



Annual Drinking Water Quality Report



City of Colstrip MT0000180

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 **Pat Zent at 406-748-2300**.

Public Participation Opportunities: If you want to learn more about our water, please attend any of our regularly scheduled meetings on the **second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm at City Hall located at 12 Cherry Street Colstrip Montana**.

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 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, 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 (800-426-4791).

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 City of Colstrip
which is classified as a *Surface 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.

City of Colstrip utilizes the listed water sources below:

Water Source Name	Water Source Type
INTAKE CASTLE ROCK LAKE	Source Water Intake

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	0.037	0	ppm	N	Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives; Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
Lead	2025	0	15	1	0	ppb	N	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.

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	.9 - 1.59	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4	ppm	N	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)	2025	37	20 - 31	No goal for the total	60	ppb	N	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)	2025	74	21 - 44	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	1	1 - 1	0	10	ppb	N	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes.
Fluoride	2025	0.40	.4 - .4	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	0.08	.08 - .08	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	2022	0.80	.8 - .8	0	5	pCi/L	N	Erosion of natural deposits.
Uranium	2022	0.90	.9 - .9	0	30	ppb	N	Erosion of natural deposits.

Total Organic Carbon

The percentage of Total Organic Carbon (TOC) removal was measured each month and the system met all TOC removal requirements set, unless a TOC violation is noted in the violations section.

Turbidity					
	Date	Limit (Treatment Technique)	Level Detected	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Highest single measurement (NTU)	2025	1.0 NTU	0.96 NTU	N	Soil runoff
Lowest monthly % meeting limit	2025	0.3 NTU	100%	N	Soil runoff

Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.

Treatment and Monitoring Did Not Meet Requirements

To ensure proper disinfection, water in the treatment plant must be in contact with enough chlorine or a similar disinfectant for a minimum amount of time. During a recent Inspection of the Colstrip Water Treatment Plant, it was discovered that disinfection calculations that have been historically utilized are not accurate and that the Colstrip Water Treatment Plant has not met minimum disinfection requirements consistently. Although chlorine quickly kills most bacteria, it is less effective against organisms such as viruses and parasites. For this reason, water needs to mix with chlorine for a longer time period to kill such organisms. The amount of time necessary, or the “contact time,” depends on the amount of disinfectant in the water and the temperature of the water.

It was also discovered during a recent inspection that disinfection monitoring is not meeting minimum requirements. We are required to continuously monitor the disinfectant concentration of all water entering the distribution system. Results of this monitoring are an indicator of whether our drinking water meets health standards. Our water treatment plant is unable to continuously monitor the disinfectant concentration of all water entering the distribution system.

What is being done.

The disinfection calculations utilized at the Colstrip Water Treatment Plant have been corrected and are being used to better optimize the system. Operators at the treatment plant have increased disinfection contact time to meet minimum disinfection requirements and better ensure safe water is being delivered to the system. The chlorine residual at the points of entry to the distribution system are now being monitored with a continuous analyzer and manually. The City of Colstrip has also engaged with KLJ Engineering to address these issues.