Town of Highland Beach

Water Quality Report

2005

Annual Water Quality Report

The Town of Highland Beach is pleased to present our Water Quality Report for 2005. Publication of this report allows us the opportunity to keep you informed about the excellent water services we have delivered over the past year.

Our goal has always been to provide our residents with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. The source of Highland Beach's drinking water is wells drawn from the Floridan Aquifer.

In October 2004, the Town's new Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant went on-line, and became the sole source of our treated drinking water. The most significant difference that residents may have noticed at the tap since we began using the reverse osmosis process is the disappearance of the "yellowish" color - our water is now crystal clear. Also, our water is now "softer". In fact, the hardness (mineral content) has been reduced by approximately 90%. Lastly, our total trihalomethanes (TTHMs) have been reduced by approximately 90% (see the chart on the inside of this report for more information on TTHMs).

Our method of water treatment utilizes chlorine as a disinfectant. The water is now so pure that a slight chlorine residual may be more noticeable than it has been in the past. The Town is in the process of adding calcium to the water, which will further improve the taste.

The Town of Highland Beach is confident that the new reverse osmosis water plant will supply our residents with safe, reliable water, meeting all regulations, for many years in the future. We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you have any questions or concerns about the information contained in this report, or would like to learn more about your water utility, please call Jack Lee, Public Works Director, or Joe Sterlicchi, Water Plant Superintendent, at 561-243-2084.

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Definitions
In this table you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:

Non-Detects (ND) – laboratory analysis indicates that the constituent is not present.

Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per Liter (Mg/l) – one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in $10,000.

Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter – one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in $10,000,000.

Action Level (Al) – the concentration of contaminant which if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) – (mandatory language) the "Maximum Allowed" is the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) – the "Goal" is the level of a contaminant in drinking water below for which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs are allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level – comparable to MCLs, but refer to disinfectants.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goals – comparable to MCLGs, but refer to disinfectants.

Not Applicable (N/A)

Our Monitoring Process

The Town of Highland Beach Water Treatment plant routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State Laws. The table below shows some of the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2005. As water travels over the land or underground it can pick up substances or contaminants such as microbes, inorganic and organic chemicals, and radioactive substances.

All drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. It's important to remember that the presence of these contaminants does not necessarily pose a health risk.

Photographer: Tina Valant

Highland Beach Water Tower

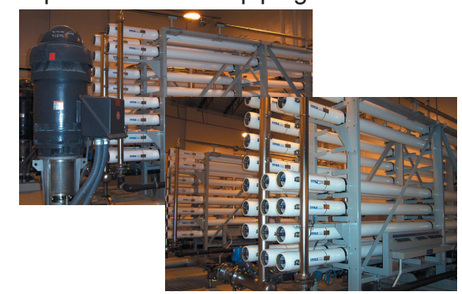
How Is Our Water Treated?

Highland Beach's water plant uses the process of reverse osmosis to treat our water. The water plant utilizes the Floridan aquifer, and draws water from wells that are 1,200 feet deep. Although the water is very pristine, it is high in salinity (salt content).

To remove the salinity and other impurities, the raw well water passes through a series of membranes (filters). The system uses 300 horse power pumps that force the water through the membranes at very high pressures, in excess of 350 pounds per square inch (psi). An anti-scalant is used in order to protect the membranes from a build up of solids that would result in clogging, and phosphate is used as a corrosion inhibitor as protection for the piping.

Before the finished water enters the distribution system, acid and sodium hydroxide are added for pH adjustment, and chlorine is used as a disinfectant.

The end result is that Highland Beach residents enjoy very pure water that is crystal clear.



A series of membranes filter the water inside the Highland Beach Reverse Osmosis Water Plant.

Test Results Table

Contaminant and Unit of Measure	Dates of Sampling	MCL Violations Y/N	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG or MRDLG	MCL or MRDL	Likely Source of Contamination
Chloramines	Monthly	N	3.5	0.4 - 3.5	4	4.0	Water additive used to control microbes
Trihalomethanes (ppb)	Quarterly	N	5.06 (Annual Avg.)	1.2 - 21.2	0	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Haloactic Acids (ppb)	9/2005	N	1.7	N/D - 29	0	60	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	**Dates of Sampling**	**Al Exceeded Y/N**	**90th Percentile Result**	**# of sites exceeding the AL**	**MCLG**	**AL**	**Likely source of Contamination**
Copper (ppm)	September 2005	No	0.066	0	1.3	1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives.
Lead (ppb)	September 2005	No	7	0	0	15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits.

Why are Contaminants Present in Our 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:

(A) **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

(B) **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.

(C) **Pesticides and herbicides**, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff, and residential uses.

(D) **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.

(E) **Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

How Do We Ensure the Highest Quality of Water?

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. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

All 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 the 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 at 1-800-426-4791.

MCLs are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink 2 liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a million chance of having the described health effect.

In our continuing efforts to maintain a safe and dependable water supply it may be necessary to make improvements in your water system. The costs of these improvements may be reflected in the rate structure. Rate adjustments may be necessary in order to address these improvements.

"We at the Highland Beach Water Treatment Plant work around the clock to provide top quality water to every tap," said Jack Lee Public Works Director. "We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community, our way of life and our children's future. Please call our office if you have any questions."

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 microbiological contaminants are available for the State Drinking Water Hot Line 800-426-4791.

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Water Dept. Hours
Monday - Friday
8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Water Quality Questions
Contact: Jack Lee, Director of Public Works or Joe Sterlicchi, Water Plant Superintendent
561/243-2084
www.ci.highland-beach.fl.us

Additional Contacts
Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline:
800/426-4791
www.epa.gov

Palm Beach County Public Health Unit:
561/355-3070

Florida Department of Health:
904/791-1599

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