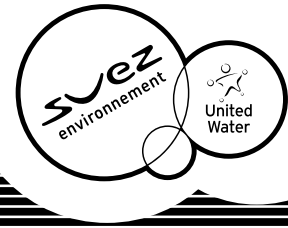


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**ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT**  
United Water New York/Blue Lake System  
PWSID NY3512132  
2008

**INTRODUCTION**

In order to comply with New York State regulations, United Water New York/Blue Lake System issues an annual report describing the quality of your drinking water. The purpose of this report is to raise your understanding and awareness of drinking water and the need to protect our drinking water sources.

This report provides an overview of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to State standards. If you have any questions about this report or concerns about your drinking water, please contact United Water's Customer Service Department at 877.426.8969.

**WHERE DOES OUR WATER COME FROM?**

In general, 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 activities. Contaminants that may be present in source water include: microbial contaminants; inorganic contaminants; pesticides and herbicides; organic chemical contaminants; and radioactive contaminants. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the State and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribe regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

Our water source is the Blue Lake Reservoir, a surface water impoundment. During 2008, water from this source met demand. An average of about 107,100 gallons of water per day was withdrawn from the reservoir. The difference can be attributed to treatment, water main breaks, flushing, and normal system losses. We treat the water by filtration to remove particulate matter, with activated carbon for taste and odor control, soda ash for corrosion control and chlorine to destroy microorganisms. The Blue Lake Reservoir System serves about 1,200 people through about 193 connections. The average residential customer uses approximately 3,000 cubic feet of water (22,440 gallons) per quarter, or approximately \$515 annually (including taxes). A typical dollar pays for system improvements, operations and maintenance, taxes, interest and debt, dividends and reinvestment and depreciation costs.

**SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

The NYSDOH has evaluated the Blue Lake system's susceptibility to contamination under the Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) and its findings are summarized in the paragraph below. It is important to stress that these assessments were created using available information and only estimate the potential for source water contamination. Elevated susceptibility ratings do not mean that source water contamination has or will occur for the Blue Lake System. United Water provides treatment and regular monitoring to ensure that the water delivered to consumers meets all applicable standards.

This assessment found an elevated level of susceptibility to contamination for this source of drinking water. Land cover and its associated activities within the assessment area may increase the potential for contamination. Unsanitary wastewater discharges may also contribute to potential contamination. There are no noteworthy contamination threats associated with other discrete contaminant sources.

A copy of the assessment, including a map of the assessment area, can be obtained by contacting United Water's Customer Service Department at 877.426.8969.

## ARE THERE CONTAMINANTS IN OUR DRINKING WATER?

As the State regulations require, we routinely test your drinking water for numerous contaminants. These contaminants include: total coliform, turbidity, inorganic compounds, nitrate, nitrite, lead and copper, volatile organic compounds, total trihalomethanes, and synthetic organic compounds. The table presented below lists the compounds that were detected in your drinking water. The State allows us to test for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Some of our data, though representative, are more than one year old.

It should be noted that all drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably 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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800.426.4791, the NYSDOH at 518.402.7713 or the Orange County Department of Health at 845.291.2331. In addition, you can also contact United Water. If you have specific questions about water as it relates to your personal health, we suggest that you contact your health care provider.

**Table of Detected Contaminants**

| Contaminant                                  | Violation Yes/No | Date of Sample     | Level Detected (Avg/Max) (Range)                    | Unit Measure | MCLG            | Regulatory Limit (MCL, TT or AL) | Likely Source of Contamination           |
|--|------------------|--------------------|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Microbiological Contaminants</b>          |                  |                    |   |              |                 |                                  |  |
| Turbidity <sup>1</sup>                       | No               | 11/4/08            | 0.66  | NTU          | NA              | TT=<1.0NTU                       | Soil runoff                              |
| Turbidity <sup>1</sup>                       | No               | 11/08              | 99. 9% of samples met limit                         | NTU          | NA              | TT=95% of samples <0.3 NTU       | Soil runoff                              |
| <b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>                |                  |                    |   |              |                 |                                  |  |
| Copper <sup>2</sup>                          | No               | 9/16/08<br>9/18/08 | Range = ND-0.02<br># samples above Action level = 0 | ppm          | 1.3             | AL = 1.3                         | Corrosion of household plumbing          |
| Lead <sup>3</sup>                            | <b>Yes</b>       | 9/16/08<br>9/18/08 | Range = ND-33<br># samples above Action level = 3   | ppb          | 0               | AL = 15                          | Corrosion of household plumbing          |
| Sodium <sup>4</sup>                          | No               | 4/14/08            | 30  | ppm          | See health note | NA                               | Naturally occurring                      |
| Sulfate                                      | No               | 5/19/08            | 7.1   | ppm          | NA              | 250                              | Naturally occurring                      |
| Barium                                       | No               | 5/19/08            | 0.007   | ppm          | 2               | 2                                | Naturally occurring                      |
| <b>Organic Contaminants</b>                  |                  |                    |   |              |                 |                                  |  |
| TTHM <sup>5</sup><br>(total trihalomethanes) | No               | Quarterly          | RAA = 54<br>(28-79)                                 | ppb          | NA              | 80                               | Byproduct of drinking water chlorination |
| HAA5 <sup>5</sup><br>(Haleocetic Acids)      | No               | Quarterly          | RAA = 28<br>(15-48)                                 | ppb          | NA              | 60                               | Byproduct of drinking water chlorination |

