

# CITY OF SWEET HOME Water Quality Report 2015



— Overall —  
*Best Drinking Water  
in Oregon  
2016*

*City of Sweet Home*

Oregon Association  
of Water Utilities

## **About this report:**

*This report represents the results of the 2015 drinking water program. You can be assured that the water is safe to drink as the results listed in this document confirm. The report is a requirement mandate and meets the specifications set forth by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).*

*This report is intended to increase public awareness of drinking water, how it gets from its source to your homes and businesses, and what tests are applied to detect contaminants. To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA set limits on the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Federal Food and Drug Administration sets limits for contaminants in bottled water.*

*Drinking water, including bottled water, may be reasonably 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 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.*

## Need more info?

City of Sweet Home Water Treatment Plant  
operated by OMI, Inc.  
(541) 367-4846

**Public Works Department**  
Michael J. Adams, Director  
(541) 367-6243, x244

**Billing and Accounts Questions**  
(541) 367-5128  
Punch in extension 221

**City of Sweet Home Web site**  
www.ci.sweet-home.or.us  
City Council meetings are held the  
second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

**Environmental Protection Agency Safe  
Drinking Water Hotline**  
1-800-426-4791  
www.epa.gov/safewater

**American Water Works Association Web site:**  
www.awwa.org

**Oregon Human Services  
Drinking Water Division**  
(503) 731-4010  
www.ohd.hr.state.or.us/dw

*This report compiled by  
Cindi Robeck*

## Water Quality Data Table Explanation

The table at right shows the results of the city's water quality analysis. Every regulated contaminant that we detected in the most minute traces, is listed here. The table contains the name of each substance, the highest level allowed by regulation (MCL), the ideal goals for public health, the amount detected, the usual sources of such contamination, and footnote explaining our findings.

■ One part per million is the same as 1 inch in 16 miles, one minute in two years, one cent in \$10,000, or 1 ounce of salt in 31 tons of potato chips.

■ One part per billion is the same as 1 inch in 16,000 miles, one second in 32 years, one cent in \$10 million, or a pinch of salt in 10 tons of potato chips.

■ One part per trillion is the same as 1 inch in 16 billion miles, one second in 320 centuries, one cent in \$10 billion or a pinch of salt in 10,000 tons of potato chips.

## Why This Report?

If this information looks familiar, it should. The City of Sweet Home has mailed similar information to customers each year since 1997.

Why every year?

Drinking water regulations require the city to produce and mail this information every year.

Most of the language is also required – Congress and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) want to be sure people know what is in their drinking water.

The City of Sweet Home agrees and that's why the city is making the effort to make this complex information understandable to those reading this report.

**On the cover:** State awards attest to the quality of Sweet Home's drinking water. To learn more, see the back page of this report.

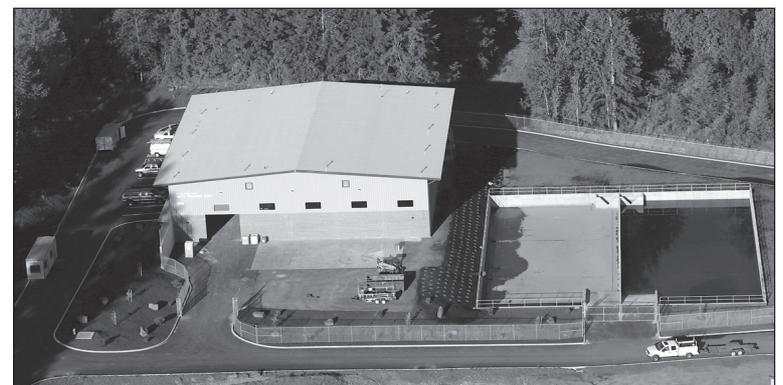
# City of Sweet Home 2015 Annual Water Quality Report

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the calendar year of this report. Although many more contaminants were tested, only those substances listed below were found in your water. All sources of drinking water contain some naturally occurring contaminants. At low levels, these substances are generally not harmful in our drinking water. Removing all contaminants would be extremely expensive, and in most cases, would not provide increased protection of public health. A few naturally occurring minerals may actually improve the taste of drinking water and have nutritional value at low levels. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done in the calendar year of the report. The EPA or the State requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not vary significantly from year to year, or the system is not considered vulnerable to this type of contamination. As such, some of our data, though representative, may be more than one year old. In this table you will find terms and abbreviations that might not be familiar to you. To help you better understand these terms, we have provided the definitions below the table.

Contaminants	MCLG	MCL,	Your	Range		Sample	Violation	Typical Source
	or	TT, or		Low	High			
	MRDLG	MRDL	Water			Date		
<b>Disinfectants &amp; Disinfectant By-Products</b>								
(There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants)								
Chlorine (as Cl <sub>2</sub> ) (ppm)	4	4	0.6	0.28	0.96	2015	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Total Organic Carbon (ppm)	NA	TT	ND	ND	ND	2015	No	Naturally present in the environment
<b>Stage 2 - Disinfectants &amp; Disinfectant By-Products</b>								
THMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	NA	80	15.8	14.3	17.4	2015	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)	NA	60	7.6	6.6	8.7	2015	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>								
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	1.08	0.07	1.08	2014	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate [measured as Nitrogen] (ppm)	10	10	ND	ND	ND	2015	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
<b>Microbiological Contaminants</b>								
Turbidity (NTU)	NA	0.3	0.24	NA	NA	2015	No	Soil runoff
99% of the samples were below the TT value of 0.3. A value less than 95% constitutes a TT violation. The highest single measurement was 0.39. Any measurement in excess of 1 is a violation unless otherwise approved by the state.								
Total Coliform (positive samples/month)	0	1	0	NA	NA	2015	No	Naturally present in the environment

