

# **Annual Drinking Water Quality Report Mercer, North Dakota 2012**

We're very pleased to provide you with this year's Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. We want to keep you informed about the excellent water and services we have delivered to you over the past year. Our goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. Our water source is ground water. Chlorine is added for disinfection.

The City of Mercer is participating in North Dakota's Wellhead Protection Program. Copies of the Wellhead Protection Program plan and other relevant information regarding this program can be obtained from the City Auditor during normal office hours. The North Dakota Department of Health has prepared a Source Water Assessment for Mercer. Information on this program is available at the Auditors office.

Our public water system, in cooperation with the North Dakota Department of Health, has completed the delineation and contaminant/land use inventory elements of the North Dakota Source Water Protection Program. Based on the information from these elements, The North Dakota Department of Health has determined that our source water is moderately susceptible to potential contaminants. No significant sources of contamination have been identified.

This report shows our water quality and what it means. If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact Edward Schuman at 701-447-2646. We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled meetings. They are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month in the Mercer City Hall, starting at 8:00 PM. If you are aware of non-English speaking individuals who need help with the appropriate language translation, please call Edward at the number listed above.

The City of Mercer would appreciate it if large volume water customers would please post copies of this Annual Drinking Water Quality Report in conspicuous locations or distribute them to tenants, residents, patients, students, and/or employees, so individuals who consume the water, but do not receive a water bill can learn about our water system.

The City of Mercer routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The following table shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012. As authorized and approved by EPA, the state has reduced monitoring requirements for certain contaminants to less often than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of our data, though representative, is more than one year old.

The sources of drinking water (both tap 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.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

*Microbial contaminants*, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.

*Inorganic contaminants*, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil production, mining or farming.

*Pesticides and herbicides*, which come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff and residential uses.

*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*, which 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, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

In the following table you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

*Not Applicable (NA)*

*Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l)* - one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.

*Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/l}$ )*- one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000.

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

*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 treatment technique is a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

*Maximum Contaminant Level* - The "Maximum Allowed" (MCL) is the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

*Maximum Contaminant Level Goal* - The "Goal" (MCLG) is 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.

*Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL)* – 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.

*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 disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

*IDSE* – Initial Distribution Systems Evaluations.

*Obsvns* – Observations/field at 100 Power.

<b>TEST RESULTS for MERCER</b>								
	<u>MCLG</u>	<u>MCL</u>	<u>Level Detected</u>	<u>Unit Measurement</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Date (year)</u>	<u>Violation Yes/No Other Info</u>	<u>Likely Source of Contamination</u>
<b>Lead/Copper</b>								
Copper	1.3	AL=1.3	0.454 90 <sup>th</sup> % Value	ppm	NA	2010	0 Sites exceeded AL	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
Lead	0	AL=15	2.86 90 <sup>th</sup> % Value	ppb	NA	2010	0 Sites exceeded AL	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>								
Nitrate-Nitrite (as Nitrogen)	10	10	0.03	ppm	NA	2012	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
<b>Radioactive Contaminants</b>								
Gross Alpha, Including RA, Excluding RN &U	15	15	NA	pCi/l	NA	2011	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Radium, Combined (226, 228)	NA	5	0.69	pCi/l	NA	2011	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Uranium, Combined	NA	30	6.84	ppb	NA	2011	No	Erosion of natural deposits
<b>Disinfectants</b>								
Chlorine	MRDL G =4	MRDL =4.0	0.8	ppm	0.0 to 1.1	2012	No	Water additive used to control microbes.

Violation: For the first quarter of 2012, January through March, and the third quarter of 2012, July through September, the City of Mercer failed to comply with the reporting requirements of the Disinfectants and Disinfection By-products Rule. This rule requires us to monitor monthly chlorine levels and report them to the State Health Department on a quarterly basis. Some people who use water containing chlorine well in excess of the MRDL could experience irritating effects to their eyes and nose. Some people who drink water containing chlorine well in excess of the MRDL could experience stomach discomfort. The City of Mercer is taking steps to correct this violation of the Disinfectants and Disinfection By-products Rule by returning to a normal reporting schedule.

EPA requires monitoring of over 80 drinking water contaminants. Those contaminants listed in the table above are the only contaminants detected in your drinking water.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The City of Mercer is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. **Use water from the cold tap for drinking and cooking. 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 drinking 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 or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

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 the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791]

**Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons, such as, persons 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. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).**

Please call Edward at 701-447-2646 if you have questions.