



# 2024 Drinking Water **QUALITY REPORT** MARTIN COUNTY UTILITIES AND SOLID WASTE



Martin County's Utilities and Solid Waste Department makes a daily commitment to provide the highest quality drinking water to our residents. This report reflects that commitment and represents a summary of the quality of your drinking water. PWS # 4431891



## Martin County Utilities and Solid Waste Department

3473 SE Willoughby Blvd, Stuart | 772.221.1434 | [www.martin.fl.us](http://www.martin.fl.us)

Dear Martin County Utility Customer,

The Martin County Utilities and Solid Waste Department is pleased to present you with this Annual Water Quality Report. The purpose of the report is to keep you informed about water quality and the services we have provided to you during the past year.

Martin County Utilities provides citizens and businesses with reliable water, sewer, and reclaimed water management services. We are proud of our employees who work to ensure we maintain the highest standards of water quality and customer service.

Martin County Utilities strives to provide a standard of excellence to our customers that we can all be proud of. Our goal has always been, and will continue to be, providing you with a dependable supply of drinking water.

There are many aspects to the services we provide, so after reading this information, we encourage you to contact us if you have additional questions or would like to share your thoughts with us. We are always looking for opportunities to improve wherever possible and look forward to your suggestions.

We are here to serve you!  
Thank you,



Samuel Amerson, P.E.

Director, Martin County Utilities and Solid Waste

If you are a landlord or manager, please provide this water quality report to your residents/tenants. This report may be distributed or posted in a prominent location at your facility.

# Our Treatment Plants

Martin County Utilities is dedicated to protecting public health by providing safe drinking water in a cost effective manner. Our customers are our first priority. As demands on Southeast Florida's limited water resources increase and EPA drinking water standards become more restrictive, these objectives are continually challenged. We are proud of our forward-thinking approach to providing a safe drinking water supply to our citizens.



**Tropical Farms Water Treatment Plant**



**North Water Treatment Plant**

Martin County operates two plants: the North Water Treatment Plant in Jensen Beach and Tropical Farms Water Treatment Plant located off Kanner Highway west of the Turnpike. Both plants utilize two distinct underground sources of water, the shallower surficial aquifer and the deeper Floridan aquifer, each requiring different treatment methods.

By treating the more mineralized Floridan Aquifer, considered an alternative water source, we conserve the shallow groundwater for the future. Blending it with the surficial product water provides alkalinity and hardness and results in a stable finished product.

Our Tropical Farms plant is a 10 million gallon per day (MGD) facility capable of treating 8 MGD brackish groundwater by reverse osmosis (RO) and 2 MGD of surficial ground water by Iron Treatment Filtration (ITF).

The product of the RO process is relatively free of desirable minerals, so ITF product water is then blended to enhance the stability of the water. The blended water is degasified to strip out hydrogen sulfide gas, followed by pH and alkalinity adjustment. Adequate disinfection is then performed to retain an acceptable residual for safety throughout the system, and the finished water is transferred to storage and pumped to distribution.

Our North plant is an 8.8 MGD facility capable of treating 5.5 MGD brackish groundwater by RO and 3.3 MGD of surficial groundwater by deep bed filtration.

The treatment process is very similar to Tropical Farms. The water is chlorinated to provide a disinfectant residual and then distributed to our customers.





# AWARDS

The Martin County Utilities & Solid Waste Department is proud of the following awards:

**Honorable Mention**, Florida Water Environmental Association Utility Management Award (2023)

**Length of Service Award 20 years**, by National Weather Service, Melbourne, David Volsinet (2022)

**Best Tasting Drinking Water Award**, American Water Works Association – Region VIII (2022)

**Outstanding Membrane Plant Operator**, Southeast Desalting Association (2022), Brittany Bassett, Assistant Director

**Volunteer of the Year**, American Water Works Association – Region VIII (2023 and 2022), Brittany Bassett, Assistant Director

**Domestic Wastewater Plant Operations Excellence Award**, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (2020 and 2018)



# Drinking Water Quality and Safety

The sources of drinking water (both tap and bottled) 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 material. Water can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Our wells draw water from the surficial aquifer that is then blended with the product water from our Reverse Osmosis Treatment System, which draws from the Floridan aquifer. Martin County Utilities routinely monitors for contaminants in drinking water in strict accordance with federal and state laws.

In order to ensure that tap water is acceptable to drink, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

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.

