

# *2017 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report*

## **Sterling Municipal Water Company**

Sterling, CT  
PWSID #CT1360011



We're pleased to present to you our Annual Drinking Water Quality Report, also known as the Consumer Confidence Report. This report, a requirement of the 1996 amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act, is designed to inform you about the quality water and services we deliver to you every day. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water.

### **Water Source**

Our water source consists of three gravel-packed groundwater wells located on the property. We currently have no secondary water source. Our system serves a population of 308 residents. Our certified lab is Phoenix Environmental Laboratories.

Our water treatment techniques consist of chlorination to protect against potential bacterial contaminants. Over the past year, our system underwent routine maintenance. At this time, we do not have any projects scheduled in the near future. For a list of regularly scheduled commission meetings please check our website [www.sterlingct.us](http://www.sterlingct.us) for dates and time. If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water system, please contact Andrew Donnelly of White Water, Inc. at 253 B Worcester Road, Charlton, MA 01507 or at 774-633-1223. We want our valued customers to be informed about their water system.

White Water, Inc. provides the Sterling Municipal Water Company with contract operation services. The contract operation includes the services of a state certified operator who monitors the water system for compliance with all state and federal drinking water regulations. The operating contract also includes services such as making emergency repairs when needed, making recommendations for improving water quality and increasing system reliability. For more information, call Al Braig of New England Water Utility Services at (860) 664-6058.

### **Source Water Protection**

Source water is untreated water from streams, rivers, lakes, or underground aquifers that is used to supply public drinking water. Preventing drinking water contamination at the source makes good public health sense, good economic sense, and good environmental sense. You can be aware of the challenges of keeping drinking water safe and take an active role in protecting drinking water. There are lots of ways that you can get involved in drinking water protection activities to prevent the contamination of the ground water source. Dispose properly of household chemicals, help clean up the watershed that is the source of your community's water, attend public meetings to ensure that the community's need for safe drinking water is considered in making decisions about land use. Contact our office for more information on source water protection, or contact the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at 1.800.426.4791. You may also find information on EPA's website at <http://cfpub.epa.gov/safewater/sourcewater/>.

A source water assessment report was recently completed by the Connecticut Department of Public Health, Drinking Water Division. The completed Assessment report is available for access on the Drinking Water Division's web site: [http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3139&q=398262&dphNav\\_GID=1824](http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3139&q=398262&dphNav_GID=1824). The assessment found that this public drinking water source has a **moderate** susceptibility to potential sources of contamination. Additional source water assessment information can be found at the Environmental Protection Agency's website: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/safewater/sourcewater/>.

## Water Quality

Sterling Municipal Water Company routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The following table shows any detection resulting from our monitoring for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2017. It's important to remember that the presence of these contaminants does not necessarily pose a health risk.

The sources of drinking water include rivers, lakes, ponds and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and radioactive material and can pick up substances resulting from human or animal activity. All sources of drinking water are subject to potential contamination by substances that are naturally occurring or man made. Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

**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, 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** 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, 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** 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, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that were detected throughout water quality monitoring and testing. The presence of contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

## Sterling Municipal Water Company had NO violations in 2017

<b>TEST RESULTS</b>						
Unless otherwise noted, testing was done in 2017						
Contaminant	Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Unit Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
<b>Microbiological Contaminants</b>						
Total Coliform Bacteria (2017)	N	<b>Absent</b>	Highest monthly # of positive samples	Absent	1 positive	Naturally present in the environment
Turbidity (6/12/17)	N	<b>0.37</b>	ntu	n/a	TT	Soil runoff
<b>Radioactive Contaminants</b>						
Beta/photon emitters (2/4/16)	N	<b>19.8</b>	pCi/L	0	50	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>						
Barium (2/4/16)	N	<b>0.005</b>	ppm	2	2	Erosion of natural deposits
Copper* (6/2017)	N	<b>0.96</b>	ppm	1.3	AL=1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (2/4/16)	N	<b>0.27</b>	ppm	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits.
Lead* (6/2017)	N	<b>5.7</b>	ppb	0	AL=15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits

Nitrate (as Nitrogen) (1/10/17)	N	<b>0.04</b>	ppm	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
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\* = Reported results are the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile value (the value that 90% of all samples are less than).

