Conserving Water Together

Water Use Efficiency Report

During 2020, North City Water District purchased 582.1 million gallons of water from Seattle Public Utilities (compared to 551 MG in 2019), with a distribution leakage rate of only 5.4% throughout our system. This is significantly below the State standard of no more than 10% water loss.

Conservation Program Goals

As one of the 18 members of the Saving Water Partnership, North City Water District participates in a ten-year goal to keep our region's total average annual retail water use under 110 mgd, despite population growth. During 2020, we achieved 91.2 mgd. Key to meeting this goal were the following programs:

- 116 people learned water-wise gardening tips at our free Savvy Gardener classes (most held online): ***find out about upcoming classes at www.savingwater.org/lawn-garden/gardening-classes***
- 4 classroom presentations were made to 88 students;
- 2 single family households received rebates for new toilets; and
- 1 single family household received a new irrigation timer rebate.

How Can You Help?

During May and June, rain decreases and people use more water in their yards and gardens. Yet it's especially important to conserve water during these months, because stream flows are lowest and adult salmon are returning to spawn. Conserving water not only saves money on your water bill, it helps protect salmon while enabling our ecosystems to thrive for generations to come.

Pick Up Free Water-Saving Components
We have water-conserving shower heads and faucet aerators and plenty of super easy toilet leak detection kits. Just come to our drive-up window during business hours to request yours!

Get a Rebate on Water-Saving Toilets
Visit www.savingwater.org/rebates to learn more.

Take a Free Savvy Gardener Class
All sorts of excellent gardening advice awaits you via free online gardening classes in the spring and fall. Get more information: www.savingwater.org/lawn-garden/gardening-classes/

Teach Your Kids About the Water Cycle
Come to our drive-up window during business hours and pick up our fun and educational "Dinosaur Water" Kit to Make Your Own Terrarium—while supplies last.

"Project" update...

Our Old Maintenance Facility (and Property) is now up for sale!

By the time this newsletter has arrived in your mailbox, we should be in the final stages of hiring a real estate broker to help us with the marketing, listing, and sale of three parcels of land—including one with our original, recently vacated maintenance facility. Pictured above and in the middle of this article, it's clear just how much we needed our new one!

After renting a building in the Northgate area for our first 14 years, North City Water District (then called King County Water District #42) purchased land and built our very own facility (pictured at the top in 1948) for both administrative and vehicle maintenance functions. In 1995, when both functions had outgrown that space, we purchased the old Key Bank facility on 177th Street, and converted it into our Administrative Headquarters, enabling maintenance functions to take over our first (original) building.

Fast forward to this year—more than 25 years later—we are thrilled to finally have a new, modern maintenance facility with ample room to grow for our community!

Managing Growth and Change for the Decades Ahead

Reliable infrastructure requires reliable planning, funding, investment, and follow-through.

Twenty Year Plan In Place

Every ten years, all water providers in Washington state are required to complete a Comprehensive Water System Plan Update. This effort helps us ensure that our water system, along with its associated operations, staff, and equipment, are all being managed and maintained as safely, efficiently, and cost-effectively as possible.

As detailed in several newsletter issues over a year, we began updating our Water System Plan in early 2018, completed it in 2019, and are pleased to report that it has recently been approved by King County and our state's Department of Health. This plan lays out the groundwork for the next 20 years, including the system's operations, design standards, infrastructure improvements, and financing.

Utility Tax Reinvested Again

Every water, sewer, and solid waste utility in Washington state pays a utility tax to the state. A portion of these taxes are placed in the Public Works Assistance Account (PWAA)—a fund from which utilities can obtain low interest loans for utility infrastructure improvements.

Numerous public entities, including the Cities of Lake Forest Park and Shoreline, along with Lake Forest Park Water District, Northshore Utility District, Ronald Wastewater District, Highlands Sewer District, and North City Water District have all drawn funds from the PWAA to keep the cost of infrastructure and capital improvements (and resulting utility rates) low.

