

# waterSOURCE

a Publication of the Athens-Clarke  
County Public Utilities Department

## New Customer Service Center

Located in downtown Athens, the old Athens First Bank building at 124 East Hancock Avenue is now the ACC Public Utilities Department (PUD) Customer Service Center. The Center houses PUD Administration, Engineering Management, and the Water Business Office, which were previously in several locations. This central location will help us to serve our customers much more efficiently.

Originally built in 1960, the Athens First Bank has been renovated with careful attention to the reuse of existing materials and historic preservation. The bank's marble interior, teller windows, doors, and woodwork have been restored. The teller windows are now customer service windows. Unique features, including two vault doors and a dumb waiter, have been kept intact, and the vaults serve as secure document storage rooms. The previous ATM window is now a drop box for utility payments.

A training room, inspectors, meter readers, and field technicians are located on the lower level. Customer service representatives, Water Business personnel, and Engineering Management are on the main level. The upper level houses Administration and the Water Conservation Office.

New construction has focused on meeting the standards for LEED Certification, including sustainability, energy and water efficiency, and indoor environmental quality. The building space has been redesigned to meet the department's needs for the next 25 years.

We look forward to serving our customers in our new location and welcome you to visit. An open house is scheduled for May 12, 4:30pm–6:00pm.

## roll out the barrels!

Twenty-one local artists are turning rain barrels into beautiful pieces of functional art and you have a chance to own one! Join us from 5:30–7:30 p.m. on May 20th at the Lyndon House for a closing reception and a silent auction. Proceeds from this delightful event benefit the Athens-Clarke County Green School Program.

Rain barrels are a simple way to conserve water and reduce stormwater runoff that may harm the health of our local streams. The auction barrels will be on public display at the Lyndon House Arts Center from May 13–20th. This event is brought to you by our Water Conservation Office and Athens-Clarke County Stormwater.



For more information or questions contact Ellison Fidler at Ellison.Fidler@AthensClarkeCounty.com

If you'd like to see the list of participating artists and their barrels, visit [rolloutthebarrels.org](http://rolloutthebarrels.org)

**SPECIAL ISSUE: Your Annual Water Quality Report Inside**

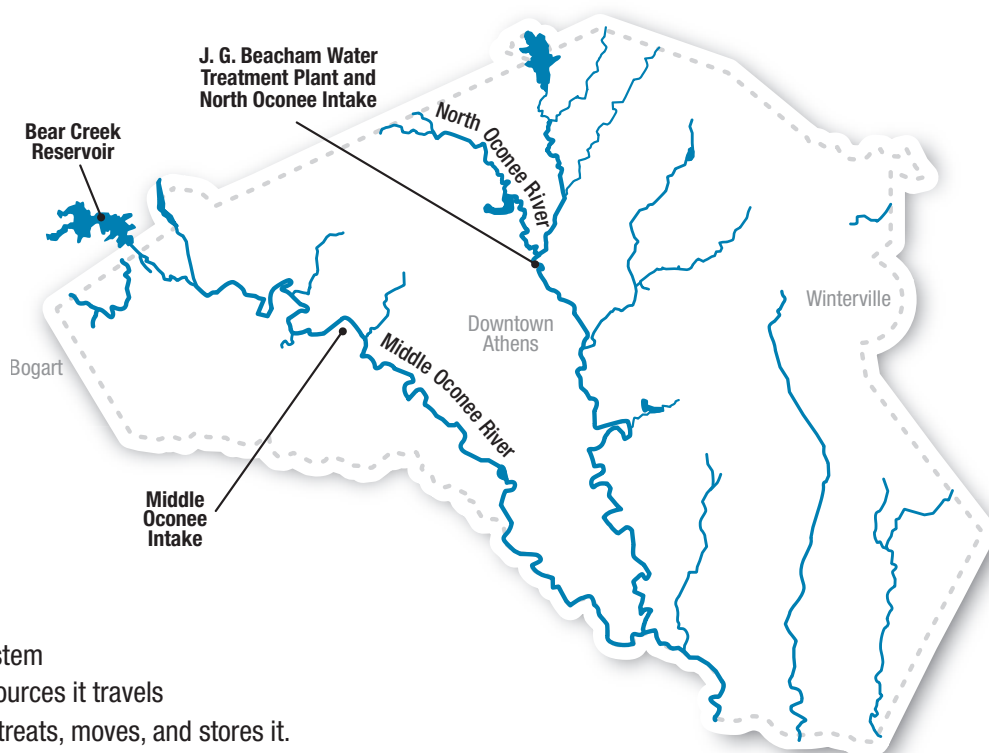
¿HABLA ESPANOL? Este Informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua beber. Tradúzcalo ó hable con alguien que lo entienda bien

# drinking water

Your water, treated and delivered by Athens-Clarke County, meets or surpasses all state and federal standards for safe drinking water. This annual report, required by the EPA Safe Drinking Water Act, provides you with vital information on the quality of your drinking water.