### Disinfection By-Products

Chlorine (2017)	N	<b>RAA = 0.62</b> (0.04-1.94)	ppm	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4	Water additive used to control microbes
TTHM [Total Trihalomethanes] (2011/10/17)	N	<b>RAA: 12.94</b> (single sample)	ppb	0	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination

### Unregulated Contaminants (*contaminants with a health advisory*)

Contaminant	Level Detected	Unit Measurement	DWEL	Likely Source of Contamination
Chloride (2/4/16)	<b>16.5</b>	ppm	250	Erosion of natural deposits, Storm water runoff containing road salt
Sodium (2/4/16)	<b>11.1</b>	ppm	28	Erosion of natural deposits, urban storm runoff

**Note:** The state allows us to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Not all contaminants are tested for every year due to monitoring waivers and therefore we must use the most recent round of sampling. Some of our data is more than one year old, however, is limited to no older than 5 years.

#### Units:

*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.

*Picocuries per liter (pCi/L)* - picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

*Micrograms per Liter (µg/l)* - a measure of radioactivity in water.

*Millirems per year (mrem/year)* - a measure of radiation absorbed by the water.

*Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU)* - nephelometric turbidity unit is a measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

#### Definitions:

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

*Treatment Technique (TT)* - A treatment technique is a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

*Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)* - The MCL 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.

*Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)* - The MCLG 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.

*Drinking Water Equivalent Level (DWEL)* - A lifetime exposure concentration protective of adverse, non-cancer health effects, that assumes all of the exposure to a contaminant is from a drinking water source.

*Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL)* - The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

*Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG)* - 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.

*Running Annual Average (RAA)* - The Average of all monthly or quarterly samples for the last year at all sample locations.

*Non Detect (ND)* - The contaminant was not detected.

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

**Lead** - *Major Sources in Drinking Water:* Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.

**Health Effects Statement:** *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** - *Major Sources in Drinking Water:* Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives

**Health Effects Statement:** *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 doctor.*

**Lead/Copper:** Action levels are measured at consumer's tap. 90% of the tests must be equal to or below the action level; therefore, the listed results above have been calculated and are listed as the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile.

**Nitrate:** Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 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 advice from your health care provider.

**Total Coliform Bacteria** - Reported as the highest monthly number of positive samples, for water systems that take < 40 samples per month. Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful bacteria may be present. Our tests have all been negative.

**Turbidity:** Turbidity has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.

The State of CT requires testing for other contaminants not regulated by the US EPA. The following contaminant was detected in our well water:

**Manganese:** In 2017, Manganese was detected in our water at a concentration level of 0.432 mg/L

**Phosphate:** In 2017, Phosphate was detected in our water at a concentration level of 1.49 mg/L, with a range of 1.13 mg/L to 2.78 mg/L

### **Distribution Color Notice**

During the monitoring periods of February, April, May, June, July, August, October, and December, 2017, our routine water quality samples indicated that distribution color was 20, 50, 20, 40, 50, 60, 30, and 50 color units (CU), respectively, and did not meet the drinking water standard of 15 CU. **Health Effects Statements:** Color may be indicative of dissolved organic material, inadequate treatment, high disinfectant demand and the potential for the production of excess amounts of disinfectant by-products. Inorganic contaminants such as metals are also common cause of color. Follow up testing have shown acceptable levels for color.

### **Copper AL Exceedance Public Notification**

In June 2017, our water systems exceeded a drinking water action level for copper. As our customers, you have a right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct the situation. We routinely monitor for dinking water contaminants. The results of routine water quality samples indicated a copper level of 1.74 mg/L. This level exceeds the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile copper action level of 1.3 mg/L. If you have been diagnosed with copper intolerance due to a genetic deficiency, please inform your physician that one of our copper samples measured at 1.74 mg/L. It is important to note, that this sample was collected from the vacant power plant that has not been in use for many years. White Water plans on speaking with facility staff regarding flushing water lines in this vacant facility.

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.

For most people, the health benefits of drinking plenty of water outweigh any possible health risk from these contaminants. However, 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/Center of Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. We are responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize

the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for thirty (30) seconds to two (2) minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

We, at Sterling Municipal Water Company, work hard to provide top quality water to every tap. Water is a limited resource so it is vital that we all work together to maintain it and use it wisely. We ask that all our customers help us protect and preserve our drinking water resources, which are the heart of our community, our way of life, and our children's future. Please contact us with any questions. Thank you for working together for safe drinking water.