

*Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for 2015  
City of North Tonawanda Public Water System  
216 Payne Ave., Room #6, North Tonawanda, NY.14120  
(Public Water Supply ID #NY3100572)*

## **INTRODUCTION**

To comply with State and Federal regulations, the City of North Tonawanda Public Water System, will be annually issuing a report describing the quality of your drinking water. The purpose of this report is to raise your understanding of drinking water and awareness of the need to protect our drinking water sources. Last year, your tap water met all State drinking water health standards. We are proud to report that our system has never violated a maximum contaminant level or any other water quality statement. This report provides an overview of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to State standards.

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your drinking water, please contact the Water Department Offices at, Phone# 716-695-8531. We want you to be informed about your drinking water. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled Common Council meetings. The meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of every month in the Common Council Chambers at City Hall, 216 Payne Avenue, North Tonawanda, NY.

## **WHERE DOES OUR WATER COME FROM?**

In general, 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 can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activities. Contaminants that may be present in source water include: microbial contaminants; inorganic contaminants; pesticides and herbicides; organic chemical contaminants; and radioactive contaminants. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the State and the EPA prescribe regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The State Health Departments and the FDA's regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

Our water source is surface water drawn from the Niagara River. Our offices are located at 216 Payne Avenue, Room #6 in the City of North Tonawanda, NY. During 2015, our system did not experience any restriction of our water source. Our intake pipe is located on the East branch of the Niagara River. This intake pipe delivers a supply of Raw water to the North Tonawanda Water Treatment Plant that is rated at a maximum capacity of 12 MGD (Million Gallons per Day). The Plant has a physical treatment process, which includes a Rapid Mixer (for Alum distribution), Coagulation, Flocculation, Sedimentation (settling of suspended solids), and Filtration (filtering out of solids). Chemical processes include Potassium Permanganate (taste & odor, zebra mussel control), Aluminum Sulfate (settling of suspended solids), Chlorine (disinfection), and Fluoride (strong teeth). The finished water is stored in a one million gallon clear well, prior to distribution.

## **FACTS AND FIGURES**

Our water system serves over 31,000 people through 11,000 service connections. The total water treated in 2015 was 1.43 billion gallons. The daily average of water treated and pumped into the distribution system is 3.91 million gallons per day. Our highest single day was 4.91 million gallons. The amount of water delivered to customers was 1.01 billion gallons. This leaves an unaccounted for total of 0.42 billion gallons. This water was used to backwash filters (Water and Wastewater), flush mains, flow testing, fight fires, supply water to public owned buildings, delinquent meter readings, and leakage, due to age of the system, accounts for the remaining 0.42 billion gallons (32% of the total amount treated).

Our water rate structure is designed to promote conservation. The more you use the more you pay. The average household pays a minimum Quarterly charge of \$12.00 dollars and \$3.00 per thousand gallons for the rest. Water bills are mailed out Quarterly and unpaid balances are subject to a 10% penalty after 25 days. The average family of four uses approximately 22,440 gallons of water per Quarter (89,760 gallons per year) making the average water bill approximately \$269.00 *per year*. Sewer rates are \$4.50 per thousand gallons.

A typical dollar pays for System improvements, Operations, Maintenance, interest and debt, reinvestment and depreciation of Facilities and infrastructure.

## **ARE THERE CONTAMINANTS IN OUR DRINKING WATER?**

As the State regulations require, we routinely test your drinking water for numerous contaminants. These contaminants include: total coliform, E.Coli, turbidity, inorganic compounds, nitrate, nitrite, lead and copper, volatile organic compounds, total trihalomethane, halo acetic acids, radiological and synthetic organic compounds, total organic carbon, and alkalinity. The table presented below depicts which compounds were detected in your drinking water. The State allows us to test for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Some of our data, though representative, are more than one year old.

It should be noted that all drinking water, including bottled drinking water, might be reasonably 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) or the Niagara County Department of Health at (716-439-7452)

The table presented below depicts which compounds WERE detected in your drinking water.

