

Your water quality

Drinking water quality standards explained

2008/09

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How good is the quality of my water?

We can provide you with a drinking water quality report for your area which gives information on the type of water supplied and the results of tests carried out on samples from our customers' taps throughout the year.

You can request the information by:-

- Visiting yorkshirewater.com and typing in your postcode on the home page
- Calling our contact centre on 0845 1 24 24 24
- Writing to us at Yorkshire Water, PO Box 52, Bradford, BD3 7YD

How can I contact you?

Our contact centre is open 8am-8pm Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm Saturday

We're open 24 hours a day for emergency calls

Call us	
All enquiries	0845 1 24 24 24
Request other information or leaflets	0845 1 24 24 24
Bogus caller checks on Identity cards	0800 1 38 78 78
Leakage	0800 57 35 53

Additional services:	
Asian language	0845 1 24 24 21
Text telephone/minicom	0845 1 24 24 23
24 hour automated services	0845 1 24 24 23

Fax 01274 372 800

Visit our website yorkshirewater.com

Or write to us
 Yorkshire Water
 PO Box 52
 Bradford BD3 7YD

yorkshirewater.com

Yorkshire Water Services Limited
 Western House Halifax Road Bradford BD6 2SZ
 Registered in England and Wales No.2366682

The standard is the amount allowed in the water: 1 µg/l = 1 part per billion; 1 mg/l = 1 part per million

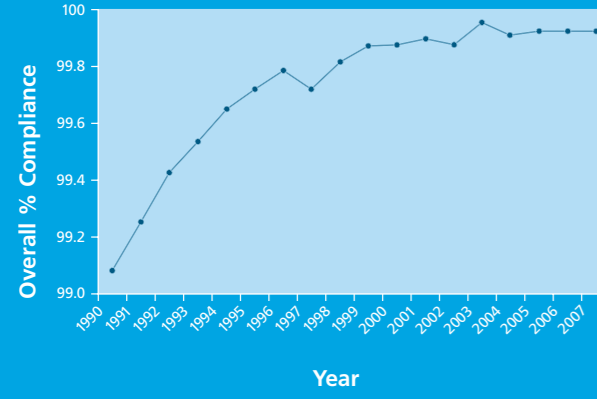
Parameter	Standard	What it means	% of our samples meeting standard in 2007
Gross Alpha Gross Beta	0.1 Bq/l 1.0 Bq/l	Occur rarely at low levels, derived from some rock strata	100 100
Pesticides	0.1 µg/l individually 0.5 µg/l total	Associated with the use of these substances by agriculture, industry, railways, local and highway authorities. For most individual pesticides the standard is 0.1 µg/l apart from a few for which it is 0.03 µg/l. The standards are set well below the levels that might cause health problems, but levels should be minimised by good practice and appropriate controls, as well as by advanced treatment processes where necessary. We measure a wide range of substances that might be present. (Additional information available on request).	100 100
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons Benzo 3, 4-pyrene	0.1 µg/l	Associated with the deterioration of old coal-tar pipe linings which are no longer used and which are removed when identified as causing a problem. The standards are set well below the levels of significance to health.	100
Conductivity	2500 µS/cm	A measure of the total content of dissolved salts, generally naturally present, in the water. Levels above the standard could give rise to taste and contribute to corrosion.	100
Chloride	250 mg/l	Occurs naturally in most water sources. Levels above the standard could give rise to taste and contribute to corrosion.	100
Bromate	10 µg/l	Potentially present when hypochlorite or ozone are used in water treatment. This is minimised by chemical specification and carefully controlled treatment conditions.	100
Total Hardness	No specific standard	Measure of the hardness of water. The higher the hardness, the more soap is required to form a lather. High hardness waters are typically from chalk and limestone; low hardness (soft) waters from moorland.	-
Tetrachloromethane (Trichloroethene +) (Tetrachloroethene)	3 µg/l 10 µg/l	Levels above the standards indicate the presence of solvents.	100 100
Benzene 1, 2 Dichloroethane	1 µg/l 3 µg/l	Levels above the standards indicate the presence of solvents.	100 100
Trihalomethanes	100 µg/l	Formed when chlorine added to disinfect the water reacts with naturally occurring organic substances.	100
Chlorine free Chlorine total	No specific standard	Sufficient chlorine is added to all our supplies to ensure the absence of harmful bacteria. At the same time we aim to keep levels at customers' taps low to minimise associated taste and odour.	- -
Coliforms total	0 per 100 ml	These are general and very sensitive indicators of bacteria in the environment and are removed by treatment. The presence of these general bacteria doesn't indicate any direct risk to health but nevertheless any detections are investigated as a matter of urgency.	99.75
Clostridium perfringens	0 per 100 ml	Coliforms in samples taken from taps can be due to contamination of the tap. We recommend that taps used for food and drinks preparation are cleaned regularly, including the inside of the spout (additional information available on request).	99.98
Colonies 22°C Colonies 37°C	No specific standard	General measures of classes of naturally occurring bacteria, not indicative of any health hazard. Any unusually high levels are investigated.	- -
E.coli	0 per 100 ml	These are bacteria that are likely to originate in the digestive systems of warm blooded animals. Their presence in treated water may indicate contamination by faecal matter and therefore a higher risk that pathogens may be present. Any detections are investigated as a matter of urgency. (Additional information available on request).	99.99
Enterococci	0 per 100 ml		100
Cryptosporidium	100 per 1000 litre	Cryptosporidium is a tiny micro-organism that can sometimes cause a form of diarrhoea called cryptosporidiosis. There are a number of sources of cryptosporidium other than water. Regulations require water companies to install continuous sampling for cryptosporidium at treatment works where there is considered to be a significant risk of the organism being present in treated water. In 2007, 2647 samples for cryptosporidium were taken at 9 sites and the standard was met in all cases. From 1 January 2008 there is no longer a numeric standard for Cryptosporidium. Any positive detections are investigated and reported to the Drinking Water Inspectorate.	

