



What's in your water?

Sodium levels for each of Tucson Water's Water Quality Zones are published each month in *Your Water Connection*, the newsletter included in Tucson Water customers' water bills. You can also find up-to-date information on sodium on Tucson Water's website at www.tucsonaz.gov/water.

To stay up-to-date on water quality issues and to learn more about your water, subscribe to the *EMPACT-Water Info Now* Newsletter. It's free! Get on the mailing list by calling 791-5080, Ext. 1372 or email Dan.Quintanar@tucsonaz.gov.

Sodium and Fluoride

Na
F



Sodium

Sodium (Salt) in your Drinking Water

Sodium is a naturally occurring mineral that is found in varying amounts in drinking water around Tucson at averages of about 40 milligrams per liter (mg/L). While sodium is not regulated in drinking water, it may be a concern with persons on a low or restricted sodium diet. Less than 1 percent of your daily salt intake comes from drinking water. Food usually is the most significant source of sodium in a person's diet. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends a daily sodium intake of no more than 2400 milligrams. Low sodium diets are typically between 1000 to 2000 milligrams per day. Persons on severely restricted sodium diets may want to consult their health professional regarding sodium levels in water.

Fluoride

Fluoride

Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral (or element) found in Tucson's drinking water. In our drinking water, naturally occurring fluoride is found at levels between 0.1 to 2.0 milligrams per liter (mg/L) in the distribution systems that are owned and managed by Tucson Water. The average value of fluoride in the drinking water is 0.5 mg/L. The optimum fluoride level for drinking water is 0.8 mg/L. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) has set a maximum drinking water standard for fluoride of 4 mg/L. USEPA has also set a secondary fluoride standard of 2 mg/L to protect against dental fluorosis or tooth staining or pitting in developing teeth of children under 9 years old. At low levels, fluoride can provide protection against tooth decay by increasing the durability of tooth enamel. Tucson Water adheres to the secondary standard of 2 mg/L as the highest acceptable level of fluoride in our drinking water.

Water fluoridation has increased in the state of Arizona. In 1990 the cities of Phoenix and Glendale began water fluoridation, joining Tempe, Bisbee and Chandler. The fluoride issue has been studied off and on over the years by Tucson Water, but the varied nature of our water supplies does not make it practical to fluoridate.

One milligram per liter is the same as one part per million. To give you an idea of how small an amount this is, it's the same as 1 teaspoon in 1,320 gallons.

One microgram per liter is the same as one part per billion, and is the equivalent of one teaspoon in 1.3 million gallons.

What is a primary drinking water standard?

A primary drinking water standard is the maximum level of a chemical or microbe legally allowed to be present in your drinking water. As part of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) sets primary standards for approximately 90 contaminants in drinking water.

For each of these, USEPA sets a legal limit called a maximum contaminant level (MCL) for drinking water. Tucson Water must, by law, provide drinking water that meets the primary standards and is safe to drink.

What is a secondary drinking water standard?

Secondary standards relate to the taste, odor, or appearance of drinking water. USEPA sets non-enforceable guidelines that address aesthetic characteristics and cosmetic effects. Public water utilities and states are not legally required to meet these secondary standards, but Tucson Water works to comply with them.

For more information about water standards visit the EPA website at www.epa.gov or Tucson Water's website at www.tucsonaz.gov/water.

What essential product that you rely on every day is tested for purity an average of every 60 seconds, 24 hours a day?

Your drinking water!