



Annual Drinking Water Quality Report



Gore Hill County Water District MT0000232

Annual Water Quality Report for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2025

This report is intended to provide you with important information about your drinking water and the efforts made by the water system to provide safe drinking water.

For more information regarding this report please contact Brian Blackford at 406-560-3142.

Public Participation Opportunities: Public Meetings 2nd & 4th Tuesday's at the pumphouse at 4503 62nd Ave SW Great Falls MT 59404 or www.gorehillcountywaterdistrict.com

Sources of Drinking Water

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.

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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

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 runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- Pesticides and herbicides, which may 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 byproducts 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, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the number of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

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 healthcare providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800426-4791).

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. We are responsible for providing high-quality drinking water, but we 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 are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Source Water Information for Gore Hill County Water District which is
classified as a *Ground Water* system

The source water assessment report for your water system provides additional information on your source water's susceptibility to contamination. To access this report please go to:

https://deq.mt.gov/water/Programs/dw-sourcewater

On the webpage scroll down and look under the subtitle “Montana Source Water Protection Viewer” and click the blue box with the same name. This will open the Montana Source Water Protection Viewer in a new tab on your internet browser. Once in there, click the grey box called “Source Water Reports” at the top. Gore Hill County Water District utilizes the listed water sources below:

Water Source Name	Water Source Type
WELL 4 GWIC 327801	Well
WELL 3 GWIC 327818	Well

Water Quality Test Results Definitions

Definitions: The following tables contain scientific terms and measures, some of which may require explanation.

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

Avg: Regulatory compliance with some MCLs is based on running an annual average of monthly samples.

Level 1 Assessment: A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system.

Level 2 Assessment: A Level 2 assessment is a very detailed study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why an E. coli MCL violation has occurred and/or why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system on multiple occasions.

Maximum Contaminant Level or MCL: The highest level of 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 or 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.

Maximum residual disinfectant level or MRDL: The highest level of disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that the addition of a disinfectant is necessary for the control of microbial contaminants.

Maximum residual disinfectant level goal or 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.

N/A: Not applicable.

ND: Not detectable at testing limit.

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU) – Measure of the clarity or cloudiness of water. Turbidity more than 5 NTU is just noticeable to the typical person.

Picocuries per liter (pCi/L) – Measure of the radioactivity in water.

ppb: micrograms per liter or parts per billion - or one ounce in 7,350,000 gallons of water. **ppm:** milligrams per liter or parts per million - or one ounce in 7,350 gallons of water.

Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level (SMCL): SMCLs are established as guidelines to assist public water systems in managing their drinking water for aesthetic considerations, such as taste, color, and odor. These contaminants are not considered to present a risk to human health at the SMCL.

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

The State of Montana DEQ requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year, or the system is not considered vulnerable to this type of contamination. Therefore, some of our data, though representative, may be more than one-year-old.

Lead and Copper								
Lead and Copper	Date Sampled	MCLG	Action Level (AL)	90th Percentile	# Sites Over AL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Copper	2025	1.3	1.3	0.708	0	ppm	N	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives; Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
Lead	2025	0	15	4	0	ppb	N	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.

Coliform Bacteria						
Maximum Contaminant Level Goal	Total Coliform Maximum Contaminant Level	Highest No of Positive	Fecal Coliform or E Coli Maximum Contaminant Level	Total No of Positive E Coli or Fecal Coliform Samples	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
0	1 positive monthly sample.	1		0	N	Naturally present in the environment.

Regulated Contaminants

Contaminant Group: Disinfectants and Disinfection By-Products

Regulated Contaminants	Collection Year	Highest Level Detected	Range of Levels	MCLG	MCL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Chlorine	2025	1.20	.08 - 1.6	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4	ppm	Y	Water additive used to control microbes.

The chlorine highest level detected reflects the highest running annual average calculated each month during the CCR year. The range is the min/max of the monthly average during the CCR year.

Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	2023	0	.39 - .39	No goal for the total	60	ppb	N	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)	2023	1	.73 - .73	No goal for the total	80	ppb	N	By-product of drinking water disinfection.

