ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY

2021 water quality REPORT

WATER SYSTEM #0590000 CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT (CCR)

Our high quality, safe, clean drinking water means you can turn on your tap with confidence.

Protecting water quality

IT'S A TEAM EFFORT!

1972–2022
50 YEARS
OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT

The first comprehensive law protecting the nation's water quality

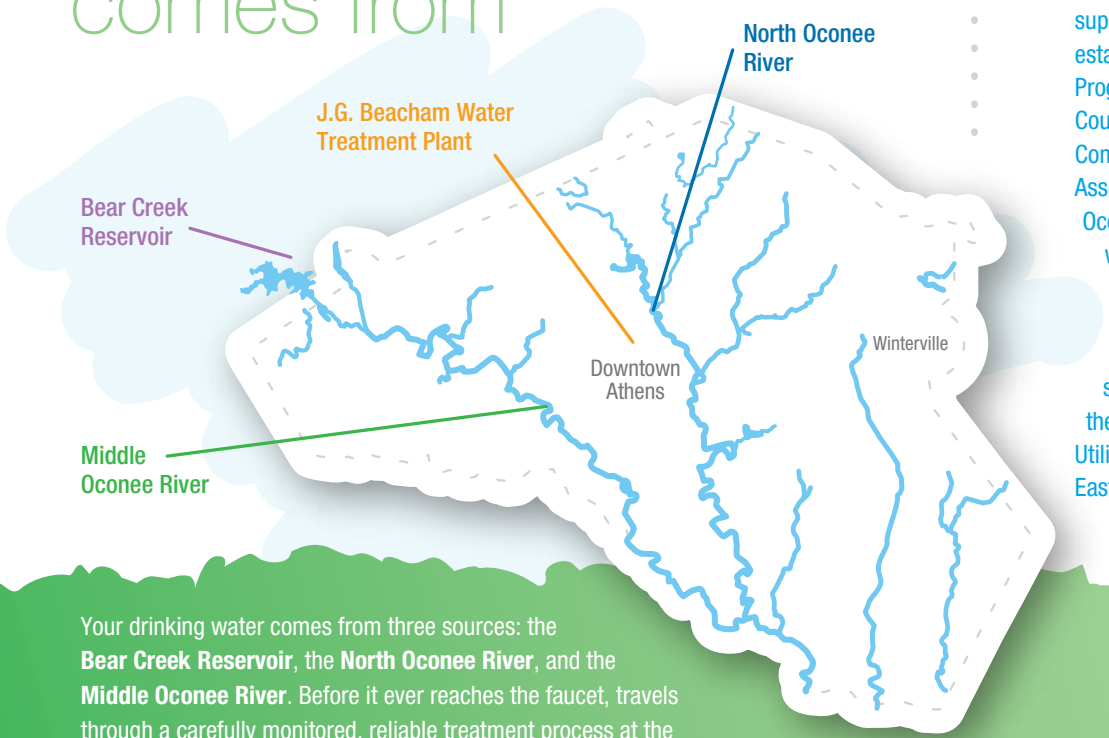
What we do

- Collect samples regularly at the rivers, Bear Creek Reservoir, the water treatment plant, and in the distribution system.
- Perform approximately 16,000 water quality tests every year.
- Perform tests routinely throughout the treatment process.
- Keep the water treatment system running smoothly 24 hours a day, seven days a week, ensuring that millions of gallons of clean, safe water are available every day.
- Ensure compliance with all federal and state water quality standards.

What you can do

- Never pour hazardous waste down the drain, on the ground, or into storm sewers.
- Limit the use of pesticides or fertilizers, and always follow the label directions.
- Dispose of your medications properly – visit **accgov.com/6344/What-should-I-do-with-old-prescriptions**.
- Always pick up after your dog when they go.
- Never sweep litter or debris into a storm drain.
- Participate in Rivers Alive – join Athens area residents in the annual clean-up of our local waterways. For more information, visit **accgov.com/riversalive**.

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**. Before it ever reaches the faucet, travels through a carefully monitored, reliable treatment process at the J.G. Beacham Drinking Water Treatment Plant.

