

Contaminant	Unit Measurement	MCL (AL) [MRDL]	PHG (MCLG) [MRDLG]	Typical Source of Contaminant	Health Effects Language
Inorganic Contaminants					
Aluminum	ppm	1	0.6	Erosion of natural deposits; residue from some surface water treatment processes	Some people who drink water containing aluminum in excess of the MCL over many years may experience short-term gastrointestinal tract effects.
Antimony	ppb	6	20	Discharge from petroleum refineries; fire retardants; ceramics; electronics; solder	Some people who drink water containing antimony in excess of the MCL over many years may experience increases in blood cholesterol and decreases in blood sugar.
Arsenic	ppb	10	0.004	Erosion of natural deposits; runoff from orchards; glass and electronics production wastes	Some people who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years may experience skin damage or circulatory system problems, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
Asbestos	MFL	7	7	Internal corrosion of asbestos cement water mains; erosion of natural deposits	Some people who drink water containing asbestos in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of developing benign intestinal polyps.
Barium	ppm	1	2	Discharge of oil drilling wastes and from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits	Some people who drink water containing barium in excess of the MCL over many years may experience an increase in blood pressure.
Beryllium	ppb	4	1	Discharge from metal refineries, coal-burning factories, and electrical, aerospace, and defense industries	Some people who drink water containing beryllium in excess of the MCL over many years may develop intestinal lesions.
Cadmium	ppb	5	0.04	Internal corrosion of galvanized pipes; erosion of natural deposits; discharge from electroplating and industrial chemical factories, and metal refineries; runoff from waste batteries and paints	Some people who drink water containing cadmium in excess of the MCL over many years may experience kidney damage.
Chromium	ppb	50	(100)	Discharge from steel and pulp mills and chrome plating; erosion of natural deposits	Some people who use water containing chromium in excess of the MCL over many years may experience allergic dermatitis.

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Copper	ppm	(AL=1.3)	0.3	Internal corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives	Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time may experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years may suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's Disease should consult their personal doctor.
Cyanide	ppb	150	150	Discharge from steel/metal, plastic and fertilizer factories	Some people who drink water containing cyanide in excess of the MCL over many years may experience nerve damage or thyroid problems.
Fluoride	ppm	2.0	1	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories	Some people who drink water containing fluoride in excess of the federal MCL of 4 mg/L over many years may get bone disease, including pain and tenderness of the bones. Children who drink water containing fluoride in excess of the state MCL of 2 mg/L may get mottled teeth.
Lead	ppb	(AL=15)	0.2	Internal corrosion of household water plumbing systems; discharges from industrial manufacturers; erosion of natural deposits	Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level may experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children may show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years may develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.
Mercury (inorganic)	ppb	2	1.2	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from refineries and factories; runoff from landfills and cropland	Some people who drink water containing mercury in excess of the MCL over many years may experience mental disturbances, or impaired physical coordination, speech and hearing.
Nickel	ppb	100	12	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from metal factories	Some people who drink water containing nickel in excess of the MCL over many years may experience liver and heart effects.
Nitrate (as nitrate, NO ₃)	ppm	45	45	Runoff and leaching from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks and sewage; erosion of natural deposits	Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL may quickly become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die because high nitrate levels can interfere with the capacity of the infant's blood to carry oxygen. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blueness of the skin. High nitrate levels may also affect the oxygen-carrying ability of the blood of pregnant women.

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Nitrite (as nitrogen, N)	ppm	1	1	Runoff and leaching from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks and sewage; erosion of natural deposits	Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrite in excess of the MCL may quickly become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blueness of the skin.
Perchlorate	ppb	6	6	Perchlorate is an inorganic chemical used in solid rocket propellant, fireworks, explosives, flares, matches, and a variety of industries. It usually gets into drinking water as a result of environmental contamination from historic aerospace or other industrial operations that used or use, store, or dispose of perchlorate and its salts.	Perchlorate has been shown to interfere with uptake of iodide by the thyroid gland, and to thereby reduce the production of thyroid hormones, leading to adverse affects associated with inadequate hormone levels. Thyroid hormones are needed for normal prenatal growth and development of the fetus, as well as for normal growth and development in the infant and child. In adults, thyroid hormones are needed for normal metabolism and mental function.
Selenium	ppb	50	30	Discharge from petroleum, glass, and metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits; discharge from mines and chemical manufacturers; runoff from livestock lots (feed additive)	Selenium is an essential nutrient. However, some people who drink water containing selenium in excess of the MCL over many years may experience hair or fingernail losses, numbness in fingers or toes, or circulation system problems.
Thallium	ppb	2	0.1	Leaching from ore-processing sites; discharge from electronics, glass, and drug factories	Some people who drink water containing thallium in excess of the MCL over many years may experience hair loss, changes in their blood, or kidney, intestinal, or liver problems.