

# **WATER QUALITY REPORT**

## **(For the Year 2005)**

### **Why am I receiving this report?**

In 1999, the Federal Government re-authorized the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1996 which requires all public water utilities and companies to provide annual drinking water quality reports to their customers. Accordingly, Point Roberts Water District No. 4 is pleased to provide you with this report.

### **Where does my drinking water come from?**

The District purchases its water from the Greater Vancouver Water District, which draws its water from three protected source lakes: Seymour, Capilano, and Coquitlam; with Point Roberts' main water supply coming from the Seymour facility.

The water to Point Roberts is drawn from the Pebble Hill Reservoir located in Tsawwassen, B.C. and distributed through our own water distribution system to your tap.

### **Do you have questions or concerns about your drinking water?**

If you have any questions regarding this report or concerning your water utility, please contact our office at (360) 945-4696, available online at [www.pointrobertswater.com](http://www.pointrobertswater.com) or e-mail us at [prwd@whidbey.com](mailto:prwd@whidbey.com). The Greater Vancouver Water District writes a comprehensive Quality Control Annual Report. A copy of this report may be obtained at any lower mainland library. Additionally, further information may be acquired by contacting the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791) or by visiting their website at [www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater).

We invite you to attend any of the Point Roberts Water District's regularly scheduled Board of Commissioners Meetings, currently held on the second Thursday of each month at the District Office at 79 Tyee Drive, Suite A, and beginning at 7 p.m.

### **What's in my drinking water?**

Point Roberts Water District No. 4 and the Greater Vancouver Water District routinely monitor for contaminants and constituents in your drinking water in accordance with Federal and State Laws. For the year 2005, we conducted fifty-five (55) tests for bacteriological analysis. All results tested satisfactory. Additionally, the Greater Vancouver Water District conducted tests for over 80 drinking water contaminants.

The water sources from Vancouver are currently unfiltered. The only treatment involved is chlorination to protect against giardia and bacteria. Corrosion control treatment is done at Seymour and Coquitlam. Since surface water tends to have a low pH, soda ash and/or lime are added to increase the pH to 7 or above.

All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least trace amounts of some contaminants. It is important to remember that the presence of contaminants does not necessarily pose a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA'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 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 also available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline.

Contaminants that may be present in source water before it is treated 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 and residential uses.*
- *Radioactive contaminants, which are naturally occurring.*
- *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.*

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 drinking water systems. We treat our water according to EPA regulations. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

## Terms and Definitions

- **Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):** the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water
- **Action Level (AL):** the concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow
- **Million Fibers per Liter (MFL):** a measure of the presence of asbestos fibers that are no longer than 10 micrometers
- **ppm:** parts per million or milligrams per liter
- **ppb:** parts per billion of milligrams per liter
- **pCi/l:** picocuries per liter (a measure of radiation)

## Water Quality Data

The following table lists some of the drinking water contaminants that the District detected during the 2005 calendar year or in our most recent tests as noted:

| Regulated               | MCL     | Your Water | Sample Date | Violation | Typical Source of Contamination                                   |
|-------------------------|---------|------------|-------------|-----------|---|
| Total coliform bacteria | 2       | 0          | 2005        | No        | Leaks in service line; animal waste                               |
| Nitrates as N (ppm)     | 10      | .08        | 2005        | No        | Runoff from fertilizer  |
| Lead (ppm)              | .015 AL | .003       | 2003        | No        | Corrosive water & home plumbing                                   |
| Copper (ppm)            | 1.3 AL  | .22        | 2003        | No        | Corrosive water & home plumbing                                   |
| Alpha/Radiation (pCi/L) | 15      | 0.11       | Sept. 2005  | No        | Erosion of natural deposits                                       |
| Beta (pCi/L)            | 15      | 0.11       | Sept. 2005  | No        | Erosion of natural deposits                                       |
| TTHMs (ppm)             | .80     | .69        | 2005        | No        | By-product of drinking water chlorination                         |
| Haloacetic Acids (ppm)  | .60     | .91        | 2005        | Yes       | By-product of drinking water chlorination                         |
| Asbestos                | 7       | <0.196 MFL | 1998        | No        | Decay of asbestos cement water Mains, erosion of natural deposits |
| Arsenic (ppb)           | 10      | < 0.001    | 2005        | No        | Erosion of natural deposits                                       |

## Facts About Tested Contaminants

**Coliform Bacteria:** Coliforms are common in the environment and generally are not harmful. The presence of these bacteria in drinking water, however, generally is a result of a problem with water treatment or the pipes which distribute water and indicate that the water may be contaminated with organisms that can cause disease.

The Point Roberts Water District No. 4 did fifty-five (55) coliform bacteria tests for the year 2005. The Washington State Department of Health determines the minimum number of samples required based on the population that is served. Two (2) samples per month are required by the State during the months of January through May and from September through December; however, the Point Roberts Water District completed four (4) samples during this time period. When the population increases from June through August, five (5) samples per month are submitted for testing.

**Nitrates:** Nitrates in drinking water at levels about 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate 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 for advice from your health care provider.

**Lead:** Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.

**Copper:** Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's Disease should consult their personal physician.

**Alpha/Radiation:** Some people who drink water containing levels of Alpha/Radiation in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of developing cancer.

**TTHM (Total Trihalomethanes):** Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous systems and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.

**Asbestos:** Some people, who drink water containing asbestos in excess of the MCL over many years, may have an increased risk of developing intestinal polyps.

**Arsenic:** Some people, who drink water containing arsenic in excess of the MCL over many years, may have decreased longevity, blood effects, dermal and nervous system toxicity effects.

### **About Your Water Bill**

In 1988, the Point Roberts Water District No. 4 successfully completed negotiations with the GVWD to obtain an allotment of up to 840,000 gallons of water per day. The District purchases water monthly for a fixed rate whether the allotment of water is utilized or not. The District charges water by the year, billed on a bimonthly basis after water meters are read. Essentially the District is charged for water that is not used; therefore we have to pass that charge along to our customers to ensure that access to safe and clean water is always readily available.

A standard, residential water bill is charged at \$40.28 every two months for 500 cubic feet. This translates to approximately 3,740 U.S. gallons per billing period.

At this rate, your water costs you 2 cents per gallon. When compared to bottled water at about 99 cents per gallon (which is not required to meet the same rigorous standards as the water from your tap), you are receiving top value for your dollar.

### **Our Commitment to our Customers**

We at the Point Roberts Water District No. 4 are committed to providing safe drinking water to every connection we serve. Our staff is trained in water system management and are constantly upgrading their skills. We may be small, but our size does not prevent us from striving for excellence in all we do. That is our commitment to you.