

City of Franklin

Water Quality Report – 2007

What is the water quality of my drinking water?

With this study, we are pleased to report that Franklin's drinking water meets federal and state requirements. The Franklin Water Department, like all other public drinking water systems in the state, submit to an ongoing rigorous testing program. All sampling is performed monthly and tested by the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Laboratory.

What is the source of my water?

Franklin obtains its' water from three different groundwater well fields. Each of these well fields consists of gravel packed wells and a pumping station, which in turn pumps water to a total of five water storage tanks throughout the City. This system serves approximately 2,292 customers and supplies water to 280 fire hydrants.

Why are contaminants in water?

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of 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 Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

What you should know about 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. 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 storm water 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 storm water 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 storm water 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 which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

How can I get involved?

If you have questions about your water system or would like to know about dates and times of public meetings pertaining to such, you may contact Brian Sullivan, Director of Franklin Municipal Services Department, Monday through Friday except holidays 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Other information

The Department performed the required lead and copper sampling for 2006. The results of these samples were below the action levels of lead and copper.

Radon is a radioactive gas that you cannot see, taste or smell. It can move up through the ground and into a home through cracks and holes in the foundation. Radon can also get into indoor air when released from tap water from showering, washing dishes and other household activities. It is known to be a human carcinogen. Breathing radon can lead to lung cancer. Drinking water containing radon may cause an increased risk of stomach cancer. Presently, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA or EPA) is reviewing a standard for radon in water.

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services has prepared a "Source Assessment Report" for the sources serving this community's water system, assessing the sources' vulnerability to contamination. The results of the assessment, prepared on June 4, 1999 are as follows: GPW#1 received 1 high, 2 medium and 9 low susceptibility ratings; GPW#2 received 2 high, 2 medium and 8 low susceptibility ratings; GPW#3 received 2 high, 3 medium and 7 low susceptibility ratings and GPW#4 received 4 high, 2 medium and 6 low susceptibility ratings. The complete Assessment Report is available for inspection at the Municipal Services Department Office, 43 West Bow Street, Franklin, NH. Call 934-4103 to request a review or visit New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services "Drinking Water Source Assessments Program" website at www.des.state.nh.us/dwspp.

How can we protect our drinking water supply?

It is every person's responsibility to dispose of chemicals and other contaminants properly. The City sponsors an annual Household Hazardous Waste Day on the last Saturday of each July. Small amounts of petroleum, pesticides, cleaning chemicals and the like can cause long-term damage to a water supply and result in costly cleanup. Never dump contaminants into the ground, in storm drains or other water bodies. To obtain more information about the water system or to report suspicious and/or potential illegal activity, contact the Franklin Municipal Services Department at 934-4103.

Do I need to take special precautions?

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised 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. 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 (1-800-426-4791).

Why is my water sometimes brown or rust colored?

Iron and Manganese, which are secondary contaminants, are characteristic to the aquifers in much of the Northeast. Unlike primary contaminants, which pose a health risk, secondary contaminants mostly affect the aesthetic quality of the water. Therefore, the City continues to treat the water with hexametaphosphate in an effort to reduce the staining these contaminants leave on plumbing fixtures and clothing. The City also makes available, at no cost, a product that will remove most stains from fixtures and clothing. This product is available for pick up at the Municipal Services Department Office at 43 West Bow Street.

The only way to resolve the iron/manganese problem is to construct water treatment and filtration plants at two city well sites. On site treatment systems would provide the user with cleaner water, less need to flush hydrants, less complaints, cleaner fixtures and appliances and less wear and tear on heating systems. This option would greatly reduce the water discoloration but will be very expensive.

Recent Department Accomplishments

Over the past twelve months, we continue to make system-wide improvements. The following are some of the more notable projects:

- We continue to work on projects identified in the Water System Study and Capital Improvements program.
- The City received a \$15,000 Source Water Protection Grant from NHDES for Security System Upgrades at its water pumping stations. This project has been completed.
- The City received a \$15,000 Source Water Protection Grant and a \$4,500 Water Security Installation Grant from NHDES for Security Fencing at the Acme Well Field. This project is underway.
- Hydrant flushing continues to be performed in the fall and spring. The Department has implemented a new program of “Directional Flushing”, which has proven to be far more effective a process.
- We continue to perform well rehabilitation to the fifty well points at the Sanbornton Well Field.
- In the fall of 2006, two of five water tanks were cleaned and inspected.
- A Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA) has been installed. This system replaces the old telephone line telemetering system which monitors water tanks and pumping stations. The entire water system is now monitored by radio frequency, thus, saving \$8,500 per year in phone line rental costs.
- We continue with our Water Meter Replacement Program. Over the past three years, a total of 1,204 new meters have been installed.
- Five Department employees maintain their State of NH Certification to operate a public water system.
- In the spring of 2006, the Department awarded an \$186,000 contract for “Electrical System Upgrades and Back-up Emergency Power” for the Sanbornton Pumping Station. This project has been completed.
- The replacement of 1,200 feet of new 12” water main in Webster Lake Road, between North Main Street and Kidder Avenue has been completed.
- The installation of 800 feet of new 8” water main in Kidder Avenue has been completed.