Beginning in 2005, state Legislators began siphoning off funds from this account to help offset other costs.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of the PWAA Board members (including our District Manager, who's been on the Board for the past eight years), and Senator Frockt from the 46th Legislative District, who chaired the Capital Budget bill, 2021 will be the first year that Public Works Assistance Account funds will once again be utilized for their originally-intended purpose: reinvesting in our infrastructure.

Ongoing Infrastructure Improvements

North City Water District is planning to apply for low-interest PWAA loans for several projects that will enable us to reduce risk and improve our resiliency in the event of earthquakes and other disasters, including upgrading our two booster stations, and constructing a new reservoir.

We have developed and regularly update a comprehensive hydraulic model that enables us to analyze, predict, and proactively address development impacts to the system. This approach enables us to maximize the overall life cycle of system components. Case in point: existing water mains that still have more than adequate life can continue to operate until the demand for both domestic water flow and fire flow increases to the point that requires the installation of larger water mains.

Wherever possible, we work closely with developers to construct and install new systems and components that not only meet current standards, but save our ratepayers money by building the cost of these improvements into the cost of their development.

Utility Rates Reinvested

As a Special Purpose District, we take great pride in our 100% focus on your water system, and the fact that we dedicate ***100% of your dollars back into your water system and its operation.***

Our only sources of revenue come from water rates and related charges, including interest, penalties, hook up fees, and rents. We use a Cash-Needs Approach to develop our revenue requirement for our annual budget each Fall. The only fee on our invoices are pass-through franchise fees from the Cities of Lake Forest Park and Shoreline, for which we negotiated agreements that limit these fees to 6% per city. Unlike a city-owned utility, we can not impose a tax.

Compare this to the City of Federal Way, who in addition to a 3% franchise fee on water and sewer utilities, recently adopted an additional 7.75% utility tax. ***10.75% of every utility bill now goes into the City's general fund.***

Yes, this is legal, as per the Municipal Research Services Center (MRSC): *"Any city or town in Washington state may impose a utility business and occupation (B&O) tax—also known as a utility tax—upon the income (as defined by local ordinance) of public and private utilities providing service within the boundaries of that city. There is no limit prescribed by state or federal law on sewer, solid waste, stormwater and water utilities."*

This is why some Cities may seek to take over these utilities. They can be used as a vehicle for additional revenue with a utility tax—a tax that can be raised as high as they want, as often as they want, and used for whatever they want. Worst of all, this tax never requires a public vote.

The North City Waves Newsletter is brought to you by North City Water District, and its Board of Commissioners:
Patricia Hale (President), Ron Ricker (Vice President), and Charlotte Haines (Secretary).
Feel free to contact us at PO Box 55367, or 1519 NE 177th Street, Shoreline, WA 98155.
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North City WATER DISTRICT
90 YEARS • 1931–2021

2020 ANNUAL REPORT of DRINKING WATER QUALITY

Issue 2: April • May • June 2021

A newsletter for water-related issues and info
Serving the communities of Shoreline and Lake Forest Park since 1931

From Our Board...

by Patricia Hale, President

This coming August, we'll have been serving our area's water needs for 90 years. During these nine decades, we have witnessed countless changes in how a water system operates—from the types of material, size of pipes, and the need for more storage and pump stations, to electronically-read meters, emergency training, and computerized monitoring systems. The one thing that has not changed? Our 24x7x365 focus on providing fresh, reliable water service in the most efficient manner possible, for the most reasonable price. We're proud to present the facts and figures in this annual report of drinking water quality, and welcome you to contact us should you have any questions about your water. On the COVID-19 front, our office continues to remain closed to the public, while our in-house staff and crews maintain masked and safe distancing measures. For those of you who have been unable to pay your water bill during the pandemic, we urge you to get in touch with us soon about our payment program options... the Governor has indicated that he may be lifting the moratorium on late fees and shut-offs in the very near future. Low-income applications and renewals are also due.

Financial Assistance

Struggling to pay your water bill due to COVID? We can help!

