

CITY OF BELLEVUE

# *Water Quality Report 2020*

RESULTS FROM TESTING IN 2019



This report contains  
important information  
about your drinking  
water.

PWS ID 05575B

We hope you and your family are staying safe and healthy at this difficult time. This report focuses on Bellevue's drinking water quality in 2019, but we recognize it's important to address the evolving COVID-19 situation.

- Your water is safe from the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19. There is no evidence of coronavirus in our protected drinking water supply, and Bellevue's water is treated to protect you from contaminants such as viruses.
- We continuously monitor the water quality and safety of the system.
- We follow the guidelines of national, state and local health agencies to keep our community, employees and neighbors safe.
- We plan for emergencies like this so we can continue to deliver the safe drinking water you rely on.
- Protecting your health is important to us. During the COVID-19 crisis, water services will not be shut off due to nonpayment.
- For the most current information on the City's response to COVID-19, please visit [www.bellevuewa.gov/COVID-19](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/COVID-19).

We are working hard to provide safe and reliable drinking water to your homes and businesses. During this time our staff are still conducting essential work, including collecting routine monitoring samples, inspecting our facilities, reading meters, conducting important routine maintenance, and performing emergency repairs. This work is vital to ensure the water system remains operational.

We need your help to conduct our work safely. Please keep at least 6 feet away from crews working in the field. Please allow our staff access to the water system by not blocking driveways or easements, which can contain water system components.

Thank you for your continued cooperation. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at Bellevue Utilities, **425-452-7840**.



Bellevue Downtown Park



# BELLEVUE WATER FACTS



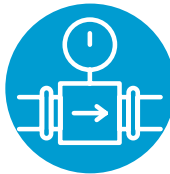
## STORAGE + CAPACITY



**24**  
active  
reservoirs



**40+**  
million gallons of  
storage capacity



**69**  
pressure  
zones



**22**  
pump  
stations

## DISTRIBUTION



**610**  
miles of  
water main



**5,900**  
fire  
hydrants



**41,000**  
water  
meters



**1,800**  
coliform  
bacteria  
samples  
taken



## Cedar River Watershed:

This 90,000-acre watershed in the Cascades is one of the two sources for Bellevue's drinking water. The watershed is closed to human activity and development.

# DRINKING WATER SOURCE

The clean and safe water you drink every day comes from the Cedar River and the south fork of the Tolt River. This water is obtained through Cascade Water Alliance (Cascade) which purchases its water from Seattle Public Utilities on behalf of its member utilities. Cascade also owns Lake Tapps, which can serve as a future source of municipal drinking water if needed.

Cascade is a municipal corporation formed in 1999 to provide a reliable source of water to municipalities in the region. It includes Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond, Tukwila, Sammamish Plateau Water, and the Skyway Water and Sewer District. Each member has a voice in determining its community's future availability of clean, safe and reliable drinking water.