SAFEGUARDING OUR RIVERS

In order to protect public drinking water supplies at the source, the State of Georgia established a Source Water Assessment Program. As part of this program, Athens-Clarke County and the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission completed a Source Water Assessment of the Middle Oconee and North Oconee rivers. Both rivers have been ranked with a medium level of pollution susceptibility. Based on the results of the Source Water Assessment, the county developed a Watershed Protection Plan for safeguarding our water resources. Copies of the report and plan are available at the Public Utilities Department Administration Office, 124 East Hancock Avenue in downtown Athens.

2021 Athens-Clarke County **Water**

The chart below shows the findings of Athens-Clarke County's Public Utilities Department (ACC PUD) water testing after treatment and how

Meets EPA Standard	Substance	Typical Source	Maximum Goal (MCLG)	Maximum Level (MCL)	Range of Removal	Annual Average Removal
YES	**Total Organic Carbon**	Naturally present in the environment	N/A	TT	0.96–1.3 ppm 4.00%–44.4%	**1.09 ppm** **35.94%**

Meets EPA Standard	Substance	Typical Source	Maximum Goal (MCLG)	Maximum Level (MCL)	Detected Level (what we found)
YES	**Copper***	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	1.30 ppm	AL 1.30 ppm	**0.036 ppm** **0.00 over AL**
YES	**Lead***	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	0.00 ppb	AL 15.00 ppb	**7.5 ppb** **2.0 over AL**
YES	**Fluoride**	Water additive that promotes strong teeth	4.00 ppm	4.00 ppm	**Max 2.55 ppm** Average 0.69 ppm (actual range 0.33–2.55 ppm)
YES	**Nitrate** (Nitrogen)	Runoff from fertilizer use	10.00 ppm	10.00 ppm	**0.77 ppm**
YES	**Haloacetic Acids** (HAA)	Corrosion of household plumbing systems	0.00 ppb	60.00 ppb (annual average)	**21.18 ppb**** Range ND–42.00 ppb
YES	**Filtered Turbidity**	Soil runoff	0.00 NTU	TT = 1.00 NTU	**0.18** (highest single measurement)
				TT = 95% of samples ≤ 0.30 NTU	**100.00% ≤ 0.3 NTU**
YES	**Chlorine**	Water additive for disinfection	4.00 ppm (MRDLG)	4.00 ppm (MRDL)	**Max 1.68 ppm** Average 0.86 ppm
NO	**Total Trihalomethanes** (TTHMS)	By-product of drinking water chlorination	0.00 ppb	80.00 ppb (annual average)	**57.91 ppb**** Range ND–130.0 ppb

We monitor TTHMs, a disinfection byproduct, at 8 locations across the county. On July 22, 2021, there was a single reading of 82.5 ppb (MCL is 80.0) at one location resulting in a locational running annual average violation.

ACTION TAKEN: We added automatic flushers, increased line flushing, and implemented changes to further reduce formation of disinfection byproducts in the distribution system. The violation ended at the next quarter sampling on November 2, 2021.

Some people who drink trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous systems, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer. For more information, visit www.accgov.com/TTHM.

*EPA regulations require testing every three years; latest testing done in 2021. **Annual locational average.

The required submittal of a copy of last year's CCR (annual water quality report) to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division did not meet the July 1st deadline, but was delivered on August 23rd.

Test Results

they compare to national standards.

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.

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.

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 contamination.

ND (NOT DETECTED)

NTU (NEPHELOMETRIC TURBIDITY UNIT) is a measurement of the clarity of the water.

TT (TREATMENT TECHNIQUE) A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

TURBIDITY – cloudiness of water; has no health effects, but we measure turbidity because it can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth.

CONTAMINANTS ARE MEASURED IN:

PARTS PER MILLION (ppm) the equivalent of one drop of water in 13.2 gallons

PARTS PER BILLION (ppb) the equivalent of one drop of water in 13,200 gallons

Having clean, safe water is one of the most important services our county provides. Our dedicated team of water professionals work for your health and safety.

Every hour of every day, certified water treatment operators perform tests throughout the treatment process.

Certified lab technicians analyze water samples from both the source water and the drinking water delivered to you to meet all water quality requirements of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division and the federal EPA.

Our mechanical and electrical staff maintain the reliable operations of all treatment plant equipment.

The result? Millions of gallons of high quality, safe drinking water reach homes, businesses, industries, and organizations every day.

