

# TISBURY WATER WORKS

## 2024 Water Quality Report

PWS #4296000 | Issued June 2025

### We are pleased to present the annual Water Quality Report and other helpful information.

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) requires that utilities issue an annual "Consumer Confidence" report to customers in addition to other notices that may be required by law. This report details where our water comes from, what it contains, and the risks our water testing and treatment are designed to prevent. TWW is committed to providing you with the safest and most reliable water supply.

A Sanitary Survey is performed periodically by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) and is available upon request. This survey is conducted to ensure the TWW is following guidelines, policies and regulations as set forth by the MassDEP.

### Improving Operations

We are beginning the design and permitting for replacement of the steel standpipe on High Point Road. Construction is tentatively scheduled to start in the fall of 2026. Please check our website for updates as the project progresses.

For more info about contaminants and their potential affects you can call the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (SDWH) at 1-800-426-4791.

**Drinking water, included bottled, may reasonably be expected to contain at least some small amounts of contaminants. It doesn't necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.**

---

***Informed consumers are our best allies in maintaining safe drinking water.***



#### Contact Information

**Tisbury Water Works**

PO Box 84, Tisbury, MA 02568

P: 508.693.3100 F: 508.338.7776

Office Hours: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Superintendent: James Cleary

[jcleary@tisburyma.gov](mailto:jcleary@tisburyma.gov)



#### Governing Board

**Tisbury Board of Water Commissioners**

- David J. Schwab, Chair
- Roland Miller
- Elmer Silva



#### Public Meetings

**When:** Second Tuesday or Wednesday  
of each month at 4:00 PM

**Where:** [tisburyma.gov/tisbury-water-works](https://tisburyma.gov/tisbury-water-works)

Virtual link & agenda posted at least 48 hours in advance. Call ahead to be added to the agenda.

# Where Does Our Water Come From?

The Tisbury Water Works (TWW) receives its water from three supply sources: the **Sanborn**, **Tashmoo** and **Manter** Wells. All sources are groundwater supplied from the Island's sole source aquifer.

An Aquifer is an underground layer of water-bearing permeable rock or unconsolidated materials (gravel, sand, silt or clay) from which groundwater can be extracted. An aquifer is recharged from rainwater and snowmelt, and from lakes and rivers. Groundwater can easily be polluted by seepage from landfills, septic tanks, from leaky underground fuel tanks, and sometimes from fertilizers or pesticides. Once polluted, the water becomes no longer safe to drink. By refusing sources of pollution, our groundwater will continue to be an important natural resource.

The **SANBORN** Well (Well #1), off Edgartown Road, is a 220 foot deep gravel-packed well, in operation since 1952. It is currently capable of pumping 950 gallons per minute (gpm).

The **TASHMOO** Well (Well #2) on W. Spring St., is a 219 foot deep gravel-packed well, in operation since 1965. It is currently capable of pumping 850 gpm.

The **MANTER** Well (Well #3) off Old Holmes Hole Road, is a 215 foot deep gravel-packed well, and was put on-line in 2004. It is capable of pumping 1,000 gpm.

There is an emergency interconnection with the Oak Bluffs Water District (OBWD) on Edgartown Rd. This allows TWW to get water from OBWD in an emergency, ensuring a constant supply of water to our customers.

## Cross Connection Control

Tisbury Water Works recommends the installation of Hose Bibb type vacuum breakers on all outside faucets. This will protect residents from the potential of backflow into their homes and the water system from a hose connection. Studies have shown that hoses are the most commonly unprotected cross connection.



## Terms & Abbreviations

**THE ACTION LEVEL:** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers a treatment or other requirement which a water system must follow.

**MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL GOAL (MCLG):** the level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLG's allow for a margin of safety.

**Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):** the highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the MCLG's as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

**SECONDARY MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVELS (SMCL):** these standards are developed to protect the aesthetic qualities of drinking water and are not health-based.

**MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND STANDARDS GUIDELINE (ORSG):** this is the concentration of a chemical in drinking water, at or below which, adverse non-cancer health effects are likely to occur after chronic (lifetime) exposure. If exceeded, it serves as an indicator of the potential need for further action.

**TOTAL COLIFORM:** a bacteria that indicates other potentially harmful bacteria may be present.

**90<sup>TH</sup> PERCENTILE:** out of every 10 homes, 9 were at or below this level.

# Water Quality Analysis

The table shows the results of our water quality analysis. Although we run well over 1,000 different tests throughout the year, the table below lists the only substances that we detected in the water, even in the most minute traces. They are all below the Maximum Contaminant Levels. The table contains the name of each substance, the highest level allowed by regulation (MCL), the ideal goals of public health, the amount detected, the usual sources of such contamination, footnotes explaining our findings, and a key to units of measurement.

Contaminants	2024 Water Quality Table						PWSID #4296000	
Regulated Substances	Date Tested	Units	MCL	MCLG	Avg. Detected Level	Range	Major Sources	Violation (Yes/No)
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>								
Asbestos	2022	MFL	7	0	ND	n/a	Asbestos-cement water main pipe.	No
Barium	2023	ppm	2	2	0.014	0.012-0.017	Discharge from drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits;	No
Nitrate	2024	ppm	10	10	0.330	0.17-0.42	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks; sewerage; erosion of natural deposits	No
Perchlorate	2024	ppb	2	n/a	0.055	ND-0.100	Rocket propellants, fireworks, munitions, flares, blasting agents	No
<b>Radioactive Contaminants</b>								
Gross Alpha Activity	2023	pCi/L	15	0	ND	n/a	Erosion of natural deposits	No
Radium 226 & 228	2023	pCi/L	5	0	ND	n/a	Erosion of natural deposits	No
<b>Volatile Organic Contaminants</b>								
Tetrachloroethylene (PCE)	2024	ppb	5	0	ND	ND	Discharge from factories and dry cleaners and asbestos cement lined water mains	No
<b>Lead &amp; Copper</b>								
- Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analysis from 30 homes throughout the service area.								
			AL		90th Percentile		Major Sources	
Lead	2024	ppb	15	0	4.1	ND - 62.4	Corrosion in household plumbing	No
Copper	2024	ppm	1.30	1.30	0.210	0.023 - 0.304	Corrosion in household plumbing	No
<b>Unregulated Substances</b>								
Chloroform	2024	ppb		70	2.3	1.9 - 2.6	Erosion of natural deposits	
Manganese	2023	ppb	50	300	17.7	ND - 24.2	Naturally occurring in the environment	
Sodium*	2023	ppm	-	20	22.5	17.1-27.8	Road run-off and corrosion control chemicals	
<b>Unregulated Contaminants Monitoring Rule - 5 (UCMR-5)</b>								
	Date	Units	SMCL	ORSG	Average		Major Sources	
PFOS	2024	ppb		0.02	0.004		The use, disposal, or discharge and emissions from manufacturing sources of PFAS products such as moisture and oil resistant coatings and fire fighting foam	No
PFOA	2024	ppb		0.02	0.004			
PFNA	2024	ppb		0.02	0.01			
HFPO-DA	2024	ppb			0.01			
Hazard Index (HI)	2024	unitless			1		n/a	
- Unregulated contaminants are those substances for which the EPA has not established drinking water standards. - The purpose of unregulated contaminants monitoring is to assist the EPA in determining their occurrence in drinking water and whether further regulation is warranted. The UCMR-5 data used a different analytical testing method than standard tests.								
* Some people who drink water containing sodium at high concentrations for many years could experience an increase in blood pressure.								
Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful, waterborne pathogens 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 any problems that were found during these assessments. During the past year, we conducted two Level 2 assessments of the system. A Level 2 assessment is a very detailed study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system on multiple occasions. We found coliform bacteria in our system on September 9, 2024, and October 9, 2024. High temperatures make it more likely for coliform bacteria to be found in the distribution system. In response to detecting the coliforms, we chlorinated the storage tanks the day after each detection was found, and we flushed the distribution system. After flushing and chlorinating, repeat samples came back negative.								
Fluoride has a secondary contaminant level (SMCL) of 2 ppm. Tisbury Water Works does not add fluoride to the water system. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health strongly supports community fluoridation as a safe, cost-effective, and proven practice that promotes good oral health within our communities. The ideal fluoride concentration in drinking water to help prevent tooth decay and support dental health is a concentration of 0.7 parts per million (ppm) consistently. The optimal average monthly fluoridation concentration range is 0.6 – 0.8 ppm.								
<b>KEY TO TABLE</b>								
MFL - Million Fibers per liter			ND - Non-detect			ppb - Parts per Billion; corresponds to one penny in \$10,000,000		
n/a - non applicable			pCi/L - Picocuries per Liter			ppm - Parts per Million; corresponds to one penny in \$10,000		

