2024 Annual Report of Drinking Water Quality

Coal Creek Connection

Your newsletter for water and sewer-related issues and information in Newcastle and surrounding areas... since 1959

Spring/Summer 2025

Visit the Cedar River Watershed Education Center

Nestled above the shores of Rattlesnake Lake in the Cascade foothills near North Bend, The Cedar River Watershed Education Center offers you and your family a uniquely enjoyable way to connect with the source of your drinking water. Learn about the area's natural and cultural history, enjoy the award-winning "Water is Magic" exhibits, test your skill at managing reservoir levels, and listen to the 'rain drums' create Native American, Afro-Cuban and Balinese rhythms. When you're finished exploring the Center, you could take the scenic 1-mile paved trail to Rattlesnake Lake Recreation Area: a sparkling turquoise oasis offering ample opportunities for hiking, swimming, and picnicking. For those who love to hike, a 2-mile trail leads to a stunning view at the top of Rattlesnake Ledge. The Center is open Thursday and Friday, 12 to 5 pm, and Saturdays 10 am to 5 pm, at 17905 Cedar Falls Road SE in North Bend, Washington.

Inside This Issue:

Coal Creek Connection: a publication by Coal Creek Utility District

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Annual Water Quality Report for 2024

This snapshot of last year's water quality reflects Coal Creek Utility District's ongoing record of maintaining state and federal guidelines that are significantly below EPA maximum levels.

All About Your Water

Who: Your drinking water is regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which 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.

CCUD field staff collect microbiology and water quality samples each month, and monitor the chlorine disinfectant residual each day from our reservoirs, and from 9 water sampling stands located throughout the distribution system. Seattle Public Utilities staff likewise analyze for microbes and contaminates at their water quality lab in Seattle.

What: 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 can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-(800) 426-4791.

When: Your water is monitored for quality 365 days a year.

Where: Your water comes from the Cedar River and the Tolt River—two large, protected, regional watersheds operated and maintained by Seattle Public Utilities.

How: Last year your drinking water was tested for over 200 compounds and additional contaminants. 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. Please note: asbestos monitoring is not required for our District because all the asbestos concrete pipe in our distribution system was replaced prior to 1999.

The Best News: Your water falls safely within state and federal guidelines for each and every contaminant, significantly below the EPA's levels.

People Who May Be More at Risk

Some people may be more vulnerable to drinking water contaminants than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons including those 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. Appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available by calling the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-(800) 426-4791.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

If you would like to learn more about your water, or have questions, call Carla Snyder, our Lead Water and Sewer Compliance Specialist at (425) 235-9200.

Table 1: Water Quality Testing Results - 2024

Types of Detected Compounds	Units	EPA's Allowed Limits (MCLG)	EPA's Allowed Limits (MCL)	Levels in the Cedar River Watershed Avg.	Levels in the Cedar River Watershed Range	Levels in the Tolt Watershed Avg.	Levels in the Tolt Watershed Range	Typical Sources
RAW WATER								
Total Organic Carbon	ppm	NA	TT	0.73	0.5 to 1.23	1.24	1.12 to 1.39	Naturally present in the environment
FINISHED WATER								
Turbidity	NTU	NA	TT	0.73	0.5 to 1.23	1.24	1.12 to 1.39	Soil runoff
Arsenic	ppb	0	10	0.4	0.3 to 0.6	0.23	0.2 to 0.3	Erosion of natural deposits
Barium	ppb	2000	2000	1.3	1.2 to 1.5	1.2	1.1 to 1.4	Erosion of natural deposits
Bromate	ppb	0	10	1.3	ND to 14	0.3	ND to 3.8	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
Fluoride	ppm	4	4	0.65	0.6 to 0.7	0.7	0.6 to 0.8	Water additive to promote strong teeth
Nitrate	ppm	10	10	ND	One Sample	0.08	One Sample	Erosion of natural deposits
Coliform, Total	%	0	5%	No detections in 2024				Naturally present in the environment
Total Trihalomethanes	ppb	NA	80	34	15.2 - 43.8	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection		
Haloacetic Acids (5)	ppb	NA	60	29	14.2 - 38.0	Byproduct of drinking water disinfection		
Chlorine	ppm	MRDLG =4	MRDL =4	Average: 1.04 Range: 0.21 to 1.71				Water additive used to control microbes