Contaminant Group: Inorganic Contaminants

Regulated Contaminants	Collection Year	Highest Level Detected	Range of Levels	MCLG	MCL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Arsenic	2025	8	2 - 8	0	10	ppb	N	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes.

While your drinking water meets EPA standards 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.

Fluoride	2025	2.50	2.1 - 2.5	4	4	ppm	N	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.
Nitrate [measured as Nitrogen]	2025	0.01	ND - .01	10	10	ppm	N	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits.

Contaminant Group: Radioactive Contaminants								
Regulated Contaminants	Collection Year	Highest Level Detected	Range of Levels	MCLG	MCL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Combined Radium 226/228	2024	5.50	4 - 5.5	0	5	pCi/L	Y	Erosion of natural deposits.
GROSS ALPHA, EXCL. RADON & Uranium	2024	12.10	6.4 - 12.1	0	15	pCi/L	N	Erosion of natural deposits.
Uranium	2024	0.50	ND - .5	0	30	ppb	N	Erosion of natural deposits.

Contaminant Group: Volatile Organic Contaminants								
Regulated Contaminants	Collection Year	Highest Level Detected	Range of Levels	MCLG	MCL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Toluene	2025	0.0005	ND - .0005	1	1	ppm	N	Discharge from petroleum factories.
Xylenes	2025	0.0009	ND - .0009	10	10	ppm	N	Discharge from petroleum factories; Discharge from chemical factories.

Violations			
Violation for E. coli			
<p>Fecal coliforms and E. coli are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Microbes in these wastes can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, and people with severely compromised immune systems.</p>			
Violation Type	Violation Period	Resolution Date	Violation Explanation

MONITOR GWR TRIGGERED/ADDITIONAL, MAJOR	07/15/2025 to 07/21/2025	07-24-2025	We failed to collect follow-up samples within 24 hours of learning of the total coliform-positive sample. These needed to be tested for fecal indicators from all sources that were being used at the time the positive sample was collected.
The violation was returned to compliance once the system collected the required triggered source water sample.			
Violation for Montana State Chlorine Rule			
Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.			
Violation Type	Violation Period	Resolution Date	Violation Explanation
MINIMUM DISINFECTANT LEVEL - STATE	07/01/2025 to 07/31/2025	10-09-2025	Our chlorine residual concentration dropped below the required minimum residual for a period of time past allowable residual in a violation.
The violation was returned to compliance once the system submitted one full month of data by 10th of the following month, and for said month, the system did not have any days with a chlorine residual below the mandatory level.			
MINIMUM DISINFECTANT LEVEL - STATE	08/01/2025 to 08/31/2025	10-09-2025	Our chlorine residual concentration dropped below the required minimum residual for a period of time past allowable residual in a violation.
The violation was returned to compliance once the system submitted one full month of data by 10th of the following month, and for said month, the system did not have any days with a chlorine residual below the mandatory level.			

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER

Elevated Fluoride Levels Detected at Gore Hill County Water District

This is an alert about your drinking water and a cosmetic dental problem that might affect children under nine years of age. At low levels, fluoride can help prevent cavities, but children drinking water more than 2 milligrams per liter (mg/L) of fluoride may develop cosmetic discoloration of their permanent teeth (dental fluorosis). The drinking water provided by your community water system has a fluoride concentration of 2.5 mg/L.

Dental fluorosis in its moderate or severe forms may result in a brown staining or pitting of the permanent teeth. This problem occurs only in developing teeth before they erupt from the gums. Children under nine should be provided with alternative sources of drinking water or water that has been treated to remove the fluoride to avoid the possibility of staining and pitting of their permanent teeth. You may also want to contact your dentist about proper use by young children of fluoride-containing products. Older children and adults can safely drink the water.

Drinking water containing more than the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) of 4 mg/L of fluoride can increase your risk of developing bone disease. Your drinking water does not contain more than 4 mg/L of

fluoride, but we're required to notify you when we discover that the fluoride levels in your drinking water exceeds 2 mg/L because of the potential cosmetic dental problems.

For more information, please contact **Brian Blackford, General Manager at 406-560-3142 or at 4503 62nd Ave SW Great Falls MT 59404.**

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.