

Coachella Valley Water District

Water Quality Information



Water from Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's aqueduct is delivered into CVWD's groundwater recharge ponds at Windy Point near Palm Springs. The water is part of an exchange agreement between CVWD and MWD which brings MWD water into the Coachella Valley in exchange for CVWD's allotment from the State Water Project.

*Photo by Robert Keeran
CVWD Public Relations Associate*



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Coachella Valley Water District Annual Water Quality Report for 2000

This annual water quality report provides evidence that extremely high quality and healthful water is served to the people in Coachella Valley Water District's service area. Data summarized here come from CVWD's most recent monitoring done during the period 1996-99. The state allows the district to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because their concentrations do not change frequently.

All domestic water served by the Coachella Valley Water District comes through wells from the Coachella Valley groundwater basin.

Coachella Valley Water District is governed by a locally elected board of directors which meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 9 a.m. in public session at district headquarters, Avenue 52 & Highway 111, Coachella.

Most water quality testing is done in the district's state-certified laboratory. A few highly specialized tests must be sent to other labs which have the extremely expensive equipment necessary to find tiny amounts of some constituents.

In addition to the detected constituents listed in the following table, CVWD's water quality staff of biologists, chemists, engineers and technicians monitors for 51 other regulated organic compounds, 16 regulated inorganic chemicals and 42 additional organic compounds for which state and federal health officials have not set standards. All of these are below detection levels in CVWD domestic water.

Chlorine is added to ensure drinking water complies with standards for bacteria. No coliform bacteria were detected in CVWD's water supply during 1999. Small amounts of chlorate and trihalomethanes detected in drinking water are by-products of this disinfection process.

The primary source of copper in drinking water is copper plumbing. Erosion of natural deposits is the source of other constituents detected in CVWD's water supply.

Radon is a naturally occurring, radioactive gas that originates underground and is found in the air. Radon moves from the ground into homes primarily through cracks and holes in foundations. While most radon enters the home through soil, radon from tap water is typically less than 2 percent of the radon in indoor air. EPA has determined breathing radon gas increases an individual's chances of developing lung cancer and has proposed a maximum contaminant level of 300 pCi/L for radon in drinking water. This proposed standard is far below the 4,000 pCi/L in water that is equivalent to the radon level in outdoor air. CVWD tests show the radon level in district wells ranges from below detection to 360 pCi/L which is far less radon than that found in outdoor air.

Nitrate can leach into groundwater from fertilizer, animal wastes and natural deposits. Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 45 mg/L is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can interfere with the capacity of the infant's blood to carry oxygen, resulting in a serious illness; symptoms include shortness of breath and blueness of skin. If you are caring for an infant you can be assured that CVWD water is safe. Groundwater nitrate is the most closely monitored chemical in drinking water and nitrate levels do not change quickly in the district's deep wells used to supply drinking water. If the nitrate level in a well begins to climb, the district increases its monitoring frequency and, if necessary, wells are taken out of service before they become unsafe.

As noted, all drinking water served by CVWD comes from wells. The California Department of Health Services requires water agencies to state, however, *"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 include:

—"Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.

—"Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, that 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, that 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, that are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, agricultural application and septic systems.

—"Radioactive contaminants, that 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, USEPA and the State Department of Health Services (Department) prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Department regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that provide the same protection for public health.

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

For additional information about CVWD's water, additional water quality data or clarification, the reader can call CVWD's water resources associate Steve Bigley at (760) 398-2651, ext. 286.

Definitions & abbreviations

AL—Action Level — The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

MCL—Maximum Contaminant Level — The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. Primary MCLs are set as close to public health goals or maximum contaminant level goals as economically and technologically feasible. Secondary MCLs are set to protect the odor, taste and appearance of drinking water.

MCLG—Maximum Contaminant Level Goal — Level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

mg/L — Milligrams per liter (parts per million).

ND — None detected.

NM—Monitoring not required

NTU — Nephelometric turbidity units (measurement of suspended material).

pCi/L — picoCuries per liter.

PHG—Public Health Goal — Level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHGs are set by the California Environmental Protection Agency.

Primary Drinking Water Standard — Primary maximum contaminant levels, and monitoring and reporting requirements for them, that are specified in regulations.

Secondary Drinking Water Standard — Based on aesthetics, these secondary maximum contaminant levels have monitoring and reporting requirements specified in regulations.

ug/L—Micrograms per liter (parts per billion).

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. USEPA/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 (800) 426-4791.

Este informe contiene información muy importante. Tradúscalo ó hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

**COACHELLA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT ANNUAL
WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR 2000**

Detected parameter	Public health goals (PHG)	Water quality standards primary or {secondary} MCL	Cove Communities (1)
Arsenic, ug/L	none	50	ND
Chlorate, ug/L	none	None	ND-44, ND
Chloride, mg/L	none	{500}	5.0-35, 13

Chlorine (free), mg/L	none	None	ND-0.9, 0.2
Chromium, ug/L	2.5	50	ND-20, ND
Color, units	none	{15}	ND-1.0, ND
Copper, ug/L (5) [homes tested]	170	AL=1,300	140 [56]
Fluoride, mg/L	1.0	2.0	0.2-0.9, 0.5
Gross alpha, pCi/L	none	15	ND-12, 4.8
Hardness (CaCO ₃), mg/L	none	None	30-243, 117
Iron, ug/L	none	{300}	ND-150, ND
Nitrate (as nitrogen), mg/L	10	10	ND-8.8, 1.4
Odor threshold, units	none	{3}	ND-1.0, ND
Sodium, mg/L	none	None	17-48, 25
Sulfate, mg/L	none	{500}	12-103, 33
Total dissolved solids, mg/L	none	{1,000}	134-387, 214
Total trihalomethanes, ug/L	none	100	ND-4.1, 0.4
Turbidity, NTUs	none	{5}	ND-1.8, 0.2
Uranium, pCi/L	none	20	ND-11, 3.0

Notes:

This table provides the range and average level for detected parameters in CVWD's water systems. A comma separates the range and average in each field. The highest detected level at any

sampling point is *italicized* and the average detected level is in **bold** print.

(1) Serves the communities of Rancho Mirage, Thousand Palms, Palm Desert, Indian Wells, La Quinta and portions of Bermuda Dunes, Cathedral City and

Riverside County adjacent to these communities.

(2) Serves the communities of Indio Hills, Sky Valley and portions of Desert Hot Springs and Riverside County adjacent to Desert Hot Springs.

(3) Serves the communities of Mecca, Bombay Beach, North Shore and Hot Mineral Spa.

(4) Serves the communities of Desert Shores, Salton Sea Beach and Salton City.

(5) Reported values are 90th percentile levels for samples collected from faucets in water user homes. No sample exceeded the action level.



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Please send inquiries or comments regarding this page to:

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