The Washington State Department of Health requires utilities to notify customers in the event of a minor monitoring violation. It was determined that Seattle Public Utilities experienced a minor monitoring violation for the Cedar Treatment Facility on June 21, 2024, when one part of the monitoring equipment failed to record a portion of data for one of the seven operating ultraviolet (UV) treatment units. Other data was available for that UV unit showing that UV treatment was still occurring, so there were no public health implications. Repairs were made, system programing improved, and operators were provided with additional training to help prevent this from happening in the future. If you have any questions about this event, please call Seattle Public Utilities at 206-615-0827.

Table 2: Lead and Copper Monitoring Results - 2024

Parameter and Units	Ideal Goal MCLG	Action Level [1]	Cedar River Watersheds 2024 Results [2]	Cedar River Watersheds # Homes Exceeding Action Level	Coal Creek Utility District 2024 Results	Coal Creek Utility District # Homes Exceeding Action Level	Typical Sources in Drinking Water
Lead, ppb	0	15	3.8	0 of 51	1.16	0 of 3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Copper, ppm	1.3	1.3	0.1	0 of 51	0.11	0 of 3	

[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.

Residential testing is done every 3 years; the next testing will occur in 2027

There is no detectable lead in Seattle Public Utility's (SPU) source water. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Where you live, when your plumbing was installed, and what type of plumbing you have all play a part in determining your potential exposure level.

While there are no known lead service lines in CCUD's water distribution system, individual homes and businesses may have other plumbing components that could corrode and introduce contaminants into the water. CCUD is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in homes and businesses. SPU treats the water to minimize the tendency for lead to enter the water through corrosion, and results show that they have been very successful at this.

The risk of lead contamination in water increases when water sits in pipes for longer than six hours. 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 present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. 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: 1-800-426-4791 or at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead. Finally, remember that drinking water is only a minor contributor to overall exposure to lead. Other sources, including paint, soil and food also contribute.

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
Turbidity is a measure of how clear the water looks. The turbidity MCL that applied to the Cedar supply in 2023 is 5 NTU, and for the Tolt supply it was 0.3 NTU for at least 95% of the samples in a month. In 2023, 100% of Tolt samples 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

umho = the unit of measurement for conductivity, aka micromhos, which is the reciprocal of the unit of resistance, the ohm

Table 3: Water Quality Aesthetics - 2024

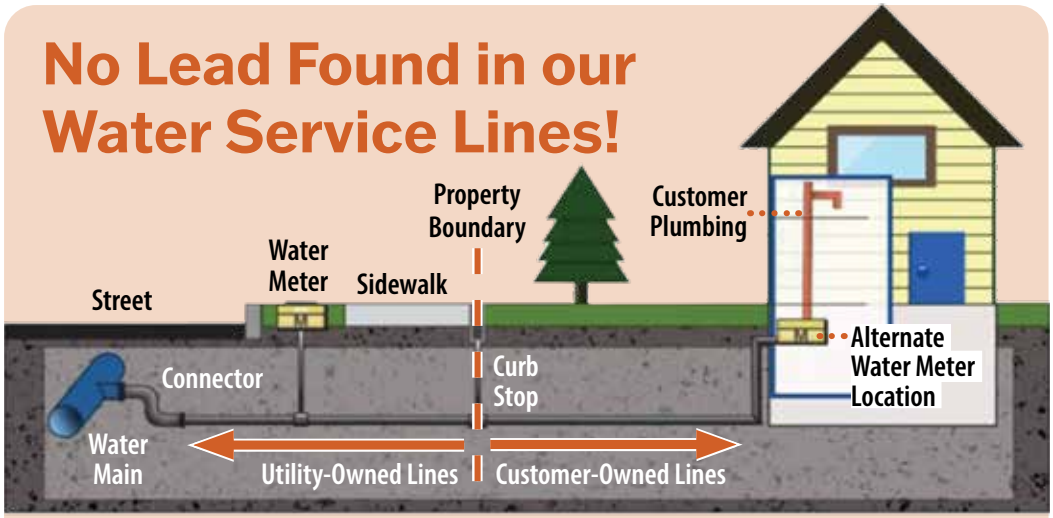
Parameter	Units	MCL	Cedar Distribution	Tolt Distribution
pH	pH Unit	6.5-8.5	8.23	8.79
Hardness, Grains	Grains/gallon		1.61	1.39
Alkalinity, Total	mg/L		26.8	20.3
Conductivity	umho/cm	700	73.2	59.9