## where your water comes from

Your drinking water comes from three sources: the Bear Creek Reservoir, the North Oconee River, and the Middle Oconee River. The rivers flow through Athens-Clarke County before merging to form the main stem of the Oconee River. From these sources it travels through an elaborate system that treats, moves, and stores it.



## protecting our water sources

In order to protect public drinking water supplies at the source – our rivers, lakes and streams – the State of Georgia has established a Source Water Assessment Program. As part of this program, Athens-Clarke County and the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center completed a Source Water Assessment of the Middle Oconee and North Oconee rivers. The assessment identified potential sources of pollution and the overall susceptibility of our water supply to contamination. Both rivers have been ranked with a medium level of pollution susceptibility. Copies of the ACC Source Water Assessment Report are available at the Public Utilities Department Administration Office, 124 East Hancock Avenue, in downtown Athens.

Athens-Clarke County is helping to prevent pollution of our rivers through stream buffer requirements and stringent stormwater ordinances and controls. In addition, ACC has a Watershed Protection Plan that outlines specific measures for safeguarding our water resources.

## the journey of your water is an interesting trip!

Join us for a tour through the J.G. Beacham Water Treatment Plant and Bob M. Snipes Water Resource Center to learn more about water treatment and testing.

 To schedule a tour, contact our Water Conservation Coordinator, Marilyn Hall, at 706-613-3729 or [Marilyn.Hall@athensclarkecounty.com](mailto:Marilyn.Hall@athensclarkecounty.com)

# about your water test results

The charts below show the findings of our water testing after treatment and how it compares to national standards.

Better than EPA Standard	Contaminant	Typical Source	EPA Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Highest EPA Allowed Level (MCL)	Detected Level (what we found)
✓	Copper	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	1.3 ppm	AL 1.3 ppm	0.06 ppm 0 over AL
✓	Flouride	Water additive that promotes strong teeth	4.0 ppm	4.0 ppm	0.98 ppm Actual Range 0.67–0.98 ppm
✓	Lead	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	0 ppb	AL 15.0 ppb	2.5 ppb 0 over AL
✓	Nitrate (Nitrogen)	Runoff from fertilizer use	10.0 ppm	10.0 ppm	1.34 ppm
✓	Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMS)	By-product of drinking water chlorination	0 ppb	80.0 ppb (annual average)	38.06 ppb (annual average) Quarterly Range 19.60–55.15 ppb
✓	Turbidity	Soil runoff	0	TT = 1 NTU	0.22 (highest single measurement)
				TT = % of samples < 0.3 NTU	100% < 0.3 NTU

Better than EPA Standard	Contaminant	Typical Source	EPA Ideal Goal (MCLG)	Highest EPA Allowed Level (MCL)	Range of Removal	Annual Average Removal
✓	Total Organic Compounds	Naturally present in the environment	N/A	TT (>35% removal required)	23.5%–66.7%	43%

Better than EPA Standard	Contaminant	Typical Source	EPA Ideal Goal (MRDLG)	Highest EPA Allowed Level (MDRL)	Detected Level (what we found)
✓	Chlorine	Water additive for disinfection	4.0 ppm	4.0 ppm	1.95 ppm

## other important tests

ACC Athens-Clarke County tests for microscopic organisms known as Giardia and Cryptosporidium. We also test for total coliform bacteria, fecal coliform and E. coli, which occur naturally in the environment from human and animal waste and can be found in lakes, rivers, and streams.

**ACC has not detected any Cryptosporidium, Giardia, total coliform bacteria, fecal coliform or E. coli in your treated water.**



## why are there contaminants in drinking water?

As we learned in school, pure water is made up of hydrogen and oxygen. However, drinking water sources include streams, lakes, rivers, reservoirs and wells, which are never purely hydrogen and oxygen. They are subject to potential “contamination” by a wide variety of substances that occur naturally or are man-made. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves natural minerals, and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from human activity or the presence of animals.

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. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

## contaminants that may be present in source water before it is treated

**Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria that 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 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 stormwater runoff, and septic systems

**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

**Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities

## what about lead in drinking water?

Testing shows that the amount of lead in our drinking water is well below the EPA's allowed levels (see chart on left) However, lead in elevated levels can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. It is important to know that lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with water service lines and home plumbing. The Public Utilities Department is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in residential plumbing.

When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds up 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 or at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

## terms to know

### AL (Action Level)

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

### ppm (parts per million)

The equivalent of one drop of water in 42 gallons .