## Lead Exposure

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and in home plumbing. Martin County Utilities is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposure.



Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formula, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry, or running a load of dishes. If you have a lead service line or galvanized service line requiring replacement, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact Martin County Utilities Customer Service at 772.221.1434. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

## Lead Service Line Inventory

While Martin County's water has not changed, the EPA did change its regulations, requiring all public water service providers, including Martin County Utilities, to develop an inventory of all water service line materials and make it publicly available. In March 2023, Martin County began developing a detailed inventory to identify the materials of unknown service lines (both publicly and privately owned) through records, field verifications, and statistical analysis. This service line material inventory can be accessed on the Martin County website at <https://www.martin.fl.us/TakingInventory>.

## Vulnerable Populations

Some people with special health concerns may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised persons such as those with cancer, those undergoing chemotherapy, those who have undergone organ transplants, those with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, and some elderly and infant populations can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and EPA guidelines regarding the appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbiological contaminants are also available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800.426.4791.



# Source Water Contamination

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 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

## Source Water Assessments

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) conducted its most recent assessment of our source water systems in 2024. The assessment was performed to provide information about any potential sources of contamination in the vicinity of our wells. For our system, all potential sources of contamination were assigned a Low to Moderate susceptibility score.

The threat of contamination is further mitigated by a well field protection ordinance and extensive water quality testing. Assessment results and more information are available on the FDEP Source Water Assessment and Protection Program website at <https://prodapps.dep.state.fl.us/swapp/> and can also be obtained from Martin County Utilities at 772.221.1434.

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.



## Martin County Utilities Water Quality Monitoring

An important part of providing drinking water to our customers is monitoring its quality from the point it is first withdrawn from our wells to its final delivery to every home or business. Martin County Utilities water quality monitoring program includes chemical and microbiological sampling and analysis by our own Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Public Health certified laboratory, and FDEP certified treatment plant operators.

**Well fields:** The suitability of source water is evaluated prior to the construction of a production well. Well water is then regularly monitored for quality.

**Treatment process:** The processes are operated by licensed operators 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Process control testing and on-line analyzers provide continuous data.

**Finished water:** Monitoring and testing at the points-of-entry to the distribution system are an ongoing activity.

**Distribution system:** Monitoring of the water quality in the network of water mains comprising the distribution system is conducted monthly at 100+ sampling stations located throughout our service area.



# Water Quality Glossary of Terms

In our line of work, we use a lot of acronyms. Here are some of the most common ones:

## AL

### Action Level:

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

### LEVEL 1 ASSESSMENT:

A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in the water system.

## LRAA

### Locational Running Annual Average:

The average of sample analytical results for samples taken at a particular monitoring location during the previous four calendar quarters.

## MCL

### Maximum Containment 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.

## 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.

## ND

### Non Detects:

Means not detected and indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

## PCi/L

### Picocuries Per Liter:

A measure of the radioactivity in water.

## PPB

### Parts Per Billion:

Means one part by weight of analyte to 1 billion parts by weight of the water sample.

## PPM

### Parts Per Million:

This means one part by weight of analyte to 1 million parts by weight of the water sample.





# Water Quality Results

Martin County Utilities routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. Except where indicated otherwise, this report is based on the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2024. Data obtained before January 1, 2024, and presented in this report, are from the most recent testing done in accordance with the applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires water quality monitoring for over 80 drinking water contaminants. The tables below do not list those parameters that had only analytical results of not detected (ND).

As you can see by the tables, your drinking water meets or exceeds all Federal and State requirements.

## INORGANIC CONTAMINANTS

Results in the “Level Detected” column for inorganics are the highest average at any of the sampling points or the highest detected level at any sampling point, depending on the sampling frequency.

Contaminant & Unit of Measurement	Dates of Sampling (mo. / yr.)	MCL Violation Y / N	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Barium (ppm)	3/23	N	0.0026	0.0016 - 0.0026	2	2	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	3/23	N	0.26	0.055 - 0.26	4	4.0	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories. Water additive which promotes strong teeth when at the optimum level of 0.7 ppm
Sodium (ppm)	3/23	N	46.6	45.1 - 46.6	N/A	160	Salt water intrusion, leaching from soil







# Water Quality Results *continued*

## DISINFECTANTS AND DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS

For total trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids, the level detected is the highest locational running annual average (LRAA) of each of the sample sites, and the range of results is the range of all individual sample results during the past year. For chloramines, the level detected is the highest running annual average (RAA), computed quarterly, of monthly averages of all samples collected. The range of results is the range of results of all the individual samples collected during the past year.