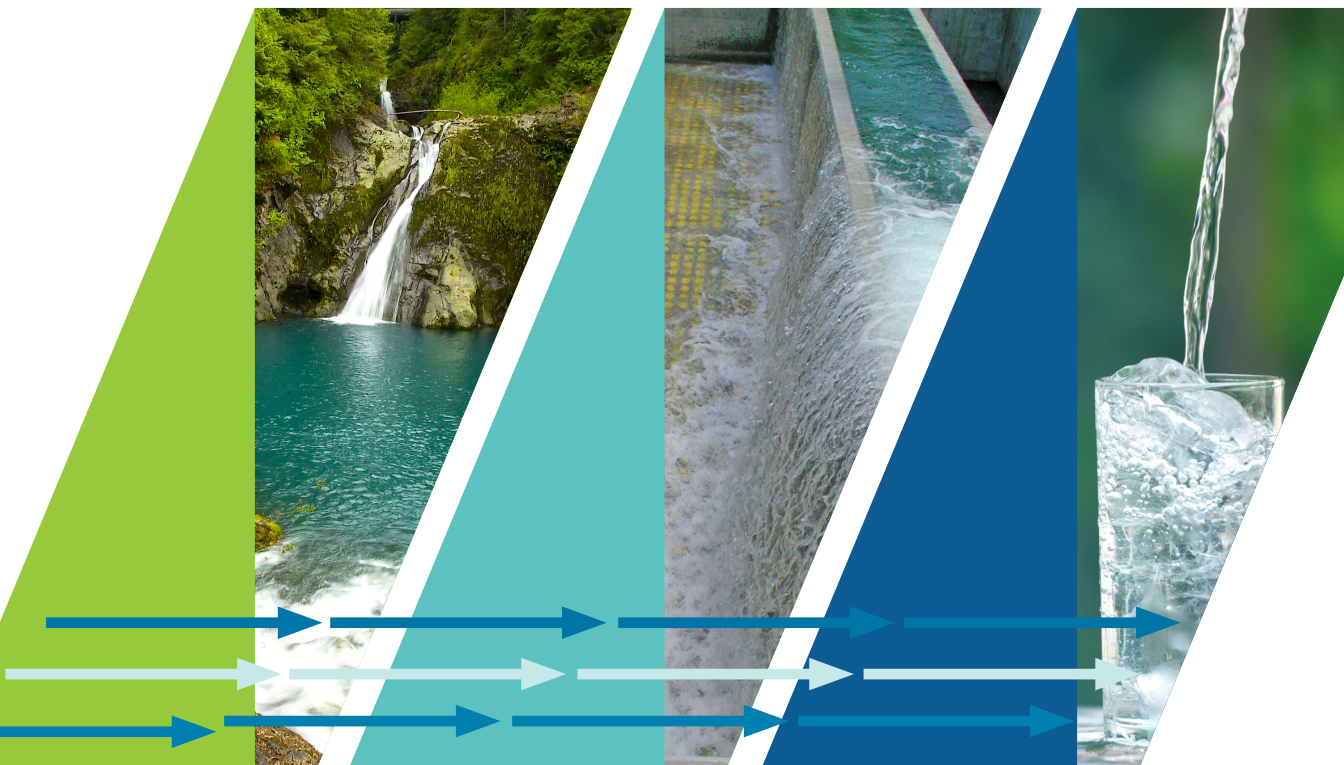
In addition, Cascade plans and implements programs, events, outreach and education

to all its partner agency residents, students, businesses and the community at large. These programs help demonstrate the best ways to use water wisely, including providing free conservation items and resources found at [www.cascadewater.org](http://www.cascadewater.org). Saving water today means delaying the need to develop additional water sources in the future.

Cascade works with its members as well as other major water providers in the Central Puget Sound region to collaboratively plan for regional water supply needs now and into the future. This will ensure that water will be available for the future, and in case of natural or other emergencies.

Bellevue Utilities and Cascade are planning to meet our water needs, now and in the future.

# WATER TREATMENT



To protect your health and improve the water quality, our drinking water supply from the Tolt River and Cedar River is disinfected with ultra-violet light (UV) and ozone. Disinfection using ozone is very effective at destroying *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial organisms. Chlorine is added to your water to prevent diseases such as cholera, giardiasis, and salmonellosis and to act as a protective barrier from

recontamination while water is in the distribution system. The average level of chlorine in your drinking water was 0.86 parts per million (ppm) in 2019. Fluoride is added by SPU during treatment to prevent tooth decay, in accordance with a Seattle public vote in 1968. The average fluoride level in your drinking water was 0.70 ppm in 2019. In addition, sodium hydroxide is added to the

water supply to raise pH levels (a measurement of acidity) to a target of 8.2. These pH levels are adjusted to make the water less corrosive to plumbing and reduce the amount of lead and copper that can dissolve into drinking water.

After treatment, your water contains very few contaminants, and those present are below the allowable limits.