### ppb (parts per billion)

The equivalent of one drop of water in 14,000 gallons.

### 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.

### 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.

### TT (Treatment Technique)

A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

### Turbidity

A measure of the cloudiness of water. We monitor turbidity because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system. NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Unit) is a measurement of the clarity of the water.



## important health information from the EPA

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 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 (1-800-426-4791).



Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general public. Immuno-compromised individuals, such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly people, 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 available by contacting the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

## ensuring water quality

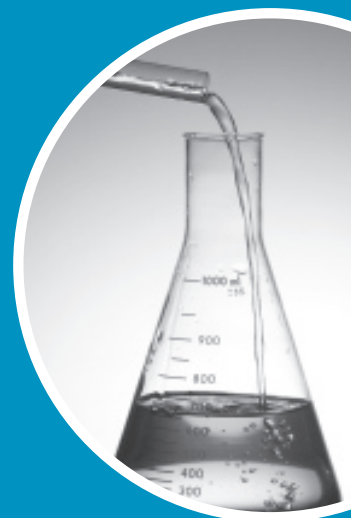
We collect and test water samples on a regular basis throughout your water's journey – at the rivers and Bear Creek Reservoir, at the water treatment plant, and in the distribution system.

We perform approximately 5,000 water quality tests every year:

- **Every hour of every day** at the water treatment plant
- **Daily** in the distribution system
- **Weekly** of raw water entering the plant and treated water ready to deliver
- **Every three months** at the Middle Oconee River, North Oconee River, and Bear Creek Reservoir
- **Monthly and quarterly** by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division for certain contaminants

## you can help, too!

- Pick up after your dog wherever they go.
- Keep fertilizers off of paved surfaces.
- Never sweep litter or debris into a storm drain.
- Never put any type of grease down a drain.
- Never dump cleaning products, chemicals, or paints down a drain.



## want to know more?

The PUD provides opportunity for public comment on all projects, and all records are available to the public. The Mayor and Commission review and approve all major water and wastewater projects at regularly scheduled meetings. These commission meetings, held at City Hall, are open to the public and televised locally on ACTV Cable Channel 7. Commission meeting information is available at [www.athensclarkecounty.com](http://www.athensclarkecounty.com).

For questions about this report or assistance with environmental or regulatory issues, contact Jeff Knight at 706-613-3470 or email [Jeff.Knight@athensclarkecounty.com](mailto:Jeff.Knight@athensclarkecounty.com)

To report a water quality problem or to request water testing, call our water treatment plant at 706-613-3481.

**ACC Public Utilities Department**  
[www.accpublicutilities.com](http://www.accpublicutilities.com)

**Georgia Environmental Protection Division**  
[www.georgiaepd.org](http://www.georgiaepd.org)

**Water Resources of Georgia U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)**  
[ga.water.usgs.gov](http://ga.water.usgs.gov)

**EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline**  
1-800-426-4791  
[water.epa.gov/drink](http://water.epa.gov/drink)

**For Kids and Teachers**  
[water.epa.gov/learn/kids/drinkingwater](http://water.epa.gov/learn/kids/drinkingwater)

# waterSOURCE



Athens  
Clarke  
County

Public Utilities  
Department

124 East Hancock Ave., Athens, Georgia 30601  
8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday–Friday

Administration  
706-613-3470

Customer Service Center  
706-613-3500

Water Conservation  
706-613-3729

To Report a Water Leak  
706-613-3495

Emergencies  
706-613-3481

[www.accpublicutilities.com](http://www.accpublicutilities.com)  
[www.thinkatthesink.com](http://www.thinkatthesink.com)

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hip hop  
hooray for  
clean water!



Our water conservation  
mascot, Lily Anne Phibian.

## news from Lily Anne Phibian

### outdoor watering schedule

For planting, growing, managing, or maintaining ground cover, trees, or shrubs, you may water between 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m.

#### ANYTIME

- Drip or soaker hose irrigation
- Hand watering with a hose with an automatic cut-off or with a handheld container
- Hydroseeding
- Installation, maintenance, or calibration of irrigation systems
- Irrigation of athletic fields, golf courses, or public turf grass recreational areas
- Irrigation of horticultural crops held for sale, resale, or installation

- Watering new and replanted plants or seeds
- Watering personal food garden

### ODD/EVEN WATERING SCHEDULE

Outdoor water use for any purposes other than watering plants, such as power washing or washing cars, is still restricted to the current odd / even watering schedule:

**Even-numbered addresses or unnumbered addresses** – Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays

**Odd-numbered address** – Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sunday



If you have any questions regarding outdoor water use, please call the Athens-Clarke County Water Conservation Office at 706-613-3729.



Support wise water use and  
become Lily's Facebook friend!