Your Water

This report is to inform the on-campus population about the safety and operation of the water facilities on the main campus of the University of Alaska Fairbanks. This is a snapshot of last year’s water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to EPA and state standards.

UAF has two primary drinking water wells and a third emergency well. The wells are drilled to depths of 70 to 90 feet. The primary wells are located in heated, secure buildings with concrete floors. The buildings and pads are excavated to prevent runoff from entering the wells. The wells are located on University property.

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Contaminant Sources

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 (800-426-4791).

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 activity. Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, may come from sewage treatment plants, farms, hospitals, hotels, and motels.

Source Water Assessment

The ADEC has compiled a Source Water Assessment of our source of public drinking water. This assessment has defined an area around our wells that is critical to the preservation of the quality of our drinking water. Within this area, they have identified potential and existing sources of contamination. Based on the information gathered, ADEC has determined the overall vulnerability of our wells to contamination. The results are available at the following locations: Rasmuson Library, UAF Power Plant, and the Fairbanks North Star Borough Library.

"I have little need to remind you that water has become one of our major national concerns." - Ezra Taft Benson, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, 1955

Japanese

この情報は重要です。読むことを強くお勧めします。

Korean

이 정보는 매우 중요합니다. 본인을 위해 번역을 사용하십시오.

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Check us out on the web!!
Www.uaf.edu/fs
Spanish
Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable. Tradúzcalo o escúchelo con alguien que lo entienda bien.
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septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife. Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming. Pesticides and herbicides may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential use. Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also, come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems. Radioactive contaminants can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

While your drinking water meets EPA’s standard for arsenic, it does contain low levels of arsenic. EPA’s standard balances the current understanding of arsenic’s possible health effects against the costs of removing arsenic from drinking water. EPA continues to research the health effects of low levels of arsenic, which is a mineral known to cause cancer in humans at high concentrations and is linked to other health effects such as skin damage and circulatory problems. Arsenic has been a major concern of the University Water Plant for many years. Naturally occurring Arsenic is very plentiful in the Fairbanks area. In 2005, the UA Water Plant was granted reduced monitoring status by the ADEC. Our next sampling event for arsenic is scheduled to take place in the 2009 calendar year. The result of the last sample collected at the water treatment plant was below detectable limits for the test method used by our laboratory. The lowest detectable limit for Arsenic is 2.5 ppb. This is significant due to the EPA’s lowering of the MCL for Arsenic in 2006 to 10 ppb. For comparison purposes, the UAF source water, before treatment, is 41 ppb.

Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)

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.

Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) are a byproduct of chlorination of water that contains naturally occurring organic matter. The ground water used by the University Water Plant has always had these organics, derived, most likely, from decaying plant materials and thus, TTHM’s have always been in the chlorinated water. An EPA survey discovered that trihalomethanes are present in virtually all chlorinated water supplies. In an effort to lower TTHM levels, EPA required large towns and cities to reduce TTHM levels in potable water. However, recent changes in national drinking water quality standards now require that all water treatment systems, regardless of size, reduce TTHM’s. For 2009, the University Water System was in compliance for TTHM’s two out of four quarters of the year. Although our final average for the calendar year was below the MCL established by ADEC, compliance with TTHM guidelines are calculated quarterly. The University Water Plant will continue to look for ways to reduce TTHM levels in the distribution system and satisfy all EPA and ADEC regulations regarding disinfection by-products. We are continually looking for alternative treatment technologies in order to achieve this reduction. It is our goal to fully comply with all current and future EPA rules regarding TTHM formation and reduction.

Radioactive Contaminants

Certain minerals are radioactive and may emit a form of radiation known as alpha radiation. Some people who drink water containing alpha emitters in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

The UAF Water Plant complied with the Radionuclide Rule during the ‘05 monitoring event. Future testing has yet to be determined.

Educational Statement for Lead Safety

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 Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791). The Division of Utilities performed in three year Lead and Copper testing in September 2007. The 90th percentile compliance samples were 1010 ppb for Copper and 3.98 ppb for Lead.

Nanook is a derivation of nanuq, the Inupiaq word for polar bear. UAF’s first team had been nicknamed the Polar Bears, but after 1963, the Polar Bears became known as the Nanooks, which has since applied to all UAF sports teams.