

# STANDARDS AND FACTS DRINKING WATER



## Drinking Water Standards

The federal Safe Drinking Water Act regulates drinking water standards for all states. To ensure the standards are met, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets the maximum allowable amount of a contaminant in drinking water.

EPA calculates these standards based on a lifetime of exposure. A person would need to drink two liters of water that exceeds the standard every day for 70 years before having an increased chance of adverse health effects.

EPA establishes testing schedules and methods that water systems must follow to monitor for contaminants. All public water systems regularly test water for approximately 100 different substances to ensure drinking water standards are met.

EPA also has established National Secondary Drinking Water Regulations to assist public water systems in managing their drinking water for aesthetic considerations, such as taste, color and odor. These characteristics do not present a risk to human health.

## Drinking Water Regulation in Florida

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) implements the Safe Drinking Water Act in Florida and has adopted EPA regulations and rules.

DEP permits public water systems and works closely with Florida's drinking water operators to monitor water quality and ensure drinking water standards are met. The department's efforts are reflected in the very high compliance rates of water systems throughout Florida.

## Ensuring Compliance

To ensure compliance with federal and state drinking water laws and standards, DEP regularly reviews how and when drinking water systems test their water and the data from these tests.

Additionally, the department conducts site inspections of Florida's water systems to ensure that water-quality standards and permit requirements are being met. The department also conducts inspections in response to complaints or identified compliance concerns.

When compliance concerns arise, DEP works with the utility to perform a system analysis to identify operational improvements and corrective actions to bring the facility back into compliance with drinking water standards as quickly as possible.

Following a compliance issue, facilities are required to increase the frequency of their water testing. The department reviews the results to ensure the facility returns to compliance. DEP makes the water-quality test results available to the public.

### Information about Drinking Water Standards

**Safe Drinking Water Act:** <https://www.epa.gov/dwstandardsregulations/background-drinking-water-standards-safe-drinking-water-act-sdwa>

**Drinking Water Standards:** <https://www.epa.gov/dwregdev/how-epa-regulates-drinking-water-contaminants>

**Drinking Water Standards and Regulations:** <https://www.epa.gov/dwstandardsregulations>

**Table of Regulated Drinking Water Contaminants** (includes information about microorganisms, disinfectants and disinfection byproducts): <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/table-regulated-drinking-water-contaminants>

**Secondary Drinking Water Standards:** <https://www.epa.gov/dwstandardsregulations/secondary-drinking-water-standards-guidance-nuisance-chemicals#what-are-secondary>