Your water is not only monitored for various chemical compounds, it is also monitored for overall aesthetics, which can be impacted by algae.

Source water from the Cedar River, and to a lesser extent from the Tolt Reservoir, can experience naturally occurring, seasonal algae blooms. Typically these blooms occur in the late Spring, but due to a number of environmental factors including sunlight and temperature, blooms can occur at other, unexpected times of the year. For similar reasons, some blooms are more intense than others. Although the algae we see in our water supplies is not associated with health concerns, it can create tastes and odors. Thankfully these are well controlled with current UV and ozone treatments.

Since the Cedar River supply is unfiltered, customers who filter water at home may experience their filters clogging sooner than usual during an algal bloom. To help alleviate this, you can either install an inexpensive pre-filter that can be periodically removed and cleaned with a brush, or replace your existing filter with a new one.

No Lead Found in our Water Service Lines!



More than a year of meticulous research, documentation, and inspections confirmed what Coal Creek Utility District long believed: no lead pipes were found in our water system, including service lines on our customers' side of the meter.

In 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) requested all water utilities to perform a Lead Service Line Inventory by October 2024. Although much of CCUD's service area was constructed after regulations banned the installation of lead pipes, solder, and fittings, we still needed to investigate older service lines. We used our Geographical Information System (GIS) to compile a complete inventory of all services, investigated those with unknown materials, and submitted our report in October 2024. We welcome you to view the report on our website at:

www.ccud.org/about-your-service

PFAS and Lithium in 2024

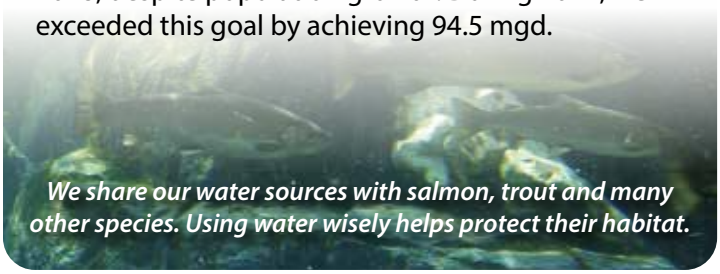
Your drinking water remains safe and protected from PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) and Lithium. This group of man-made chemicals has the potential to raise health concerns if detected in drinking water.

Seattle Public Utilities/SPU (our source of water) has tested and found no detections of PFAS in 2015, 2018, 2023. Coal Creek Utility District began testing at the point where SPU's source water enters our system in January, April, July, and October, 2024 as part of Unregulated Contaminate Monitoring Regulations fifth round (UCMR5) required monitoring, and found no detections for 29 PFAS compounds or Lithium.

Water Use Efficiency Report

In 2024, Coal Creek Utility District (CCUD) purchased 456 million gallons of water from Seattle Public Utilities (SPU). Of this amount, approximately 1.8 million gallons were lost to leakage, representing a loss rate of 0.4%, with a three year average of 3.2%. This low level of leakage is well below the Washington State standard of no more than 10% water loss.

The Saving Water Partnership (SWP)—of which Coal Creek Utility District and 18 other water utilities are members—has a ten-year conservation goal to keep each member's average annual retail water use under 110 million gallons per day (mgd) through 2028, despite population growth. During 2024, we exceeded this goal by achieving 94.5 mgd.



We share our water sources with salmon, trout and many other species. Using water wisely helps protect their habitat.

