

# 2002 WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR City of Decorah

This report contains important information regarding the water quality in our water system. The source of our water is groundwater. Our groundwater is drawn from the alluvial and Middle Ordovician (Galena, Decorah, St. Peter) aquifers. Our water quality testing shows the following results:

CONTAMINANT	MCLG	MCL	DETECTED LEVEL	DATE SAMPLED	RANGE OF DETECTION	VIOLATION	SOURCE
Alpha emitters (pCi/L)	0	15	1.9	2-1-99		No	Erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	0	AL=15	5, one sample exceeded the AL	9/9/98	ND-32	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	1.3		0.8 – 1.3.No		Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate [as N] (ppm)	10	10	8.2		2.2 –8.2	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Barium (ppm)	2	2	0.114	2/1/99		No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	N/A	N/A	23		13.9 - 23	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Added to water during treatment process
Atrazine (ppb)	3	3	0.8	7/30/01		No	Runoff from herbicide used on row crops
Copper (ppm)	1.3	AL=1.3	0.578, one sample exceeded AL	9/11/98	0.038-1.63	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives
Sulfate (ppm)	N/A	N/A	24.3	11/12/97	24 – 24.3	No	Erosion of natural deposits

Note: Contaminants with dates indicate results from the most recent testing done in accordance with regulations.

As you can see by the table, our system has no violations. The City of Decorah's drinking water meets or exceeds all Federal and State requirements. Although we have learned through our monitoring and testing that some constituents have been detected, the EPA has determined that our water is safe. The City Water Dept. takes 9 bacteriological samples from various sites each month. The results of these samples are available at the Decorah Water Dept.

## DEFINITIONS

- Maximum Contaminant Level (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 (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.
- ppb -- parts per billion.
- ppm -- parts per million.
- pCi/L – picocuries per liter

- N/A – Not applicable
- ND -- Not detected
- Action Level (AL) – The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

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 posed a health risk. More information about contaminants or potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline (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. 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).

**ADDITIONAL HEALTH INFORMATION**

Nitrite in drinking water at levels above 1 ppm is a health risk of infants of less than six months of age. High nitrite levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant you should ask advice from your health care provider.

Infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general population. It is possible that lead levels at your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of materials used in your home’s plumbing. If you are concerned about elevated lead levels in your home’s water, you may wish to have your water tested and flush your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using tap water. Additional information is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

**SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT INFORMATION**

The City of Decorah’s water supply obtains its water from the alluvial aquifer and the Middle Ordovician (Galens, Decorah St. Peter) aquifer. These aquifers were determined to be highly susceptible to contamination because the characteristics of the aquifer and overlying materials allow contaminants to move through the aquifer fairly quickly. The wells will be most susceptible to activities such as dry cleaners, gas stations, industrial sites, and municipal wastewater dischargers. A detailed evaluation of your source water was completed by the IDNR, and is available from David M. Pahlas of the Decorah Water Dept. at 800 W. Water St. or by phoning 382-5171.

The city of Decorah presently has a Wellhead Protection Ordinance in existence. Any questions regarding this ordinance can be directed to David M. Pahlas, Decorah Water Superintendent, at the Decorah Water Dept., 382-5171.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

For questions regarding this information, please contact David M. Pahlas, Decorah Water Dept. at 563-382-5171 during the following hours: 7-5 Monday thru Friday.

Decisions regarding the water system are made at the Utility committee meetings and then approved at the City Council meetings held on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays at 7:30 p.m. at City Hall and are open to the public. The City Council and Utility Committee meetings are posted at City Hall 24 hours in advance of meetings, and submitted to the media. Citizens may also contact City Hall or the Water Dept. for information on such meetings.

YOU MAY ALSO PICK UP A COPY OF THIS CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

DECORAH CITY HALL	400 CLAIBORNE DR.	563-382-3651
DECORAH PUBLIC LIBRARY	202 WINNEBAGO ST.	563-382-3717
DECORAH WATER DEPT.	800 W. WATER ST.	563-382-5171

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