*Your water is monitored and tested extensively throughout the year. After testing nearly 200 chemical compounds, only a few were detected (see table on next page). If you would like to see the complete list of chemical compounds that were tested but not detected in 2019, please call Water Quality at 425-452-6192 or visit [bellevuewa.gov/water-quality](http://bellevuewa.gov/water-quality).*



# 2019 WATER QUALITY

		EPA's Allowable Limits		Levels in Cedar Water		Levels in Tolt Water		
Detected Compounds	Units	MCLG	MCL	Average	Range	Average	Range	Typical Sources
Raw Water								
Total Organic Carbon	ppm	NA	TT	0.5	0.3 to 0.8	1.1	1.0 to 1.3	Naturally present in the environment
Finished Water								
Turbidity	NTU	NA	TT	0.3	0.2 to 1.8	0.03	0.01 to 0.17	Soil runoff
Arsenic	ppb	0	10	0.4	0.4 to 0.6	0.4	0.3 to 0.4	Erosion of natural deposits
Barium	ppb	2000	2000	1.6	1.4 to 1.9	1.3	1.1 to 1.5	Erosion of natural deposits
Bromate	ppb	0	10	ND	ND	0.2	ND to 2	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate	ppm	10	10	ND	One sample	0.11	One sample	Erosion of natural deposits
Chromium	ppb	100	100	0.27	0.25 to 0.33	0.2	ND to 0.24	Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride	ppm	4	4	0.7	0.6 to 0.8	0.7	0.6 to 0.8	Water additive, which promotes strong teeth
Total Trihalomethanes	ppb	NA	80	Average = 34 Range = 19.9 to 41.6				By-products of drinking water chlorination
Haloacetic Acids (5)	ppb	NA	60	Average = 28 Range = 14.6 to 38.6				
Chlorine	ppm	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4	Average = 0.86 Range = 0.03 to 1.67				Water additive used to control microbes

## DEFINITIONS

**MCLG:** *Maximum Contaminant Level Goal* - 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.

**MCL:** *Maximum Contaminant Level* - 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.

**MRDL:** *Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level* - 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.

**MRDLG:** *Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal* - 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.

**TT:** *Treatment Technique* - A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**NTU:** *Nephelometric Turbidity Unit* - Turbidity is a measure of how clear the water looks. The turbidity MCL that applied to the Cedar supply in 2019 is 5 NTU, and for the Tolt supply it was 0.3 NTU for at least 95% of the samples in a month. 100% of Tolt samples in 2019 were below 0.3 NTU.

**NA:** Not Applicable

**ND:** Not Detected

**ppm:** 1 part per million = 1 mg/L = 1 milligram per liter

**ppb:** 1 part per billion = 1 ug/L = 1 microgram per liter

**1 ppm** = 1000 ppb



## REDUCING LEAD FROM PLUMBING FIXTURES

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. Bellevue Utilities is 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 30 seconds to 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 at **1-800-426-4791** or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

*In 2017, tap water samples were collected and analyzed for lead and copper from 66 homes throughout the Bellevue Utilities service area. These samples are collected every 3 years as required by the Washington State Department of Health. Our next round of sampling will occur in August 2020.*

*At right are the 2017 sample results.*

**Lead and copper monitoring results (Bellevue)**

Parameter and Units	MCLG	Action Level*	2017 Results**	Homes Exceeding Action Level	Source
Lead, ppb	0	15	4.5	1 of 66	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Copper, ppm	1.3	1.3	0.11	0 of 66	

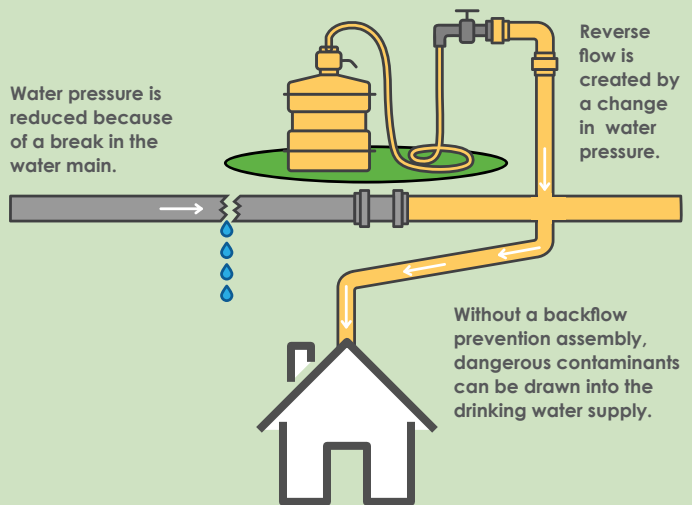
\* The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

\*\* 90th Percentile: i.e. 90 percent of the samples were less than the values shown.