**Notes:**

- 1 - Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We test it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system. Our highest single turbidity measurement for the year occurred on 11/04/08 @ 0.66 NTU. State regulations require that turbidity must always be below 1 NTU. The regulations require that 95% of the turbidity samples collected each month have measurements below 0.3 NTU.
  - 2 - The Copper level presented represents the 90th percentile of the 10 sites tested. A percentile is a value on a scale of 100 that indicates the percent of a distribution that is equal to or below it. The 90th percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of the copper values detected at your water system. In this case, 10 samples were collected at your water system and the 90th percentile value was 0.02ppm, with the highest value being 0.02ppm. The action level for copper was not exceeded at any of the sites tested.
  - 3 - The Lead level presented represents the 90th percentile of the 10 sites tested. A percentile is a value on a scale of 100 that indicates the percent of a distribution that is equal to or below it. The 90th percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of the lead values detected at your water system. In this case, 10 samples were collected at your water system and the 90th percentile value was 21 ppb, with the highest value being 33 ppb. The action level for lead was exceeded at three of the sites tested.
- Public education was distributed in December 2008.
- 4 - Health Note for Sodium: Water containing more than 20 ppm of sodium should not be used for drinking water by people on diets that severely restrict sodium. Water containing more than 270 ppm of sodium should not be used for drinking by people on diets that moderately restrict sodium.
  - 5 - This level represents the annual quarterly average calculated from data collected.

**Definitions:**

*Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):* The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible.

*Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG):* 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.

*Action Level (AL):* The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

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

*Not Analyzed or Not Applicable (NA):* Analysis of the constituent is not required.

*Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU):* A measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

*Parts per million (ppm):* Corresponds to one part of liquid in one million parts of liquid.

*Parts per billion (ppb):* Corresponds to one part of liquid in one billion parts of liquid.

*Picocuries per liter (pCi/L):* Picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

< This means "less than."

*Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL):*

The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

*Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG):*

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 disinfectant to control microbial contamination.

*Running Annual Average (RAA):* THMS and HAA5 are reported by the annual average of the four quarterly samples for the year.

*ND:* Not detectable

**HEALTH EFFECTS***Lead*

United Water recently tested its Blue Lake water system for lead and copper and found an exceedance of the EPA standard for lead in three of ten homes tested. The heightened levels most likely occurred as a result of a reaction between the water and plumbing within these homes. Historic sampling indicates that the source of your water supply (Blue Lake) has no lead.

Although there is no emergency, as customers you have a right to know what has happened and what is being done to correct the situation. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the New York Department of Health and United Water are concerned about lead in your drinking water.

Although most homes, schools, and businesses have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes have lead levels above the EPA action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb), or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water (mg/l).

United Water is actively pursuing programs to minimize lead/copper in your drinking water that include:

1. A chemical enhancement system to control corrosion and prevent leaching of the lead/copper from plumbing fixtures. The corrosion inhibitor will ensure that lead/copper levels are reduced. We are actively pursuing approvals from both the State and County Health Departments in this matter.
2. Continuation of a public education program that keeps customers informed.

An additional requirement is replacing components of our plumbing system if they contribute lead concentrations of more than 15 ppb. However, there are no lead based service lines in the Blue Lake distribution system.

We are currently required to test for lead /copper semi annually (every six months) in order to ensure that levels are controlled.

A few easy steps can be followed (especially if the water will be consumed by young children or pregnant women:

1. When the water has not been used for a period of hours, flush the tap for 30-60 seconds before using it for drinking.
2. Don't use hot tap water for drinking or cooking.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women, infants, and young children. 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. United Water 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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1.800.426.4791) or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

#### *Trihalomethanes*

Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous systems, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

#### *Turbidity*

Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea and associated headaches.

### **WHAT DOES THIS INFORMATION MEAN?**

We have learned through our testing that some contaminants have been detected. United Water recently tested its Blue Lake water system for lead and copper and found an exceedance of the EPA standard for lead in two of ten homes tested. The heightened levels most likely occurred as a result of a reaction between the water and plumbing within these homes. Historic sampling indicates that the source of your water supply (Blue Lake) has no lead.

You may be interested in learning more about lead and drinking water. Infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general population. 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 you are concerned about elevated lead levels in your home's water, you may wish to have your water tested and flush your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using tap water. Additional information is available from the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800.426.4791.

### **IS OUR WATER SYSTEM MEETING OTHER RULES?**

In 2008, the system met all other regulations.

### **DO I NEED TO TAKE SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS?**

Some people may be more vulnerable to disease causing microorganisms or pathogens in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons, such as those with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, those who have undergone organ transplants, those with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly individuals, and infants can be particularly at risk for infections. These people should seek advice from their health care provider about their drinking water. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium, Giardia and other microbial pathogens are available from the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800.426.4791.

### **CONSERVATION MEASURES**

United Water encourages customers to use water wisely and exercise individual responsibility. You can help preserve a precious natural resource by taking simple actions around your home. Check faucets and toilets for leaks that can waste thousands of gallons of water a year. Use your dishwasher and washing machines only for full loads. Water your grass only when needed and plant a conservation garden to save water outdoors.