

Frequently Asked Questions

What causes discolored water?

Rusting galvanized pipe in some plumbing is the usual cause of discolored water. If this is the case, the water clears after running a bit. Iron causes the discoloration.

How often is the water tested?

EWU tap water is tested every month for bacteria, and as directed by the Department of Health for copper and lead. Every building on campus is tested for bacteria at least twice a year. No tests in 2014 came back positive. Because we chlorinate, we test for disinfection by products. We tested four times in 2014 and all came back non-detectable. At this time all tests are up to date with Department of Health Regulations.

If you have any questions about your water or this report:

- Contact Jim Butler, Water System Manager at (509) 359-6561
- See this report on the web at <http://www.ewu.edu/x10034.xml>
- Call EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-4791



We encourage you to become informed and involved in water protection. Water system tours can be arranged by calling (509) 359-2245.



2014 Annual Drinking Water Report

Eastern Washington University is pleased to report that our water meets or exceeds all standards set for quality and safety.



We are committed to providing you with safe, high-quality water, and we want you to understand the efforts we make to continually protect our water resources.

This brochure is a summary of the quality of water provided in 2014. Included are analytical test results and information on how these results compare to federal safety standards.

Origin of Our Water

Eastern provides drinking water from two drilled wells under a permit from the Washington State Department of Health.

Our well water is from a groundwater aquifer about 500 feet below the surface of university grounds. The water is chlorinated and safe to drink. On January 31, 2011 a new well was brought on line to replace SO#1. In the Fall of 2015, a new well will come on line at Rozell.

The water is pumped through new plastic supply pipes to a 1.1 million gallon storage tank, which is cleaned and repaired on a regular basis. Water is distributed from the storage tank to university buildings.

To ensure your tap water remains safe to drink, there are 375 backflow assemblies installed to protect our water system. A Cross Connection Control Specialist and four Backflow Assembly Testers perform tests on all assemblies and repair/replace as required annually. A report is submitted to the Department of Health yearly.



Safe Drinking Water Act

The Safe Drinking Water Act, among other things, requires all public water systems to issue an annual report explaining what substances are in the water and in what amounts.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Washington State Department of Health set standards for the amounts of various contaminants that are acceptable for drinking water safety. Eastern Washington University tests frequently for the presence of these substances.



Substances in the Water

As water travels through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animal or human activity. It can be reasonably expected that all drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may contain at least small amounts of some substances.



Information on Detected Substances

*Substances listed below were detected above laboratory detection limits on the dates indicated.
All are below levels allowed by federal and state agencies.*

Substance	Lowest Amt Detected	Highest Amt Detected	Lab Detection Limit	MCL	MCLG	Likely Source of Substance
Nutrients						
Nitrate (ppm)	ND	.987 9/6/2013	0.05	10.0	10.0	Erosion of natural deposit Runoff from fertilizer
Metals						
Lead (ppb)	ND	.026 8/14/2004	2.00	15.0	0.0	Corrosion of plumbing systems Erosion of natural deposits
Other Minerals						
*Arsenic (ppb)	ND	ND 10/03/2013	0.05	10.0	10.0	Naturally occurring element in the earth's crust

** While your drinking water does contain low levels of arsenic, it currently meets EPA's revised water standard for arsenic. There is a small chance that some people who drink water containing low levels of arsenic over many years could develop circulatory disease, cancer, or other health problems. Most types of cancer and circulatory diseases are due to factors other than exposure to arsenic. EPA's standard balances the current understanding of arsenic.*

In 2014, there were 123 coliform (bacteriological) tests done throughout the campus and zero came back positive. Now that we chlorinate, daily chlorine readings are taken at random sites around campus to ensure we have at least a trace of chlorine in all buildings. After doing more lead and copper tests, we've gotten below the action level set by DOH. We will not have to do corrosion control at this time. We will be doing 30 more tests of different buildings this summer. Well 1R was tested in August 2014 for radium 228 and gross alpha, both were well below DOH action levels.



A source water protection plan that provides more information is available for review.

- ◆ **Non-Detected (ND)** - Laboratory analysis indicates that the substance is not present.
- ◆ **Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l)** - One part per million corresponds to one minute in two years; a single penny in \$10,000; or one half of an aspirin tablet (162.5) in a full bathtub of water (approximately 50 gallons).
- ◆ **Parts per billion (ppb)** - One part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years or a single penny in \$10 million.
- ◆ **Action Level (AL)** - The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, trigger treatment or other requirements for a water system.
- ◆ **Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)** - The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLG as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- ◆ **Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)** - The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health.

The annual public forum was held May 20, 2015 for the purpose of keeping the public informed about our water use efficiency and conservation practices; and to solicit public input on other ways to achieve our water conservation goals.

It is important to remember that the presence of these substances does not necessarily pose a health risk. Some people may be more vulnerable to substances in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons 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 microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline.

(800) 426-4791



In March of 2014, Well 1R was tested for volatile organic chemicals (VOC) and inorganic chemicals (IOC). All were non-detectable or below DOH action levels. In March 2014, Well 2 was deactivated. A new well will be drilled Summer 2015.