

2025 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

Wauchula Hills WTP

System ID Number 6254799

This report will be mailed to customers only upon request and is also available at **2428 Commerce Ct., Bowling Green, FL 33834** upon request. This report can also be viewed at the URL link located on your water bill or at the following address <https://www.hardeecountyfl.gov/departments-services/public-works/utilities/>.

We are 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 and always has been, to provide to you a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. Our water source has two 12" wells that draw water from the Floridian Aquifer. Before delivery to you, the water is scrubbed with force drafted air to improve taste and odor. It is then injected with sulfuric acid to further assist in sulfide removal. Near final treatment Orth polyphosphate is added to sequester the hardness forming compounds and to make the water less corrosive. Finally, the water is disinfected with chlorine to achieve free available residuals.

In 2025 the Department of Environmental Protection performed a Source Water Assessment on our system. A search of the data sources indicated that there are three unique potential sources of contamination near our wells, and all had a low susceptibility. The assessment results are available on the FDEP Source Water Assessment and Protection Program website at <https://prodapps.dep.state.fl.us/swapp/>.

If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, please contact, **Utilities Superintendent at 863-773-3465**. We encourage our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. Any customer can obtain additional information from EPA at their Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Wauchula Hills WTP routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws, rules, and regulations. Except where indicated, this report is based on the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2025. Data obtained before January 1, 2025, and presented in this report is from the most recent testing done in accordance with the laws, rules, and regulations.

In the tables below, you may find unfamiliar terms and abbreviations. To help you better understand these terms we have provided the following definitions:

Maximum Contaminant Level or MCL: 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 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.

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

Initial Distribution System Evaluation (IDSE): An important part of the Stage 2 Disinfection By-Products Rule (DBPR). The IDSE is a one-time study conducted by water systems to identify distribution system locations with high of trihalomethanes (THMs) and haloacetic acids (HAAs). Water systems will use results from the IDSE, in conjunction with their Stage 1 DBPR compliance monitoring data, to select compliance monitoring locations for the Stage 2 DBPR.

Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA): The average of sample analytical results for samples taken at a particular monitoring location during the previous four calendar quarters.

Maximum residual disinfectant level or 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 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.

Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{l}$): one part by weight of analyte to 1 billion parts by weight of the water sample.

Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l): one part by weight of analyte to 1 million parts by weight of the water sample.

Picocurie per liter (pCi/L): measure of the radioactivity in water.

ND' means not detected and indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

Table 1: Radioactive Contaminants

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mos./yrs.)	MCL Violation (Y/N)	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	08/21	N	7.0	N/A	0	15	Erosion of natural deposits.
Radium 226 + 228 or Combined radium (pCi/L)	08/24	N	2.4	ND – 2.4	0	5	Erosion of natural deposits.

Table 2: Inorganic Contaminants

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mos./yrs.)	MCL Violation (Y/N)	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Barium (ppm)	08/24	N	0.0875	N/A	2	2	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride (ppm)	08/24	N	0.298	N/A	4.0	4.0	Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories. Water additive which promotes strongteeth when at the optimum level of 0.7 ppm.
Lead (point of entry) (ppb)	08/24	N	0.176	N/A	0	15	Residue from man-made pollution such as auto emissions and paint; lead pipe, casing, and solder
Nickel (ppb)	08/24	N	0.312	N/A	N/A	100	Pollution from mining and refining operations. Natural occurrence in soil.
Sodium (ppm)	08/24	N	12.2	N/A	N/A	160	Saltwater intrusion, leaching from soil.

Table 3: Lead and Copper

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mos./yrs.)	AL Exceeded (Y/N)	90th Percentile Result	No. of sampling sites exceeding the AL	Range of Tap Sample Results	MCLG	AL (Action Level)	Likely Source of Contamination
Copper (tap water) (ppm)	08/23	N	0.135	0	0.00107 – 0.267	1.3	1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives.
Lead (tap water) (ppb)	08/23	N	0.371	0	ND – 1.48	0	15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.

Table 4: Stage 1 and 2 Disinfectants and Disinfection By-Products

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mos./yrs.)	MCL Violation (Y/N)	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Chlorine (ppm)	2025 Monthly	N	1.80	0.93 – 2.66	MRDGL=4	MRDL=4	Water additive used to control microbes.
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	08/25 (annually)	N	33 (highest at Site 1)	52 – 57	N/A	MCL=60	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) (ppb)	08/25 (annually)	N	53 (highest at Site 2)	68 – 78	N/A	MCL=80	By-product of drinking water disinfection

- During 2025 our system had only annual results and all these results were below the MCL, we reported the highest result as the level detected.
06/30/26

Table 5: Secondary Contaminants

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mo/yr)	MCL Violation Y/N	Highest Result	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Total Dissolved Solids (ppm)	08/24	Y	596	N/A	N/A	500	Natural occurrence from soil leaching

- TDS can occur from water moving through soil and rock can dissolve naturally occurring minerals like calcium, magnesium, sodium, and potassium. We have cleaned the pack tower and clear well which is a normal part of the treatment process to help ensure better results of TDS removal.

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and in home plumbing. Wauchula Hills WTP is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formula, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. If you have a lead service line or galvanized requiring replacement service line, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact Wauchula Hills WTP main office at 2428 Commerce Court, Bowling Green FL 33847. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Lead Service line inventory was submitted to FDEP in 2024. No lead service lines found in submitted survey.

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.

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.

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations, which limit the amounts 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.

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 at 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. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency/Center for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water

Hotline (800-426-4791).

In our continuing efforts to maintain a safe and dependable water supply, it may be necessary to make improvements in your water system. The costs of these improvements may be reflected in the rate structure. Thank you for understanding and for allowing us to continue providing your family with clean, quality water this year.

We at Hardee County Utilities are committed to ensuring the quality of your water and work around the clock to provide top quality water to every tap. We would like you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community, our way of life and our children's future.

If you have any questions or concerns about the information provided, please feel free to call any of the numbers listed.