# WHAT IS "BACKFLOW?"

It's just what it sounds like: the water is flowing in the opposite direction from its normal flow. With the direction of flow reversed due to a change in pressures, backflow can allow contaminants to enter your drinking water system through cross connections—connection points between the drinking water system and another system, like irrigation or fire sprinkler.



## TO KEEP OUR DRINKING WATER CLEAN AND SAFE:

**1** **Locate or install a backflow assembly device.** If you have an underground irrigation system, check to see if you have a backflow assembly. The backflow assembly is a brass valve usually found between your water meter and the point where your water service line enters your home, usually in a small green box similar to a meter box. If your irrigation system does not include a backflow assembly or if you are installing a new underground irrigation system, City of Bellevue plumbing code requires you to install a Double Check Valve Assembly (DCVA) at a minimum.

**2** **Test your backflow assembly device annually.** Once installed or located, you must have it tested annually by a state-certified backflow assembly tester. This ensures that the assembly is functioning properly to protect the public drinking water. For a list of state-certified testers or any question on backflow assembly testing, please contact **City of Bellevue Backflow Prevention** at **425-452-4201**.

**3** **Properly maintain your irrigation system.** When winterizing your irrigation system, make sure the compressed air is connected to a properly installed blowout connection to avoid inadvertently introducing air into our water distribution system.

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, in some cases, radioactive material; and substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these 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 **EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791**.

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 may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. Environmental Protection Agency/ Centers for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the **Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791**.

## Water Use Efficiency

Using water efficiently is important to provide a safe, reliable supply of water for our community's needs today and in the future. On behalf of Bellevue and other members, Cascade will dedicate resources to achieve a cumulative, annual drinking water savings of 0.4 million gallons per day by December 31, 2022.

In 2019, Bellevue Utilities supplied 5.73 billion gallons of water to its customers. Bellevue's water system is fully metered. The city does its part to encourage the efficient use of water by minimizing water loss caused by leaks throughout its distribution system. Distribution system leakage or water loss was 7.1 percent of total consumption in 2019, below the Washington State standard of 10 percent.

Cascade provides water efficiency programs and services on behalf of its members, which are Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond, Tukwila, Sammamish Plateau Water District, and Skyway Water and Sewer District. In 2019 Cascade administered several conservation program measures or activities including the following:

- Rebates for EnergyStar and WaterSense labeled showerheads and clothes washers
- Showerhead and aerator installation at multifamily properties
- Free conservation items delivered upon request to multifamily properties and Cascade members for distribution to customers
- Free shower timers, rain gauges, toilet leak detection dye, and other conservation items available through Cascade's website, [www.cascadewater.org](http://www.cascadewater.org)
- Participation in 15 community events to promote conservation, the value of water, and the "We Need Water Because..." campaign

- Promotion of the US EPA's annual Fix A Leak Week
- Irrigation system assessments for high-use customers such as school districts, parks departments, and homeowner associations
- Residential gardening classes
- Partnership with Tilth Alliance to deliver the Soil and Water Stewardship program, which trains residents on sustainable landscaping, rainwater harvesting, drip irrigation, and other topics
- Partnership with the Lake Washington Institute of Technology to offer the Sustainable Landscape Technologies accredited program to train students and industry professionals on the fundamentals of efficient irrigation system management and sustainable landscaping
- Partnership with the Sno-King Watershed Council to train residents to become stream monitors
- Classroom presentations on a variety of water-related topics
- Support of teachers in developing water-based curricula and training and resources for teachers to incorporate the study of water into their classrooms

These programs and services promoted water efficiency and stewardship of our water resources resulting in approximately 20,000 customer interactions representing all Cascade members and achieved a savings of an estimated 142,469 gallons of water per day in 2019 or 35.6% of Cascade's 2019-22 WUE goal.

To learn more about water efficiency programs and what you can do to save water, visit Cascade Water Alliance at [www.cascadewater.org/conservation.php](http://www.cascadewater.org/conservation.php).

