
Town of Bluff City Annual Water Quality Report

2025

PWSID – 0000061



IN 1996, CONGRESS AMENDED THE SAFE WATER DRINKING WATER ACT REQUIRING COMMUNITY SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE CUSTOMERS WITH AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE QUALITY OF THEIR DRINKING WATER. WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT OUR ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT. THIS REPORT COVERS ALL TESTING COMPLETED BETWEEN JANUARY 1 AND DECEMBER 31, 2025.

This report provides information about the quality of the drinking water provided by the Town of Bluff City Water Utilities. The Town of Bluff City operates a municipal water treatment and distribution utility that is owned by the Town of Bluff City. Treated drinking water is also purchased from Bristol Bluff City Utility (BBCU) and delivered to the residents and businesses of Bluff City. Rigorous testing is performed every month by both utilities to ensure the quality of our drinking water. Our goal is to inform consumers about the source of water and how we ensure its safety.





Is my drinking water safe?

Yes, our water meets all of EPA's health standards. We have conducted numerous tests for over 80 contaminants that may be in drinking water. As indicated on the chart on the back, only seven of these contaminants were detected; all of which were at safe levels.

What is the source of my water?

Our water source is groundwater that comes from Underwood Springs. Our goal is to protect our water from contaminants, and we are working with the State of Tennessee to determine the vulnerability of our water source to potential contamination. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) has prepared a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) Report for the untreated water sources serving water to this water system. The SWAP Report assesses the susceptibility of untreated water sources to *potential contamination*. To ensure safe drinking water, all public water systems treat and routinely test their water. Water sources have been rated as reasonably susceptible or slightly susceptible based on geological factors and human activities in the vicinity of the water source. Bluff City's water source is rated as **Reasonably Susceptible** to potential contamination.



An explanation of Tennessee’s SWAP and the Source Water Assessment summaries, susceptibility scorings and overall TDEC report to EPA can be viewed online at <https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/wr-water-resources/water-quality/source-water-assessment.html> - or you may contact the Water System to obtain copies of specific assessments. The wellhead protection plan is available for your review at Bluff City Town Hall on weekdays between 8:00am and 4:30pm.

Why are there contaminants in my water?

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least some 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 the Environmental Protection Agency’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

For more information about your drinking water, please call Allen Moultrie at (423) 538-7144.



How can I get involved?

The Board of Mayor and Alderman (aka Town Council) of Bluff City each serves four-year terms. Board members are elected positions with offset elections so there is no one large change per election. The Board meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00pm. These meetings are open to the public and residents are welcome to participate.

Any decisions made by the Board regarding customer complaints may be reviewed by the Utility Management Review Board of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation pursuant to Section 7-82-702(7) Tennessee Code Annotated.



Is our water system meeting other rules governing our operations?



The State of Tennessee and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) require testing and reporting on all utility water on a regular basis to ensure its safety. Bluff City has met all these requirements. Results of unregulated contaminant analysis are available upon request.

Other Information

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 from the presence of animals or from human activity.



Contaminants that may be present in source water:



Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, 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, TDEC and the EPA prescribe regulations which limit the number 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.

Do I need to take special precautions?

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons, such as people with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, people who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about not only their drinking water, but food preparation, personal hygiene, and precautions in handling infants and pets from their health care providers. EPA/CDC (Center for Disease Control) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.



Lead in Drinking Water

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and in home plumbing. Bluff City Waterworks is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formula, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. If you have a lead service line or galvanized requiring replacement service line, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact Bluff City Town Hall at (423) 440-5130. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at: <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney, or nervous system problems.

Lead Service Line Inventory

A Lead Service Line Inventory has been completed for our system and is accessible by contacting Town Hall during regular business hours.

Water System Security

Following the events of September 2001, we realize that our customers are concerned about the safety of their drinking water. WE urge the public to report any suspicious activities at any utility facilities, including treatment plants, tanks, fire hydrants, etc. to (423) 538-7144.

















Think before you flush!

Flushing unused or expired medicines can be harmful to your drinking water. Proper disposal of unused or expired medication helps protect you and the environment. Keep medications out of Tennessee's waterways by disposing in one of our permanent pharmaceutical take-back boxes. There are nearly 100 take-back boxes located across the State. To find a convenient location please visit: <https://www.tn.gov/behavioral-health/substance-abuse-services/prevention/take-back-box.html>



Terms to Know

-  **AL** – Action Level is the concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
-  **BDL** – Below Detection Level is when a laboratory analysis indicates that the contaminant is not present at a level that can be detected.
-  **MCL** – Maximum Contaminant Level is 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. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink two (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.
-  **MCLG** – Maximum Contaminant Level Goal is 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.
-  **MFL** – million fibers per liter is a measure of the presence of asbestos fibers that are longer than 10 micrometers.
-  **MRDL** – Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level is the highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for the control of microbial contaminants.
-  **MRDLG** – Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal is the level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
-  **mrem/yr** – Millirems per year is the measure of radiation absorbed by the body.
-  **ND** – Non-detect is when a laboratory analysis indicates that the contaminant is not present.
-  **NTU** – Nephelometric Turbidity units are a measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.
-  **pCi/L** – Picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.
-  **PPB and micrograms per liter** – Parts per Billion or Micrograms per liter are explained as a relation to time and money as one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years or a single penny in \$10,000,000.