- **Program 1:** COVID-19-Impacted Low Income Rate Reduction
- **Program 2:** COVID-19-Impacted Deferred Payment Plan
- **Program 3:** Low Income Reduced Water Rate Reduction

Call 206.362.8100 or Visit: www.bit.ly/ncwdassist
(all lower case)

North City Waves Newsletter ~ a publication by North City Water District

Three Ways to Stay in Touch

1) Join www.nextdoor.com for neighborhood news and notices
2) Follow us on www.Facebook.com/NorthCityWaterDistrict
3) Sign up for news, alerts, free classes and more on our website at www.northcitywater.org

Inside This Issue

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Chester Morse Lake; photo courtesy of Seattle Public Utilities

Annual Water Quality Report for 2020

North City Water District continues to maintain state and federal water quality guidelines that are significantly below EPA maximum levels.

All About Your Water

Where Is Your Water From? Tolt and Cedar River Watersheds.

Who Tests Your Water? Your drinking water is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), who sets drinking water quality standards, establishes testing methods and monitoring requirements for water utilities, sets maximum levels for water contaminants, and requires utilities to give public notice whenever a violation occurs. Your drinking water is tested frequently both by North City Water District and Seattle Public Utilities, our supplier, to ensure that high quality water is delivered to your home and business.

How Safe is Your Water? Your water falls safely within state and federal guidelines for each and every contaminant, significantly below the EPA's levels.

What is Your Water Being Tested For? 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 is available by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline 800.426.4791.

When is Your Water Tested? Out of roughly 100 EPA-regulated contaminants, some parameters are tested continuously, some are tested daily, some are tested weekly, some monthly, some quarterly, and some annually—all in accordance with federal and state regulations. Others, such as UCMR monitoring or herbicides, are only required to be tested once every 6 years.

How is Your Water Tested? Over 200 compounds are tested and not detected; most of this monitoring occurs once every several years. Tests are done before and after treatment and while your water is in the distribution system. The Tables presented on the following page list all of the contaminants detected in the most recent required water testing and compare them to the limits and goals set by the EPA and the State of Washington to ensure your tap water is safe. Not shown are more than 200 additional contaminants that were tested for, but not detected, in your drinking water. If you would like to see a list of these other compounds or if you have other water quality questions, do not hesitate to contact us (number below). Note: asbestos monitoring is not required for our District because all asbestos pipe in our distribution system was replaced prior to 1991.

Lead and Copper Monitoring Results

Our regional water supply does not contain lead or copper. However it is possible that lead levels at your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of materials used in your home's plumbing.

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. North City Water District 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 your 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 at 1.800.426.4791 or at http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

People With Special Concerns

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. EPA/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1.800.426.4791.

If you would like to learn more, or have questions about water quality, just give us a call at 206.362.8100.

Table 1: Water Quality Testing Results for 2020

Compounds that were not detected in 2020 are not included in these charts.

Types of Detected Compounds	Units	Primary Source	Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Max. Allowed (MCL)	Levels in the Cedar River Watershed Average	Levels in the Cedar River Watershed Range	Levels in the Tolt Watershed Average	Levels in the Tolt Watershed Range	Meets EPA Stds.?
RAW WATER									
Total Organic Carbon	ppm	Naturally present in the environment	NA	TT	0.7	0.3 to 1.1	1.15	1.0 to 1.3	Yes
FINISHED WATER SOURCE									
Turbidity	NTU	Soil runoff	NA	TT	0.3	0.15 to 3.1	0.04	0.02 to 0.18	Yes
Arsenic	ppb	Erosion of natural deposits	0	10	0.4	0.4 to 0.5	0.4	0.3 to 0.5	Yes
Barium	ppb	Erosion of natural deposits	2000	2000	1.5	1.4 to 1.7	1.2	1.1 to 1.3	Yes
Bromate	ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	0	10	0.2	ND to 5	ND	ND	Yes
Fluoride	ppm	Water additive to promote strong teeth	4	4	0.7	0.6 to 0.8	0.7	0 to 0.8	Yes
SPECIFIC SAMPLES FROM NORTH CITY WATER DISTRICT'S DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM									
Total Trihalomethanes	ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	NA	80	Average: 35 Range: 25 to 45				Yes
Haloacetic Acids (5)	ppb	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection	NA	60	Average: 30 Range: 23 to 42				Yes
Chlorine	ppm	Water additive to control microbes	MRDLG =4	MRDL =4	Highest Monthly Average: 0.95 Range: 0.06 to 1.57				Yes

Table 2: Lead and Copper Monitoring Results for the Tolt Watershed in 2020

Samples are taken every three years. Five of the 51 samples in the Tolt Watershed were taken in NCWD's service area. None of the samples for the Cedar River Watershed were from NCWD's service area.

