

Drinking Water FAQs

Is my water safe?

Yes; Water provided by Cobb County-Marietta Water Authority (CCMWA) meets or exceeds all EPA and EPD regulations. In addition to quarterly and annual sampling, CCMWA tests approximately 500 water samples a month from original water sources, CCMWA's water transmission system, and the wholesale customers' distribution systems on a monthly basis. Hourly samples are also gathered and tested at our water treatment plants, Wyckoff Plant and Quarles Plant. CCMWA is the wholesale water provider for 10 customers including: City of Smyrna, City of Austell, Marietta Water, Cobb County Water System, Cherokee County Water and Sewerage Authority, Douglasville/Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority, Paulding County, City of Mountain Park, and City of Woodstock.

Who regulates drinking water?

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) was originally passed by Congress in 1974 to protect public health by regulating the nation's public drinking water supply. The law was amended in 1986 and 1996 and requires many actions to protect drinking water and its sources. SDWA authorizes the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) to set national health-based standards for drinking water to protect against both naturally occurring and man-made contaminants that may be found in drinking water.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has granted primacy to Georgia to administer the provisions of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The Georgia EPD is a state agency charged with protecting Georgia's air, land, and water resources through the authority of state and federal environmental statutes.

The Georgia EPD water regulations generally follow the complete or revised national primary drinking water regulations under the SDWA (CGA 12-5-177), but they also have some additional requirements. For example, Georgia also requires that water wells and springs to be used as drinking water sources be approved and comply with state regulations. Operators of public water supply systems must be certified by the state.

What is a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)?

Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) are standards that are set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for drinking water quality. An MCL is the legal threshold limit on the amount of a contaminant that is allowed in public water systems under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA).

How is a Maximum Contaminant Level determined?

EPA has drinking water regulations for more than 90 contaminants. The Safe Drinking Water Act includes a process that EPA must follow to identify and list unregulated contaminants.

The Safe Drinking Water Act requires EPA to consider three criteria when making a determination to regulate:

- The contaminant may have an adverse effect on the health of persons
- The contaminant is known to occur or there is a high chance that the contaminant will occur in public water systems often enough and at levels of public health concern
- Regulation of the contaminant presents a meaningful opportunity for health risk reductions for persons served by public water systems

If EPA makes a decision to regulate a particular contaminant, the Agency starts the rulemaking process to establish the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations

If EPA decides not to regulate a contaminant, then the Agency may decide to develop a health advisory. A health advisory is a non-enforceable federal limit. It serves as technical guidance for federal, state, and local officials.

How often are these levels revised?

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requires EPA to review each national primary drinking water regulation (including maximum contaminant levels) at least once every six years and revise them, if appropriate. As part of the "Six-Year Review," EPA evaluates any newly available data, information and technologies to determine if any regulatory revisions are needed. Revisions must maintain or strengthen public health protection.

Where can I find the federal drinking water regulations?

Federal drinking water regulations are codified in Title 40 of the Code Federal Regulations (CFR).

- [CFR Part 141: National Primary Drinking Water Regulations](#). These set maximum levels for contaminants allowed in drinking water or treatment technique rules.
- [CFR Part 142: National Primary Drinking Water Regulations Implementation](#). These cover how the states, tribes and EPA carry out the Public Water System Supervision (PWSS) program.
- [CFR Part 143: National Secondary Drinking Water Regulations](#). These set recommended standards that relate to the acceptability of drinking water to consumers. These are not enforceable (except for the public notice required for exceedance of the fluoride secondary standard).

Where can I find information about what's in my drinking water?

Both the EPA and EPD require community water systems to deliver a Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), also known as an annual water quality report, to their customers. These reports provide Americans information about their local drinking water quality. To access Water Quality Reports for Marietta Water customers, go to the following link on our website: <https://www.mariettaga.gov/570/Water-Quality-Report>

How often is my water tested?

In addition to quarterly and annual sampling, CCMWA tests approximately 500 water samples a month from original water sources, CCMWA's water transmission system, and the wholesale customers' distribution systems on a monthly basis. Hourly samples are also gathered and tested at our water treatment plants, Wyckoff Plant and Quarles Plant.

Will I know if my water hasn't met an EPA requirement?

Yes, Water systems are required to include information regarding any contaminant detected in violation of an EPA health standard and potential health effects of the contaminant in the Consumer Confidence Report. There are three levels for contaminant violation. Level I violations require public communication within 24 hours. Level II violations require public communication within 30 days. Level III violations require public communication within a year.