Drinking water quality standards explained

The drinking water we supply is of excellent quality. Figures published by the Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) show that 99.95% of samples taken from customers' taps in 2007, complied with the standards.

Water Quality Compliance

The graph below shows overall compliance with standards for samples taken at water treatment works, service reservoirs and customers' taps, from 1990 to 2007.



This leaflet explains the background to water quality standards, what they mean, and our current compliance with them.

Where do Yorkshire Water's supplies come from?

We take water from a variety of sources and move supplies to where they are needed through our grid system. About ½ the water we supply comes from moorland reservoirs, ¼ from rivers, and ¼ from underground boreholes and spring sources.

How is my drinking water quality controlled?

The quality of drinking water in Britain is controlled by some of the tightest regulations in the world, with standards set by the European Commission for over 50 different substances. The UK government has implemented additional and, in some cases, more stringent standards (with very large safety margins), to further protect public health. Some standards are concerned with aspects not related to health, such as the taste and appearance of water.

The Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) independently monitors our operations and advises the government on our performance in all aspects of drinking water quality. Their website is www.dwi.gov.uk

How is drinking water tested?

Using on-line technology we continuously monitor water from each of our water treatment works for key parameters, taking regular samples to ensure that the water meets the standards. Regular samples are also taken from service reservoirs, where treated water is stored, and from customers' taps. Using advanced laboratory techniques, almost 450,000 tests were carried out in 2007 together with many more operational checks.

What are you doing to further improve my water quality?

During 2007, we continued to renovate our distribution network to reduce the risk of discoloured water and to reduce leakage, bringing further improvements and benefits to customers.

Looking after water in your home

The water industry has produced a simple guide of household tips to help you enjoy the quality of tap water once it reaches your home and to answer questions relating to water and hygiene issues in the home.