**Table of Detected Contaminants**

Contaminant	Violation Yes/No	Date of Sample	Level Detected (Average) (Range)	Unit Measurement	MCLG	Regulatory Limit (MCL, TT or AL)	Likely Source of Contamination
<b><i>Inorganic Contaminants</i></b>							
Barium	No	12/2015	22.0	ug/l	2000	2000=MCL	Discharge of drilling waste; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.
Copper <sup>1</sup>	No	08/2014	121 (2.7-341)	ug/l	1300	1300=AL	Corrosion of household plumbing system; Erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives.
Lead <sup>1</sup>	No	08/2014	12.0 (<0.5-141)	ug/l	0	15=AL	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.
Nitrate	No	5/2015	150	ug/l	10,000	10,000=MCL	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits.
Sodium <sup>2</sup>	No	6/2014	12.0	mg/l	N/A	20.0=AL	Naturally occurring; Road salt; Water softeners; Animal waste.
Fluoride	No	01/15-12/15	0.79 (0.70-0.90)	mg/l	N/A	2.2mg/l=MCL	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive that promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.
<b><i>Disinfection</i></b>							
Chlorine, Free Distribution	No	2015	Avg. 0.69 (0.10-1.25)	mg/l	N/A	MRDL = 4.0	Result of drinking water chlorination
Entry Point Chlorine Residual	No	1/15-12/15	1.27-Avg (1.20-1.30)	mg/l	MRDL 4.0	MRDL = 4.0	Added for disinfection.
Turbidity <sup>3</sup> Distribution	No	1/15-12/15	Max. 1.6 (0.02-1.6)	NTU	N/A	TT=<5NTU	Soil Runoff
Turbidity <sup>3</sup> Entry Point	No	2015	100% EP compliance	NTU	N/A	TT=95%of Samples<0.3 NTU	Soil Runoff

<sup>1</sup> The level presented represents the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile of the 30 sites tested. A percentile is a value on a scale of 100 that indicates the percent of a distribution that is equal to or below it. The 90<sup>th</sup> percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of the copper and lead values detected at your water system. In this case, 30 samples were collected at your water system and the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile value was the 27<sup>th</sup> highest value. Copper = 121 ug/l; Lead = 12.0 ug/l. The action level for copper was not exceeded at any of the sites tested. The action level for lead was exceeded at three of the sites tested.

<sup>2</sup> Sodium: Water containing more than 20 mg/l sodium should not be used for drinking by people on a severely restricted diet. Water with more than 270 mg/l sodium should not be used by people on a moderately restricted sodium diet

<sup>3</sup> Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system. Our highest single turbidity measurement for the year occurred on 07/24/15 (1.60 NTU). State regulations require that turbidity must always be below 5 NTU. The regulation requires 95% of the turbidity samples collected have measurements below 0.3 NTU's at EP tap. Our Range was 0.02 NTU's 1.10 NTU's in the distribution system

<b>Radioactive Contaminants</b>							
Gross alpha activity (including radium-226 but excluding radon and uranium)	No	8/08	1.15	pCi/l	0	15	Erosion of natural deposits
Beta particle and Photon activity From manmade radionuclide	No	09/95	<4	pCi/l	0	50	Decay of natural deposits and man-made emissions.
Radium 226	No	08/08	0.07	pCi/l	NA	5.0	Erosion of natural deposits
Radium 228	No	04/08-11/08	0.72 (0.42-0.93)	pCi/l	0	5.0	Decay of natural deposits and man-made emissions
Uranium	No	08/08	ND	pCi/l	NA	20	Erosion of natural deposits
<b>Disinfection Byproducts</b>							
Total Trihalomethanes <sup>4</sup>	No	2015	44 (18-69)	ug/l	N/A	MCL=80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Total Halo Acetic Acids <sup>4</sup>	No	2015	22 (12-26)	ug/l	N/A	MCL-60	By-product of drinking water chlorination
<b>UNREGULATED SUBSTANCES</b>							
	Date of Sample (mo./year)	Level detected Average (Range)		MCLG	MCL		
<i>Physical Tests/UCMR3</i>							
Alkalinity source	Monthly/2015	95 mg/l (86.-104)		NA	Non-reg.		
Total organic Carbon source	Monthly/2015	2.2 mg/l (2.0-2.3)		NA	Non-reg.		
Total organic Carbon finished	Monthly/2015	1.83 mg/l (1.7-2.0)		NA	Non-reg.		
Molybdenum	Quarterly May 2014-Feb 2015	1.2 ug/l (1.1-1.3)		NA	Non-reg.		
Strontium	Quarterly May 2014-Feb 2015	166 ug/l (141-183)		NA	Non-reg.		
Chromium-5	Quarterly May 2014-Feb 2015	0.24 ug/l (<0.20-0.28)		NA	Non-reg.		
Chromium-6	Quarterly May 2014-Feb 2015	0.069 ug/l (0.056-0.081)		NA	Non-reg.		

## LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

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. The North Tonawanda Water Department 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 drinking 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>

<sup>4</sup> This level represents the highest locational running annual average calculated from data collected.

## CHLORINE

Waterborne diseases are some of the most serious health threats. The treatment of drinking water has saved more lives than all the doctors and hospitals in history. Chlorine is used to eliminate these pathogens from our water system and keep it safe. The chlorine residual leaving our Water Treatment Plant is averaging 1.30 ppm (mg/l). The highest quarterly average in the Distribution system, 1.02 mg/l, is in the first quarter of the year. The highest Distribution residual was 1.3 mg/l in December, 2015, and our lowest, 0.10 mg/l in September, 2015. The Treatment Plant constantly monitors the Entry Point Chlorine level and the Distribution System is monitored on a daily basis.

## INFORMATION ON FLUORIDE ADDITION

The North Tonawanda Water System is one of the many drinking water systems in New York State that provides drinking water with a controlled, low level of fluoride for consumer dental health protection. According to the United States Centers for Disease Control, fluoride is very effective in preventing cavities when present in drinking water at an optimal range from 0.7 to 1.2 mg/l (parts per million). To ensure that the fluoride supplement in your water provides optimal dental protection, the State Department of Health requires that we monitor fluoride levels on a daily basis. During 2015, monitoring showed fluoride levels in your water were within 0.2 mg/l of the target level for 98% of the time. None of the monitoring results showed fluoride levels that approach the 2.2 mg/L MCL for fluoride. Our fluoride facility is designed and operated to meet this optimal range.

### Definitions:

**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.

**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.

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

**Treatment Technique (TT)**: A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**Non-Detects (ND)**: Laboratory analysis indicates that the constituent is not present.

**Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU)**: A measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

**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 contamination

**Milligrams per liter (mg/l)**: Corresponds to one part of liquid in one million parts of liquid (parts per million - ppm).

**Micrograms per liter (ug/l)**: Corresponds to one part of liquid in one billion parts of liquid (parts per billion - ppb).

**Nano grams per liter (ng/l)**: Corresponds to one part of liquid to one trillion parts of liquid (parts per trillion - ppt).

**Pico grams per liter (pg/l)**: Corresponds to one part per of liquid to one quadrillion parts of liquid (parts per quadrillion - ppq).

**Picocuries per liter (pCi/L)**: A measure of the radioactivity in water.

**Millirems per year (mrem/yr.)**: A measure of radiation absorbed by the body.

**Million Fibers per Liter (MFL)**: A measure of the presence of asbestos fibers that are longer than 10 micrometers.

**Entry Point (EP)**: The point where finished water enters the Distribution System.

## WHAT DOES THIS INFORMATION MEAN?

As you can see by the tables, our system had no violations. We have learned through our testing that some contaminants have been detected; however, these contaminants were detected below the action level allowed by the State.

## IS OUR WATER SYSTEM MEETING OTHER RULES THAT GOVERN OPERATIONS?

During 2015, our system was in compliance with or exceeded all applicable State drinking water requirements.