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## ***Why does my water taste like rubber?***

Check to see if your garden hoses are connected and charged with the hose bib in the open position. This would allow water to flow backwards into your plumbing system, imparting a rubbery taste. Shut off the hose bib and disconnect the garden hose when not using to prevent backflow from the hose.



## ***Why are there pink or black stains in sinks and around drains?***

Those pink or black stains are a mixed culture of airborne yeast, mold, and/or bacteria which grow well in moist conditions. They are not from your drinking water. These occurrences can increase especially in the summer when humidity and warmer temperatures increase microbial growth rates. Frequent cleaning can remove these.



## ***Is Bellevue's drinking water hard or soft?***

Bellevue's drinking water is soft. It is unnecessary to use special water softeners for your clothes or dishwashing machines.

Water's "hardness" and "softness" is due to its concentration of minerals, such as calcium and magnesium. Water is considered "softer" when it contains a lower mineral content. Bellevue's drinking water has a hardness of approximately 23.5 mg/L, or 1.37 grains per gallon.



## ***Who should I contact if my water has a unusual smell, taste, or appearance?***

A change in your water's smell, taste, or color is not necessarily a health concern. However, sometimes changes can be a sign of problems. If you notice a change in your water, please call **City of Bellevue Utilities at 425-452-7840**.





City of Bellevue Utilities  
PO Box 90012  
Bellevue, WA 98009-9012

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### Important Contact Information

#### City of Bellevue Utilities

##### Operation and Maintenance

2901 115th Ave NE, Bellevue, WA 98004

Monday thru Friday: 7:00 am – 3:30 pm

Email: [OMSupport@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:OMSupport@bellevuewa.gov)

Website: [www.bellevuewa.gov/utilities](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/utilities)

Utilities employees are on-call to respond to emergencies 24 hours a day. For **drinking water quality, cross connections and backflow assembly testing, water main break, flooding, sewer overflow, or pollutant spill**, please call **425-452-7840**.

During non-working hours, emergency calls are answered by staff who will contact the appropriate stand-by personnel.

Get involved! The Environmental Services Commission is a citizen group that advises The Bellevue City Council on Utilities issues. Call **Bellevue Utilities** at **425-452-4497** for meeting dates and other information.

#### City Hall

450 110th Ave NE, Bellevue, WA 98009-9012

Service First (general information) **425-452-6800**

[www.bellevuewa.gov](http://www.bellevuewa.gov)

#### Utility Billing 425-452-6973

To pay your utility bill online, please visit

[www.myutilitybill.bellevuewa.gov](http://www.myutilitybill.bellevuewa.gov)

#### Permit Processing 425-452-4898

[www.mybuildingpermit.com](http://www.mybuildingpermit.com)

#### EPA Hotlines

Safe Drinking Water **1-800-426-4791**

[water.epa.gov](http://water.epa.gov)

#### Washington State Department of Health

Office of Drinking Water **253-395-6750**

[www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/DrinkingWater](http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/DrinkingWater)



MyBellevue app available at:



This report contains important information about your drinking water. To read it in other languages, visit [www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality)

Các báo cáo này chứa các thông tin quan trọng về nước uống của quý vị.

Đề đọc bằng các thứ tiếng khác, truy cập [www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality)

Данный отчет содержит важные сведения о питьевой воде в вашем регионе.

На других языках он доступен по адресу: [www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality)

Este informe contiene información importante acerca del agua potable.

Para leerla en otros idiomas, visite [www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality)

本報告內含關於您飲用水的重要資訊。若需要使用其他語言閱讀此資訊，

請參觀網站 [www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality)

이 보고서에는 식수에 관한 중요한 정보가 들어 있습니다. 다른 언어로 읽으시려면, 다음 웹사이트를 방문하십시오: [www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality)

本報告書にはあなたの飲料水に関する重要な情報が記載されています。

英語以外の言語でお読みになる場合、[www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality) をご覧ください。

इस रपॉर्ट में आपके पीने के पानी के बारे में महत्वपूर्ण जानकारी शामिल है। इसे अन्य भाषाओं में पढ़ने के लिए, [www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/drinkingwaterquality) पर जाएँ