LEARN MORE

All ACC PUD records are available to the public.
All major water and wastewater projects are reviewed and approved by the Mayor and Commission at City Hall meetings, which are open for public comment and televised on Facebook, Youtube, and ACTV Cable Channel 180. Copies of our annual water quality reports are available at **accgov.com/ccr**.

For more water quality info:

- Contact Laurel Loftin at 706-613-3729
- email savewater@accgov.com
- epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water
- accgov.com/8631/Drinking-Water-Quality

WHY ARE THERE CONTAMINANTS IN WATER?

Pure water is made up of hydrogen and oxygen. However, all drinking water comes from rivers, lakes, reservoirs, or wells. These sources are never purely hydrogen and oxygen. As water travels over land or through the ground, it dissolves natural minerals, and is subject to potential "contamination" by a variety of naturally occurring and man-made substances.

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.

To ensure that our tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Water Test Results at left detail the EPA's ideal goal and highest level allowed.

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).

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).

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 private service lines and home plumbing. ACC PUD 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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791) or at epa.gov/safewater/lead.

ACC PUD QUALITY AWARDED

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S WATERSENSE PROGRAM

For the 5th consecutive year, the ACC PUD earned a Sustained Excellence Award for its promotion of water-efficient products, practices, and services.

GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF WATER PROFESSIONALS

Comprehensive Education Program of Excellence in Water & Wastewater

Platinum Award, Cedar Creek Water Reclamation Facility (11th)

Platinum Award, Middle Oconee Water Reclamation Facility (9th)

2021 Water Reclamation Facility of the Year, Cedar Creek Water Reclamation Facility

FOX MCCARTHY WATE WISE AWARD

Outstanding ConservationProgram

Find the faucet icon hidden in this water quality report and enter to win a bucket of water gifts! Tell us at **accgov.com/LittleLilyLookout**. Entries are accepted until July 31, 2022.

Certified Blue Businesses Our 35 Certified Blue local restaurants, bars, and venues consistently practice water efficiency and encourage their employees and customers to use water wisely. Visit **accgov.com/blue**

Ripple Effect Film Project Local students submit an average of **50 films per year** to the annual film festival promoting the importance of water and conservation.

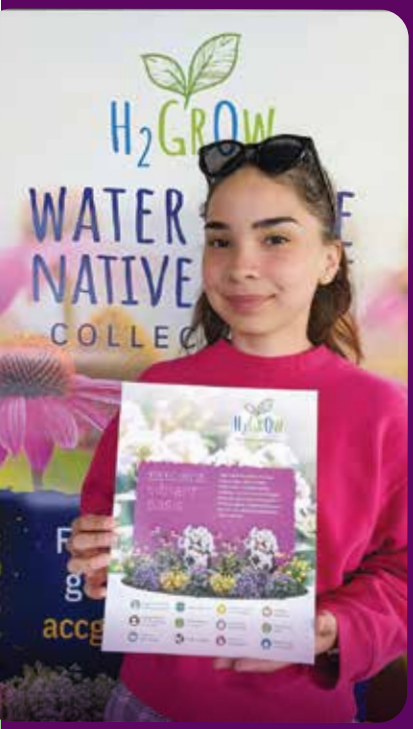
2021 Water Conservation Leadership Award

Normal Hardware and Athens Hardware These hardware stores served as pick-up points for our free WaterSense showerheads and toilet flappers in support of our water-efficiency promotions. Their combined efforts help customers reduce water use in Athens by over 10,000,000 gallons annually.

Athens Water Festival An **average of 1,000 residents** learn and play at our annual water celebration. Join us on September 10!

Community Counts!

WORKING TOGTHER FOR WATER PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION.



Cofer's Home & Garden Showplace As a partner in our H2GrOw program, Cofer's encourages water-wise gardening by promoting H2GrOw Native Plants Collection design guides, providing expertise, and offering limited-time discounts to customers choosing water-wise native plants. Learn more at **accgov.com/h2grow.**

Education Programs Little Lily, our water mascot, made water a fun subject for **790 students** in **14 schools** and **43 classrooms** during this past school year.

WaterSense Meets EPA Criteria

Annual Showerhead Giveaway An estimated **2 million gallons of water saved** annually by residents switching to WaterSense showerheads in 2021.

Visit ThinkAtTheSink.com for upcoming events and workshops.