## **DO I NEED TO TAKE SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS?**

Although our drinking water met or exceeded state and federal regulations, some people may be more vulnerable to disease causing microorganisms or pathogens in drinking water than the general population. Immune-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 from their health care provider about their drinking water. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by any known microbial pathogens are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

## **WHY SAVE WATER AND HOW TO AVOID WASTING IT?**

Although our system has an adequate amount of water to meet present and future demands, there are a number of reasons why it is important to conserve water:

- ◆ Saving water saves energy and some of the costs associated with both of these necessities of life;
- ◆ Saving water reduces the cost of energy required to pump water and the need to construct costly new wells, pumping systems and water towers; and
- ◆ Saving water lessens the strain on the water system during a dry spell or drought, helping to avoid severe water use restrictions so that essential firefighting needs are met.

You can play a role in conserving water by becoming conscious of the amount of water your household is using, and by looking for ways to use less whenever you can. It is not hard to conserve water. Conservation tips include:

- ◆ Automatic dishwashers use 15 gallons for every cycle, regardless of how many dishes are loaded. So get a run for your money and load it to capacity.
- ◆ Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth.
- ◆ Check every faucet in your home for leaks. Just a slow drip can waste 15 to 20 gallons a day. Fix it up and you can save almost 6,000 gallons per year.
- ◆ Check your toilets for leaks by putting a few drops of food coloring in the tank, watch for a few minutes to see if the color shows up in the bowl. It is not uncommon to lose up to 100 gallons a day from one of these otherwise invisible toilet leaks. Fix it and you save more than 30,000 gallons a year.
- ◆ Use your water meter to detect hidden leaks. Simply turn off all taps and water using appliances, then, check the meter after 15 minutes, if it moved, you have a leak.

## **SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS**

In 2015 improvements were made to the Plant instrumentation and Operations. Replacement of the roof over the Filter Building offices and storage area were done this year. Replacement of the roof on the Pump Station and the Filter Gallery was completed in 2015. Operators are being trained to use the equipment and run both the Filtration Plant and the Pump Station on an ongoing basis. A new water line has been put in place in front of DeGraff hospital using Plastic Pipe. New energy conservation procedures are, continually, being implemented throughout the system on an on-going basis. We are always striving to make improvements and upgrades to our system to comply and surpass the regulations set by the state and have already started on our improvements for 2016.

## **CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA SWAP SUMMARY**

The New York State Department of Health recently completed a draft Source Water Assessment of the supplies **raw water source** under the States Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP). The purpose of this program is to compile, organize, and evaluate information regarding possible and actual threats to the quality of public water supply (PWS) sources. It is important to note that source water assessment reports estimate the **potential** for untreated drinking water sources to be impacted by contamination. These reports do not address the safety or quality of treated finished potable tap water. The Great Lakes' watershed is exceptionally large and too big for a detailed evaluation in the SWAP. General drinking water concerns for public water supplies which use these sources include: storm generated turbidity, wastewater, toxic sediments, shipping related spills, and problems associated with exotic species (e.g. zebra mussels - intake clogging and taste and odor problems). The SWAP is based on the analysis of the contaminant inventory compiled for the drainage area deemed most likely to impact drinking water quality at this public water supply raw water intake. This assessment found an elevated susceptibility to contamination for this source of drinking water. The amount of residential land in the assessment

area results in elevated potential for microbial, disinfection byproduct precursors, turbidity and pesticides contamination. There is also a high density of sanitary wastewater discharges, which results in elevated susceptibility for numerous contaminant categories. Non-sanitary wastewater could also impact source water quality. There is also noteworthy contamination susceptibility associated with other discrete contaminant sources, and these facility types include: Chemical Bulk Storage facilities, Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites, Landfills, Toxic Release Inventory data, Municipally Operated Sewage Facilities and Resources Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) facilities.

### **CLOSING**

Thank you for allowing us to continue to provide your family with Quality Drinking Water again this year. Be assured that we are constantly and consistently vigilant in our care for your water supply. We shall also strive to comply with all the new rules and regulations set forth by Federal, State, and Local Government agencies. We ask that all our customers help us protect all our Water Resources, which are the heart of our community and our way of life. Remember to treat Clean Water wisely because your health and life *DO* depend on it! If you have any questions, please call our Water Offices @ 716-695-8531. Thank you. Ernest T Chank, Operator in Responsible Charge and William Davignon, Water/Wastewater Superintendent.