Contaminant & Unit of Measurement	Dates of Sampling (mo. / yr.)	MCL Violation Y / N	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG or MRDLG	MCL or MRDL	Likely Source of Contamination
TTHM (Total Trihalomethanes) (ppb)	2/24 - 11/24	N	53.9	0.8 - 63.5	N/A	MCL = 80	By-product of drinking water disinfection
HAA5 (Haloacetic Acid) (ppb)	2/24 - 11/24	N	34.7	0.9 - 41.2	N/A	MCL = 60	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chloramines (ppm)	1/24 - 12/24	N	3.0	0.6 - 4.9	MRDLG = 4	MRDL = 4.0	Water additive used to control microbes

## LEAD AND COPPER (TAP WATER)

Contaminant & Unit of Measurement	Dates of Sampling (mo. / yr.)	AL Ex-ceeded Y / N	90th Percentile Result	No. of sampling sites exceeding the AL	MCLG	Action Level (AL)	Likely Source of Contamination
Copper, tap water (ppm)	8/23	N	0.11	0	1.3	1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
Lead, tap water (ppb)	8/23	N	4.0	0	0	15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits

Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that another potentially harmful waterborne pathogen may be present, or that a potential pathway exists through which contamination may enter the drinking water distribution system. We found coliforms indicating the need to look for potential problems in water treatment or distribution. When this occurs, we are required to conduct assessment(s) to identify problems and to correct any problems that were found during these assessments. During the past year, we were required to conduct one Level 1 assessment. One Level 1 assessment was completed. We were required to take zero corrective actions although we completed three of these actions.



# What's on tap now and for the future?

Martin County Utilities continues to expand water and wastewater services to existing residences and businesses within the utility's service area.

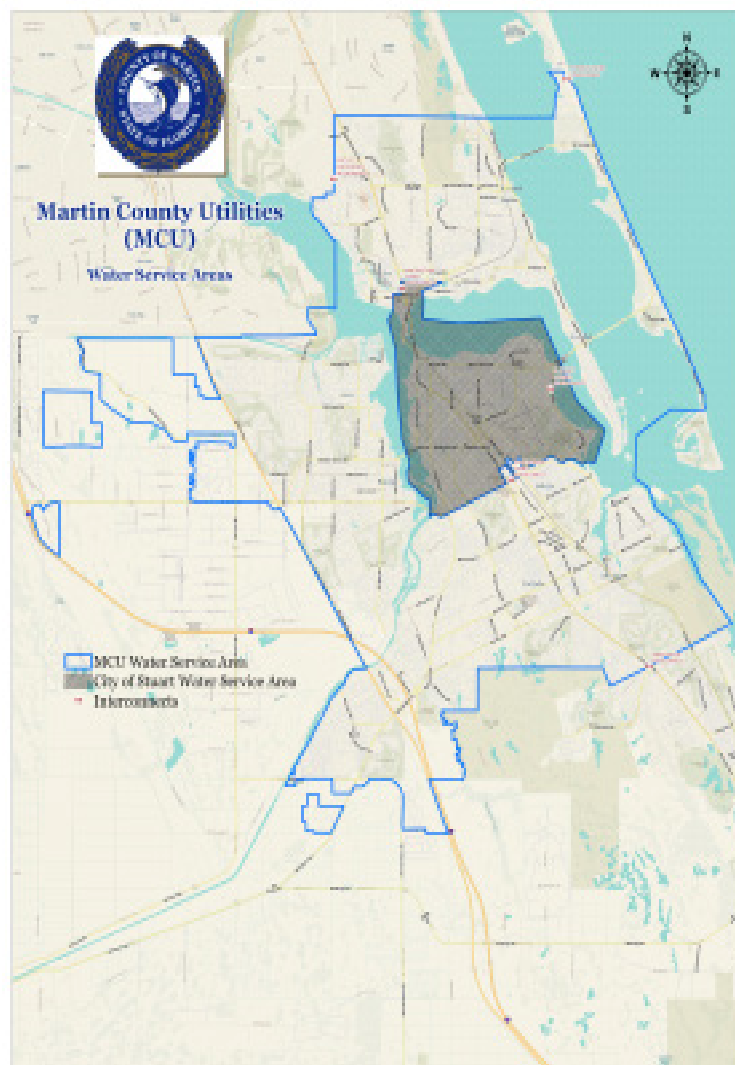
## Septic to Sewer

Septic to sewer conversions have long been a priority of the Board of County Commissioners. Over the years, we have completed numerous projects to provide sewer service to properties formerly served by septic systems, with more projects planned for the future.