Lead and Copper Sampling Program and Units	Ideal Goal MCLG	Action Level [1]	Results of 2020 Samplings [2]	# Homes Exceeding Action Level	Typical Sources in Drinking Water
Lead, ppb	0	15	3.8	0 of 55	Corrosion of household plumbing systems. Samples collected in homes within the Tolt water service area.
Copper, ppm	1.3	1.3	0.19	0 of 55	

[1] The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
[2] 90th percentile: 90 percent of the samples were less than the values shown.

Table 3: UCMR4 Monitoring for 2020

Analyte	Units	MRL	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Manganese	ppb	0.4	0.41	1.3	0.75
Quinoline	ppb	0.0	0.069	0.069	0.07
Bromochloroacetic Acid	ppb	0.3	0.36	0.6	0.5
Bromodichloroacetic Acid	ppb	0.5	0.63	1.1	0.9
Dibromoacetic Acid	ppb	0.3	ND	0	0.04
Dichloroacetic Acid	ppb	0.2	5.0	11.0	8.26
Monocloracetic Acid	ppb	2.0	ND	0	0.26
Trichloroacetic Acid	ppb	0.5	12.0	22.0	16.0

UCMR4 data is reported to let you know about new contaminants that may be regulated in the future. The EPA requires us to monitor contaminants that do not have defined health-based standards. The EPA uses this information to determine the occurrence of contaminants in drinking water systems, which may lead to future regulations. The contaminants monitored were selected through a data-driven process that considered adverse health effects (potency and severity) and occurrence (prevalence and magnitude), but additional health information is needed to know whether the contaminants pose a health risk. For more information about the program, visit EPA's website:
www.epa.gov/dwucmr/fourth-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule

Table Definitions

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.

MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level
The highest level of a contaminant allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

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.

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

NTU: Nephelometric Turbidity Unit
Nephelometric Turbidity Unit - Turbidity is a measure of how clear the water looks. The turbidity MCL that applied to the Cedar supply in 2020 is 5 NTU, and for the Tolt supply it was 0.3 NTU for at least 95% of the samples in a month. 100% of Tolt samples in 2020 were below 0.3 NTU.

NA: Not applicable.

ND: Not detected.

ppm: 1 part per million = 1 mg/L = 1 milligram per liter.

ppb: 1 part per billion = 1 ug/L = 1 microgram per liter

1 ppm: = 1000 ppb.

Chester Morse Lake Masonry Pool; photo courtesy of Seattle Public Utilities

More About Water Quality

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, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. In Seattle's surface water supplies, the potential sources of contamination include:

- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses, bacteria, and protozoa from wildlife;
- Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which are naturally occurring; and
- Organic contaminants, which result from chlorine combining with the naturally occurring organic matter.

In order to ensure tap water is safe to drink, the Environmental Protection Agency and/or the Washington state board of health prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration and/or the Washington state department of agriculture regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.

We at North City Water District encourage public interest and participation in the decisions that affect our drinking water. If you would like to learn more about our water, have questions about its quality, or would like to know what you can do to help keep our water supply clean, safe and abundant, please don't hesitate to contact us at 206.362.8100.

You are also welcome to participate in our Board of Commissioners meetings, which take place every first and third Tuesday of each month at 3:00 pm. Until COVID restrictions are lifted, you can join these meetings by dialing into our conference call. The call-in number is listed on each meeting agenda; agendas are in the "Information" section of our website:
www.northcitywater.org/resources/meeting-schedule-agendas-and-minutes/

Additional organizations for information about your water include:

Seattle Public Utilities: 206.684.3000
www.seattle.gov/util/MyServices/Water/Water_Quality

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline: 800.426.4791
www.epa.gov/safewater

Washington State Department of Health (DOH): 800.521.0323
www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/