New Website

This April, CCUD launched our newly updated website featuring all sorts of customer-focused improvements, including quick access to bill pay, helpful resources, and more. Feel free to check it out and email us if you have suggestions, or spot something that needs an edit: **www.ccud.org**

About Your Water Quality

The sources of drinking water (both tap and bottled) 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 human activity. In Seattle's surface water supplies, potential contamination sources 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 can result from chlorine combining with the naturally occurring organic matter.

Washington's Source Water Assessment Program is conducted by the Department of Health (DOH) Office of Drinking Water. According to DOH, all surface waters in Washington are given a susceptibility rating of "high" regardless of whether contaminants have been detected or whether there are any sources of contaminants in the watershed. Information on the source water assessments is available from the DOH website at fortress.wa.gov/doh/swap

To ensure that 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 encourage you to learn more at any of the following:

Coal Creek Utility District: (425) 235-9200
www.ccud.org

Seattle Public Utilities: (206) 684-3000
www.seattle.gov/utilities/your-services/water/water-quality

Washington State Department of Health: (800) 521-0323
www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw

Environmental Protection Agency: (800) 426-4791
www.epa.gov/safewater

U.S. Food and Drug Administration: (888) 463-6332
www.www.fda.gov

Washington State Department of Agriculture: (360) 902-1800
www.agr.wa.gov

You're Invited

Coal Creek Utility District invites you to join our regular open Board meetings—either in person or via Zoom. These meetings are held at 2:00 pm on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, at our headquarters building (6801 132nd Place SE in Newcastle). If a regular meeting falls on a legal holiday, it will be held on the next business day at the same time. Agendas can be found on our website under the 'Agenda' tab at www.ccud.org

To attend by phone, call (253) 215-8782, using Meeting ID: 210 020 5821, and Passcode: 6801. Those attending by phone will be able to hear everyone who speaks.

Should you wish to make a comment during a meeting, please contact us in advance—before 10:00 am on the day of the meeting at the very latest—by email at: customerservice@ccud.org or by phone at (425) 235-9200.

An example of a backflow preventer

Does Your Home or Business Need Backflow Prevention?

If you have any of the following...

- ❑ Fire Sprinkler system
- ❑ Lawn irrigation system
- ❑ Swimming pool
- ❑ Hot tub / jacuzzi tub
- ❑ Livestock watering system
- ❑ Decorative fountain
- ❑ Hydraulic boat lift
- ❑ Water makeup lines (to supply a boiler or hydronic heating)

...OR if you are a business of (most) any kind;

...OR if you raise farm animals...

The State Department of Health requires you:

1. Have a "Backflow Prevention Assembly" installed on your water service;
2. Get it tested annually by a certified backflow assembly tester; and
3. Have your tester send a copy of the test record to Coal Creek Utility District.

Give us a call for more info: (425) 235-9200

Cedar River Watershed

About Your Water Source

Coal Creek Utility District purchases the water we provide from Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), which sources its water primarily from the publicly-owned Cedar River, and on rare occasions the Tolt River watersheds. Cedar River Water is pumped to the Lake Youngs Facility, where it undergoes a treatment process that includes both ozonation and ultraviolet light (UV) disinfection, which kills disease-causing bacteria, giardia and cryptosporidium. The UV process limits the amount of chemicals required for disinfection and is not known to produce any harmful by-products. Finally, the water is fluoridated to help prevent tooth decay, controlled with alkalinity for corrosion reduction, and chlorinated.

Unique Supply of Pure, Clean Water

Many cities source their drinking water from local rivers—the same rivers that are used for recreation, industry, and commerce. SPU's water is different. We capture our water as rain and melted snow in forested and protected mountain watersheds. As a result, we have one of the purest water supplies in the nation.

Two surface water sources provide all CCUD water: Lake Youngs, fed by the Cedar River from Chester Morse Lake, and the South Fork of the Tolt River. These two river systems begin in the Cascades and have large protected watersheds.

Since both watersheds are publicly owned, SPU is able to vigorously protect them through a comprehensive program that prohibits agricultural, industrial, and recreational activities in the watersheds, and no one is allowed to live within the watersheds. This means there is little opportunity for contaminants to enter the water. Even so, there is always some potential for natural sources of contamination, which is why your water is tested and treated so thoroughly.

The Tolt River