PPM and mg/l – Parts per Million and Milligrams per liter are explained as a relation to time and money as one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.



RTCR – Revised Total Coliform Rule went into effect on April 1, 2016 and replaces the MCL for total coliform with a Treatment Technique Trigger for a system assessment.



TT – Treatment Technique is a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.



Bluff City 2025

Water Quality Data Table

Contaminant	Violation (Y/N)	Level Detected	Range of Detection	Date of Sample	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Total Coliform	N	0		2025		0	TT Trigger	Naturally present in the environment
Turbidity	N	0.34	0.18-0.34	2025	NTU	N/A	TT	Soil runoff
Lead*	N	90 th %= <1.0	<1.0-<1.0	2024	ppb	0	AL=15	Corrosion of Household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
Copper*	N	90 th %= 0.082	0.00965- 0.129	2024	ppm	1.3	AL=1.3	Corrosion of Household Plumbing system; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
Sodium	N	2.63	2.63*	2023	ppm	N/A	N/A	Erosion of natural deposits; used in water treatment
Nitrate	N	<0.100	<0.100*	2025	PPM	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tank, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
TTHM (Total Trihalomethanes)	N	40.90	25.90-51.50	2025	ppb	N/A	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
HAA5 (Haloacetic Acids)	N	28.60	20.30-34.40	2025	ppb	N/A	60	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chlorine	N	1.50 avg.	0.78-2.18	2025	ppm	4	4	Water additive used to control microbes.

*During the most recent round of Lead and Copper testing, 0 out of 11 households sampled contained concentrations exceeding the action level.



Bristol Bluff City Utility District CCR – 2025

The Town of Bluff City also purchases water from Bristol Bluff City Utility District (BBCUD)

Below is the 2025 sampling from BBCUD

Contaminant	Violation (Y/N)	Level Detected	Range of Detection	Date of Sample	Unit of Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Total Coliform	N	0		2025		0	0	Naturally present in the environment
Turbidity ⁽¹⁾	N	0.19	0.03-0.19	2025	NTU	N/A	TT	Soil runoff
Asbestos	N	ND		2022	MFL	7	7	Decay of asbestos cement water mains; erosion of natural deposits
Copper*	N	90 th % =0.0208	0.0010-0.168	2023	ppm	1.3	AL=1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
Lead*	N	90 th % =BDL	ND	2023	ppb	0	AL=15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits
Sodium	N	7.86		2025	ppm	N/A	N/A	Erosion of natural deposits; used in water treatment
Nitrate	N	0.597		2025	ppm	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
TTHM (Total Trihalomethanes)	N	53.95	30.00-61.40	2025	ppb	N/A	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
HAA5 (Haloacetic Acids)	N	49.05	21.90-76.30	2025	ppb	N/A	60	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Organic Carbon ⁽²⁾	N			2025	ppm	TT	TT	Naturally present in the environment
Chlorine	N	1.82 avg.	1.4-1.9	2025	ppm	4	4	Water additive used to control microbes.

(1) 100% of our samples were below the turbidity limit.

*During the most recent round of Lead and Copper testing, 0 out of 20 households sampled contained concentrations exceeding the action level.

(2) We have met all treatment technique requirements for Total Organic Carbon removal.



2024 Report Violations

During a recent compliance status review, Bluff City Waterworks has been identified with possible violations of the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) rule. The CCR shall be delivered by approved methods and shall contain water quality information that is consistent with the compliance monitoring data submitted. The violations are listed below:

1. In the contaminants table in the CCR, the copper 90th percentile value listed in the 'Level Found' column is incorrect. The value listed is 0.0894 ppb, but it should be 0.082 ppb.
2. There are several links in the CCR that are not typed out but rather have a link that someone viewing the document electronically can click on, such as '[Source Water Assessment](#)' and '[Find a Prescription Drug Take-Back Box](#)'. All links should be fully typed out so that anyone viewing the CCR as a paper document can access the link.
3. In the 'Lead in Drinking Water' paragraph in the CCR, there is an 'Error! Reference source not found' error. Please correct that in the next CCR.

