

2019 Village of Ontonagon Annual Water Quality Report

Is my water safe?

Last year your tap water met all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] and State of Michigan drinking water health standards. This report is a snap shot of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to EPA and State of Michigan standards. We are committed to providing you with information because informed customers are our best allies.

We were operating under an ACO (administrative consent order) from the DEQ in 2019. We worked with the DEQ on a set timeline to correct plant deficiencies, and have completed a major upgrade of the plant computer and monitoring equipment and the sludge collection system. The ACO was terminated on 9/11/2019 upon successful completion of our plant upgrades.

Where does my water come from?

The Ontonagon Regional Water System gets its water from Lake Superior through an intake tunnel just out from the mouth of the Big Iron River. From here the water is pumped to the water treatment plant located at the White Pine mine site. This surface water is being treated with a chemical called alum to help remove particles that make the water cloudy or turbid. Soda ash controls corrosion in the water that could cause lead or copper to leach out of pipes. The water flows through slow mixing chambers, and then goes to sedimentation basins which allow larger particles to settle out of the water. Next the sand filters remove smaller particles. Finally, Chlorine is added as a disinfectant. The water flows to a clearwell storage tank and is ready to enter the distribution system.

A source water assessment was completed by the Department of Environmental Quality in 2003. The purpose of this assessment is to determine the susceptibility of our source water to potential contamination. The Ontonagon Regional Water Supply source water has been determined to have moderately high susceptibility, based primarily on geologic sensitivity, water chemistry, and contaminant source. If you would like to know more about the report please contact Jeremy Graff at the water plant (906) 885-5631.

Why are there contaminants in my drinking 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 the 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).

Some people maybe 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 (1-800-426-4791).

The sources of drinking water (both tap 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 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 stormwater 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 stormwater runoff and residential uses.
- Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also, come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff and septic systems.
- Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order 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. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

A new requirement of the consumer confidence report is to list the number and type of service lines in our distribution system.

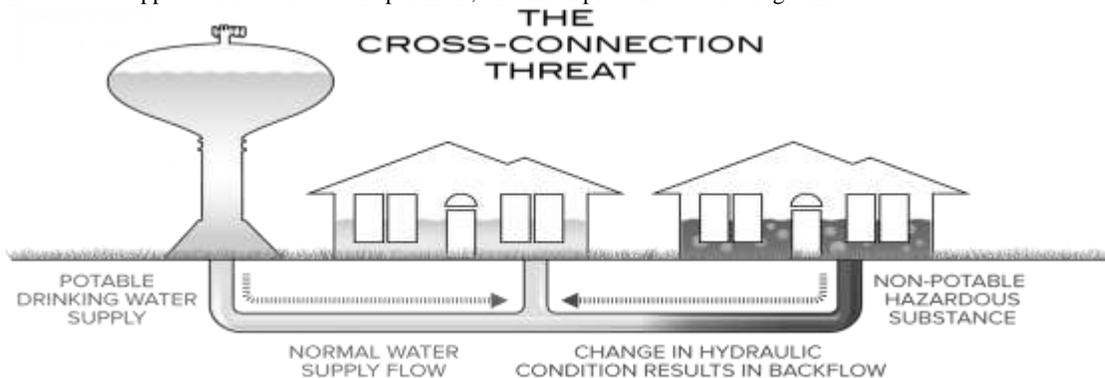
Known lead service lines: 0
Unknown material service lines: 793
Total service lines: 1431

The following informational statement about lead in drinking water is required for all community water systems to include in their Consumer Confidence Reports. It does not reflect any changes to your water quality.

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. Ontonagon water service 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 the water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information about lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the safe drinking water hotline 1-800-426-4791 or at <http://www.epa.gov/drink/info/lead>.



Don't flush old or unwanted prescriptions or over the counter medicines down the toilet or drain. When medicine is flushed it flows through the sewer system to the wastewater treatment lagoons or your septic system. These treatment systems are not designed to remove all pharmaceutical compounds, and medicines can wind up in our rivers and lakes. Please help protect our environment and dispose of your prescriptions properly. There are drug disposal bins located at the Ontonagon County Sheriff's office, the Western Upper Peninsula Health Department, and the Aspirus Bruce Crossing Clinic.



By taking steps to control cross connections and prevent the possibility of backflow at your home, you will help to protect the public water supply and ensure that your family continues to enjoy safe drinking water.

The garden hose is the most common cross connection. Each of these common uses of a hose sets up a cross connection:

- forcing it into a clogged gutter, downspout, or sewer pipe to flush out the clog
- connecting it directly to a hose end sprayer to apply pesticide or fertilizer to your yard
- connecting it to a soap and brush attachment to wash your car
- letting the end of a hose lie in a puddle or pool of water

In each of these cases, if backflow happens, your household's water lines could be contaminated. Depending on how long the backflow event lasts, the contamination could spread to the public water system. Fortunately, there are two inexpensive ways to solve this problem:

- make sure that the end of your hose is never submerged in or connected to a nonpotable substance. This solution is free, but not highly reliable. Can you always be this careful?
- install a **hose bibb vacuum breaker** on each of your outside faucets. These inexpensive devices are designed to allow water to flow in only one direction. Before you use a hose end sprayer you should install a hose bibb vacuum breaker.

The Michigan DEQ has a brochure online to explain more about cross connections at: [deq-wd-water-fos-tsu-crossconnbrochure](http://deq.wd-water-fos-tsu-crossconnbrochure)

If you have any questions about the quality of your water or the data in this report, please call Jeremy Graff at the water filtration plant at (906) 885-5631. This report will not be mailed to individual water customers. If you would like a personal copy, please contact the water plant or village office (906) 884-2305.

The Ontonagon Village Council meets at 6:00 pm on the second and fourth Monday of each Month. Meetings are held at the village office at 315 Quartz Street. Please feel free to come and participate. Due to Covid 19 meetings may be held remotely, please call ahead to confirm attendance restrictions. (906) 884-2305