**22 neighborhood septic to sewer projects have been completed since 2019, providing service availability to approximately 4,600 properties.**

- ▶ Through 2030, 16 additional neighborhood septic to sewer projects are anticipated to be completed, providing service availability to another 3,900 properties.
- ▶ To date, Martin County Utilities has received over \$37.1 million in grants to assist in funding the Septic to Sewer Program.

Additional details can be found at [www.martin.fl.us/SeptictoSewer](http://www.martin.fl.us/SeptictoSewer).



## Capital Improvement Plan

Martin County Utilities Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes septic to sewer projects, ongoing replacement projects, one-time rehabilitation projects, and capacity/service related projects. The CIP ensures reliable and consistent service to potable water, wastewater, and reclaimed water customers.

Major CIP projects includes expansions to the Tropical Farms WTP and North WTP, new water supply well, wastewater collection and plant improvements, and water supply planning. Additional details can be found at [www.martin.fl.us/CIP](http://www.martin.fl.us/CIP).



# Understanding Boil Water Notices

## Stay Informed and Stay Safe!

A precautionary boil water notice is sent out when there is a concern that the water supply may be contaminated with microbes. The notice serves to protect public health by advising the affected community to boil their water before drinking it or using it for any activity that involves the consumption of water, like cooking, making ice, or brushing teeth.

### Protecting the water supply

To ensure the delivery of safe drinking water to customers, Martin County Utilities has many built-in safeguards to prevent water contamination, including:

- Proper water treatment
- System pressure
- Backflow prevention
- Residual disinfectant
- Routine bacteriological monitoring

*If one or more of these safeguards are compromised, then a boil water notice may be necessary until laboratory tests confirm the water is acceptable to drink.*

### What can trigger a boil water notice

Several circumstances can create conditions where contaminants could potentially enter the water supply and result in the issuance of a boil water notice:

- Water pressure loss or severe pressure reduction
- Pipes breaking
- Hurricanes, heavy rains, and flooding events that can disrupt water treatment and distribution systems
- Routine system maintenance or other infrastructure issues
- Water quality issues identified during monitoring



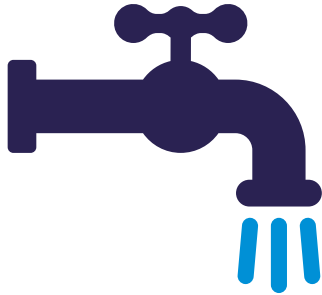
## How long does a precautionary boil water notice last?

Boil water notices don't have a specific timeframe. They remain in effect until the problem has been corrected and bacteriological testing shows that the water is safe to drink.

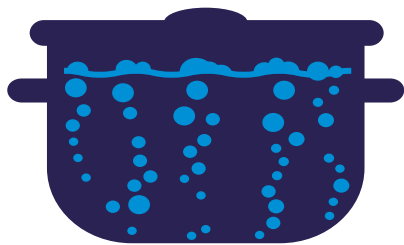
Customers will be notified when the boil water notice is lifted through the same method as the original notice.

# What to do when you receive a Boil Water Notice

It's important to pay attention to public announcements during boil water notices and follow these simple steps to protect yourself and your family:



**Use tap water only after boiling** for drinking, cooking, making ice, brushing teeth, or any other activity that involves the consumption of water.



**Bring water to a rolling boil for at least one minute**, then let it cool before use. Boiling water helps to kill or inactivate harmful microorganisms that may be present.



**Store the boiled water in clean, covered containers.**

## Alternative Water Sources:

When bottled water is available, it is a convenient alternative to boiling water.



## Your Safety is Our Priority!

Stay informed and share this information with your community.



For additional resources, guidelines, and tips, visit [martin.fl.us/departments/utilities-and-solid-waste](https://martin.fl.us/departments/utilities-and-solid-waste)



To sign up for AlertMartin so you will receive important public safety messages, go to [martin.fl.us/AlertMartin](https://martin.fl.us/AlertMartin)