Contaminants	MCLG	AL	Your Water	Sample Date	# Samples	Exceeds	Typical Source
					Exceeding AL		
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>							
Lead - action level at consumer taps (ppb)	0	15	2.2	2015	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Copper - action level at consumer taps (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.04	2015	0	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

*Sweet Home's Water Treatment Plant, right, is where water from the South Santiam River is filtered to remove contaminants listed above, and treated for delivery to your tap. For definitions and other explanatory information, see chart on next page.*



# What's that in English?

## Acronyms and Definitions

**Action Level:** The concentration of a contaminant, which, if exceeded, triggers treatment of other requirements which a water system must follow.

**CDC:** Centers for Disease Control

**EPA:** Environmental Protection Agency

**IT:** Treatment Technique. A required process intended to produce the level of containment in drinking water. A treatment technique may be required by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Oregon Health Department.

**MCL:** Maximum Contaminant Level. The highest level of 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 contaminant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

**MNR:** Monitored, not regulated.

**MPL:** State-assigned maximum permissible level.

**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 disinfection 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.

**NA:** Not applicable.

**ND:** Not detected.

**NR:** Monitoring not required, but recommended.

**NTU:** Nephelometric Turbidity Unit. Unit of measure used to describe water clarity. The smaller the number the clearer the water.

**pCi/L:** Picocuries per liter (measure of radioactivity).

**ppb:** Parts per billion. One ppb is equal to approximately one drop of water in a 22,000-gallon swimming pool.

**ppm:** Parts per million. One ppm is equal to approximately one drop of water in 22 gallons. One ppm is equivalent to one milligram per liter.

## How to protect your water sources

Protection of drinking water is everyone's responsibility. You can help protect your community's drinking water source in several ways:

■ Eliminate excess use of lawn and garden fertilizers and pesticides – they contain hazardous chemicals that can reach your drinking water source.

■ Pick up after your pets.

■ If you have your own septic system, properly maintain your system to reduce leaching to water sources or consider connecting to a public water system.

■ Dispose of chemicals properly; take used motor oil to a recycling center.

■ Volunteer in your community. Find a watershed or wellhead protection organization in your community and volunteer to help. If there are no active groups, consider starting one.

Use EPA's Adopt Your Watershed to locate groups in your community, or visit the Watershed Information Network's How to Start a Watershed Team

■ Organize a storm drain stenciling project with your local government or water supplier. Stencil a message next to the street drain reminding people "Dump No Waste - Drains to River" or "Protect Your Water."

Produce and distribute a flyer for households to remind residents that storm drains dump directly into your local water body.

## Lead contamination in water a danger that city

*The following statement is a report requirement regardless of lead levels occurring in any samples.*

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.

The City of Sweet Home is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing com-

ponents.

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 two 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 [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).



## Health problems? Read on...

*The following statement is required by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):*

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.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) / Centers for Disease



Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

## Contaminants – even naturally occurring – can be bad news

*The following statement is required by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):*

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 minerals, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

■ Microbial contaminants such as viruses and bacteria, which 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 stormwater 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 residential uses.

■ Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are byproducts or 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.

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.

## Conservation: Save water, save money

Did you know that the average U.S. household uses approximately 400 gallons of water per day or 100 gallons per person per day? Luckily, there are many low-cost and no-cost ways to conserve water. Small changes can make a big difference – try one today and soon it will become second nature.

■ Take short showers - a five-minute shower uses four to five gallons of water compared to up to 50 gallons for a bath.

■ Shut off water while brushing your teeth, washing your hair and shaving and save up to 500 gallons a month.

■ Use a water-efficient showerhead. They're inexpensive, easy to install, and can save you up to 750 gallons a month.

■ Run your clothes washer and dishwasher only when they are full. You can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.

■ Water plants only when necessary.

■ Fix leaky toilets and faucets. Faucet washers are inexpensive and take only a few minutes to replace. To check your toilet for a leak, place a few drops of food coloring in the tank and wait. If it seeps into the toilet bowl without flushing, you have a leak. Fixing it or replacing it with a new, more efficient model can save up to 1,000 gallons a month.

■ Adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered. Apply water only as fast as the soil can absorb it and during the cooler parts of the day to reduce evaporation.

■ Teach your kids about water conservation to ensure a future generation that uses water wisely. Make it a family effort to reduce next month's water bill!

For more information, visit [www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense).



The City of Sweet Home's water has been judged the best in the state in two separate tests in which the city's water was matched up against others, including communities drawing their water from wells, in blind tests – meaning judges had no idea where the water was coming from. Here, the Oregon Association of Water Utilities presents the awards to the city staff and officials in a recent ceremony. From left are Mike Collier, deputy director and source water specialist with OAWU; Sweet Home Mayor Jim Gourley; D.J. Fox, city Water Treatment Plant operations manager; Tim Riley, mechanic with city Public Works; Mike Adams, city Public Works director; and Jason Green, executive director of the OAWU.

# City Water Zones