About your Water Rates:

Effective July 1, 2006, the Water Commodity Charge increased 3.5% from \$3.08 to \$3.19 per 100 cubic feet of water consumed. One hundred cubic feet of water equals 748 gallons. You are billed for whatever usage is on the water meter, plus an availability charge of \$20.00 per quarter.

In 2006, the City Water Department pumped 178,065,200 gallons of water to 2,292 customers. The system also provides the City with fire protection. The total water budget for fiscal year 2006/07 is \$1,187,137. Water customers bear the total cost for operation and maintenance of the system and any planned capital improvements. Like other utilities, the Franklin Water Department operates solely on the revenue from its 2,292 customers. Property taxes are not used to operate or improve the city's water system.

Water is a valuable but relatively inexpensive commodity considering that 748 gallons is delivered to your home or business for \$3.19, an equivalent cost of one gallon of milk.

The cost to pump and deliver water to the tap continues to increase. Costs for energy, pipe, valves and other materials have all increased significantly. Not only are rate increases necessary to keep up with inflation, they are necessary to make system-wide improvements. Franklin's aging water system requires constant maintenance, repair, and parts need to be replaced frequently.

Long-term Water System Outlook

In 2003, the City hired a consulting engineer to evaluate short and long-term needs of the City water system. Some of the needs are for on-going system maintenance and others affect the quality of water, future storage capacity and the distribution system. Franklin's public water system is aging. The cost of doing business continues to increase and a limited customer base makes it difficult for the rate payer to fund improvements.

Over the next several years, there are several needed capital projects that will require funding through rate increases. Whenever possible, the city will attempt to secure low interested loans and/or grants. Below is a brief description of future projects being considered by the City Staff and City Council.

1. **Water Treatment / Filtration and Facility Improvements.** Two of the three well fields in the City yield water that is high in iron and manganese. This aesthetic problem generates the most complaints and concerns about Franklin's water quality. Some of the effects of iron/manganese include staining, taste, appearance and clogging. In order to reduce the problem, some form of water treatment / filtration is necessary. The city has estimated that water treatment will cost between 3 ½ to 4 million dollars at these two well fields.
2. **Water Main Replacement.** The City Water Department owns about 52 miles of water pipe. Pipe replacement is a critical component of a water system maintenance program, as pipes deteriorate over time. Older pipes can leak, fail and become so corroded that it affects water pressure to customers. Based on a conservative estimate, there are several critical projects that need to be performed at a cost of \$2.5 million dollars. Cost of water pipe has increased 30% over the past three years and labor costs continue to rise, thus, deferring projects is not realistic as it compounds the problem.
3. **Water Storage.** By the year 2015, the City will lack sufficient storage capacity in the Cross Street Tank. In order to have the required capacity for residential and commercial customers, for fire protection, and to maintain sufficient water pressure, a replacement tank is necessary. The estimated cost for this tank replacement project is at \$2.5 million dollars.

City Staff has recommended to the City Council that long-term bonding of projects and spreading payments out over a twenty to thirty year period is the best, most affordable alternative. Certain loans also provide for grant funds with up to a 30% match. Bonding these improvements now reduces the long-term cost to the rate payer.

The Water Department hopes that this report has given you some additional information about your water system and some of the challenges ahead. By way of this report, the Water Department hopes to obtain customer feedback. The City Council is currently considering a 25% incremental rate increase each year for the next three years providing the Water Department with revenue it needs to undertake \$9 million dollars worth of projects. The City Council and Water Department need your feedback as soon as possible as the FY08 budget process (which determines rates) is in progress.

Help the City Council and Water Department by completing the attached survey. Please fill out the following questionnaire and return it to the City Clerks Office at 316 Central Street, Franklin, NH 03235 or the Municipal Services Department at 43 West Bow Street, Franklin, NH 03235. **All surveys must be returned to the City by July 15, 2007.**

FRANKLIN WATER DEPARTMENT SURVEY

MAY 2007

Please respond to the following questions with:



	Circle Response
1. I am satisfied with Franklin's water quality.	1 2 3 4 5
2. I would support a rate increase to help improve the water quality.	1 2 3 4 5
3. There is no need to improve the water provided to me.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Maintaining the city's water infrastructure is important.	1 2 3 4 5
5. I use bottled water for drinking.	Yes / No
6. This report was helpful in helping me understand issues facing the water department.	Yes / No

Other Comments:

Return to Franklin Municipal Services Department, 43 West Bow Street, Franklin, NH 03235 by July 15, 2007

Or

Return to Franklin City Clerk, 316 Central Street, Franklin, NH 03235 by July 15, 2007.

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Water Quality
Consumer
Confidence Report

Volume 9
July 2007