A copy of this guide is available to download from our website www.yorkshirewater.com or alternatively can be accessed from CC Water's website www.ccwater.org.uk



Water Quality Parameters

The standard is the amount allowed in the water: 1 µg/l = 1 part per billion; 1 mg/l = 1 part per million

Parameter	Standard	What it means	% of our samples meeting standard in 2007
Colour	20 mg/l Pt/Co scale (Hazen Units)	Filtered colour (excludes suspensions) is caused by natural organic matter in water running off moorland into reservoirs and rivers. The standard is set for aesthetic reasons and requires the water to be virtually colourless.	100
Turbidity	4.0 NTU	Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. Sometimes tiny air bubbles can make water look milky, but the water clears if left to stand for a few minutes. A standard of 1.0 NTU is applied to samples taken at water treatment works outlets.	99.93
Taste Odour	Dilution Number 3 (@ 25°C)	The water is examined by tasting panels for any taste or smell. A slight taste or odour of chlorine may be present. Customers may notice if it is unusually strong.	100 100
pH (Hydrogen ion)	6.5 to 10 pH units	A measure of acidity or alkalinity. Water supplies in our area are usually slightly alkaline which helps to prevent corrosion of pipes and fittings.	100
Sulphate	250 mg/l	May be dissolved as water passes through rocks. An excess can contribute to corrosion.	100
Sodium	200 mg/l	May be naturally present or introduced by some water softening processes (not used by Yorkshire Water). The standard is set well below the level that could affect health.	100
Nitrate	50 mg/l	Nitrate arises from the use of fertilisers in agriculture and may be minimised by good practices and appropriate controls. (Additional information available on request). We also achieved 99.7% compliance with the combined nitrate / nitrite standard based on the formula: (NO3 / 50 + NO2 / 3) < 1.0 mg/l.	99.7
Nitrite	0.5 mg/l	Nitrite is usually present due to the use of chloramine in water disinfection. Chloramine remains in water longer than chlorine and assists in reducing microbiological activity. A standard of 0.1 mg/l is applied to samples taken at water treatment works outlets.	99.7
Ammonium	0.5 mg/l	May be naturally present in some water sources and is not harmful.	100
Total Organic Carbon	No specific standard	Measures of the general organic content of the water, and not indicative of any health hazard.	-
Aluminium Iron	200 µg/l 200 µg/l	Occur naturally in many water sources. They are also used at some treatment plants to remove impurities, but are themselves removed in the process. Iron may also be associated with the corrosion of unlined iron water mains. The standards are set for aesthetic reasons as levels persistently above the standards can give rise to discolouration of supplies. (Additional information available on request)	99.95 99.58
Manganese	50 µg/l	Occurs naturally in many water sources. The standard is set for aesthetic reasons as levels persistently above the standard can give rise to discolouration of supplies. (Additional information available on request).	99.95
Copper	2 mg/l	Any significant amount of copper is likely to come from customers' pipes or fittings. Excess amounts can occasionally cause a metallic taste and/or a blue tint to the water.	100
Fluoride	1.5 mg/l	Occurs naturally at low levels in many sources. The standard is set to ensure no adverse health effects. None of Yorkshire Water's supplies are artificially fluoridated. (Additional information available on request).	100
Antimony Arsenic Boron Cadmium Chromium Cyanide Mercury Nickel Selenium	5 µg/l 10 µg/l 1 mg/l 5 µg/l 50 µg/l 50 µg/l 1 µg/l 20 µg/l 10 µg/l	Very low levels of these substances may occur naturally. The standards are set with a large margin of safety for health reasons.	100 100 100 100 100 100 100 99.71 100
Lead	25 µg/l	Very little is present in the water supply. Higher amounts are associated with lead supply pipes between our mains and the property or with the excessive use of lead solders in copper pipes; these solders must no longer be used for domestic plumbing. The standard for lead has reduced to 25 µg/l from December 2003 and will reduce further to 10 µg/l from December 2013. (Additional information available on request).	99.62