's daily activities. There are five main types of contaminants in drinking water sources.

- **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses, bacteria, and parasites. Sources include sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, pets, and wildlife.
- **Inorganic contaminants** include salts and metals from natural sources (e.g. rock and soil), oil and gas production, mining and farming operations, urban stormwater runoff, and wastewater discharges.
- **Pesticides and herbicides** are chemicals used to reduce or kill unwanted plants and pests. Sources include agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and commercial and residential properties.
- **Organic chemical contaminants** include synthetic and volatile organic compounds. Sources include industrial processes and petroleum production, gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.
- **Radioactive contaminants** such as radium, thorium, and uranium isotopes come from natural sources (e.g. radon gas from soils and rock), mining operations, and oil and gas production.

The Minnesota Department of Health provides information about your drinking water source(s) in a source water assessment, including:

- How South Saint Paul is protecting your drinking water source(s);
- Nearby threats to your drinking water sources;
- How easily water and pollution can move from the surface of the land into drinking water sources, based on natural geology and the way wells are constructed.

Find your source water assessment at [Source Water Assessments](#)

([www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/swa/](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/swp/swa/)) or call 651-201-4700 or 1-800-818-9318 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## Lead in Drinking Water

You may be in contact with lead through paint, water, dust, soil, food, hobbies, or your job. Coming in contact with lead can cause serious health problems for everyone. There is no safe level of lead. Babies, children under six years, and pregnant women are at the highest risk.

Lead is rarely in a drinking water source, but it can get in your drinking water as it passes through lead service lines and your household plumbing system. South Saint Paul provides high quality drinking water, but it cannot control the plumbing materials used in private buildings.

Read below to learn how you can protect yourself from lead in drinking water.

1. **Let the water run** for 30-60 seconds before using it for drinking or cooking if the water has not been turned on in over six hours. If you have a lead service line, you may need to let the water run longer. A service line is the underground pipe that brings water from the main water pipe under the street to your home.
  - You can find out if you have a lead service line by contacting your public water system, or you can check by following the steps at: [Are your pipes made of lead? Here's a quick way to find out](https://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/06/24/npr-find-lead-pipes-in-your-home) (<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2016/06/24/npr-find-lead-pipes-in-your-home>).
  - The only way to know if lead has been reduced by letting it run is to check with a test. If letting the water run does not reduce lead, consider other options to reduce your exposure.
2. **Use cold water** for drinking, making food, and making baby formula. Hot water releases more lead from pipes than cold water.
3. **Test your water.** In most cases, letting the water run and using cold water for drinking and cooking should keep lead levels low in your drinking water. If you are still concerned about lead, arrange with a laboratory to test your tap water. Testing your water is important if young children or pregnant women drink your tap water.
  - Contact a Minnesota Department of Health accredited laboratory to get a sample container and instructions on how to submit a sample: [Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program](https://apps.health.state.mn.us/eldo/public/accreditedlabs/labsearch.seam) (<https://apps.health.state.mn.us/eldo/public/accreditedlabs/labsearch.seam>)  
The Minnesota Department of Health can help you understand your test results.
4. **Treat your water** if a test shows your water has high levels of lead after you let the water run.
  - Read about water treatment units: [Point-of-Use Water Treatment Units for Lead Reduction](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/poulead.html) (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/poulead.html>)

Learn more:

- Visit [Lead in Drinking Water](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/contaminants/lead.html#Protect) (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/contaminants/lead.html#Protect>)
- Visit [Basic Information about Lead in Drinking Water](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead) (<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>)
- Call the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791. To learn about how to reduce your contact with lead from sources other than your drinking water, visit [Lead Poisoning Prevention: Common Sources](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/lead/sources.html) (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/lead/sources.html>).

## Home Water Treatment

Most Minnesotans, whether they drink from a public water supply or a private well, have drinking water that does not need treatment for health protection. Water treatment units are best for improving the physical qualities of water—the taste, color, or odor.

No single treatment process can remove all substances in water. If you decide to install a home water treatment unit, choose a unit certified and labeled to reduce or remove the substance of concern. If there is more than one substance you want to remove from your water, you may need to combine several treatment processes into one system.

Even well-designed treatments systems can fail. You should continue to test your drinking water after you install a treatment unit. All home water treatment units need regular maintenance to work correctly. Regular maintenance may include changing filters, disinfecting the unit, or cleaning scale buildup. Always install, clean, and maintain a treatment unit according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Learn more at [Home Water Treatment](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/pou.html) (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/pou.html>).

### **Beware of Water Treatment Scams**

False claims, deceptive sales pitches, or scare tactics have been used by some water treatment companies. Every person has a right to decide what is best for themselves and their family, and you may choose to install additional water treatment to further lower the levels of contaminants of emerging concern, chlorine, and other chemicals in your water. However, you should be cautious about purchasing a water treatment system. If you are considering the purchase of a home water treatment system, please read the Minnesota Department of Health's recommendations online at [Warning: Beware of Water Treatment Scams](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/beware.html) (<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/water/factsheet/com/beware.html>).

## Help Protect Our Most Precious Resource – Water

### You Can Prevent Pollution

Many of our daily activities contribute to the pollution of Minnesota's surface water and groundwater. You can help protect these drinking water sources by taking the following actions:

- Lawn and property:
  - Limit use of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers on your property.
  - Keep soil in place with plants, grass, or rocks.
  - Cover temporary piles of dirt with a tarp or burlap sack.
  - Keep leaves and grass off of streets and sidewalks.
  - Maintain any septic systems, private wells, and storage tanks to prevent leaks. Seal any unused wells.
- Out-of-date medications: Never flush unwanted or out-of-date medications down the toilet or sink. Always take them to a waste disposal or prescription medication drop-off site. More information is available at [Managing unwanted medications \(www.pca.state.mn.us/living-green/managing-unwanted-medications\)](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/living-green/managing-unwanted-medications)
- Hazardous materials: Safety store hazardous materials such as paint, batteries, herbicides, pesticides, and pool chemicals. Dispose of them at a proper waste disposal facility or drop-off event. Do not dump down storm drains, sink or onto your land. Learn more at: [Keep hazardous waste out of the garbage \(http://www.pca.state.mn.us/featured/keep-hazardous-waste-out-garbage\)](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/featured/keep-hazardous-waste-out-garbage).
- Pet waste: Pick up after your pet and put waste in the trash.
- Trash: Seal trash bags and keep litter out of the street.
- Winter ice removal: Chemicals used to break up the ice are called deicers or anti-icers. They can be harmful to the environment, corrosive to driveways and sidewalks and harmful to plants, pets and humans. Always shovel first, and then only apply deicers/anti-icers lightly if needed. Learn more at [10 smart salting tips to protect Minnesota waters \(https://www.pca.state.mn.us/featured/10-smart-salting-tips-protect-minnesota-waters\)](https://www.pca.state.mn.us/featured/10-smart-salting-tips-protect-minnesota-waters).
- Keep an eye out for car and motor fluids: Seal or repair any fluid leaks that could run off onto streets and into storm drains. Take used motor oil or other fluids to a neighborhood drop-off site.
- Be a water advocate: Spread the word; get involved. There are many groups and individuals working to protect water across Minnesota.