## Source Waters & Their Potential Contaminants

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 radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- A) Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- B) Inorganic contaminants**, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring as a result of urban storm runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.
- C) Pesticides and herbicides**, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, stormwater runoff and residential uses.
- D) Organic chemical contaminants**, including synthetic and volatile organics, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff and septic systems.
- E) Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provide by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

## Is My Water Treated?

Many drinking water sources in New England are naturally corrosive (e.g. they have a pH of less than 7.0). The water they supply has a tendency to corrode and dissolve the metal piping it flows through. This not only damages pipes, but can also add harmful metals such as lead and copper to the water. Therefore it is beneficial to add chemicals that make the water neutral or slightly alkaline.

The Tisbury Water Works adds sodium hydroxide (25% NaOH) to its water to increase the pH levels and control corrosion. Testing throughout the water system has shown that this treatment has been effective at reducing lead and copper concentrations, and has helped to retard the corrosion of iron in our old cast iron mains.

## People at Risk

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water. Immuno-compromised persons, such as those undergoing chemotherapy, those who have had transplants, and people with HIV/Aids or other immune system disorders; and some elderly or infants can be particularly at risk for infections. One can seek advice from their doctors. The EPA/CDC guidelines for appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* are available from calling the Safe Drinking Water Hotline 800-426-4791.



## Lead in Our Drinking Water

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. Tisbury Water Works is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in your home. You share the responsibility for protecting yourself and your family from the lead in your home plumbing. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Before drinking tap water, flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. You can also use a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead in drinking water.

If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact Tisbury Water Works at 508-693-3100. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at:

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>. TWW is taking steps to comply with EPA's new Lead and Copper Rule Revisions. We have prepared a lead service line inventory to identify lead or galvanized water services for your property. The inventory is available at <https://www.tisburywaterworks/pages/epa-lead-copper-rule-revisions>.

The elevated water tank on High Point Lane contains 350,000 gallons of drinking water.

A large, cylindrical, elevated water tank stands prominently on a hillside. The tank's upper portion is clad in blue corrugated metal, while the lower base is constructed from light-colored concrete blocks. A white metal walkway with railings encircles the tank just below the blue section. A vertical pipe runs down the side of the tank. To the left, a portion of a dark-roofed building is visible. A chain-link fence runs across the foreground, and several trees are scattered around the base of the tank. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Be assured that the Tisbury Water Works has addressed concerns as stated in the last SWAP report. In an effort to protect our drinking water supply we have posted signs like the one pictured to the right to advise people when they have entered the Zone 1 of one of our wells. Please use extra care when in these areas to ensure the protection of our precious resource.

In the event of an emergency, it is imperative to quickly get ahold of our water customers. If you have recently changed your telephone number, mailing address or any other contact information, please go to our website and click "Update Your Customer Contact Information" from the green boxes on the left side. It's also easy to add an emergency contact for when you're away from the island, or caretaker/plumber to your call list. [www.tisbury.ma.gov/tisbury-water-works](http://www.tisbury.ma.gov/tisbury-water-works)

***Water is a natural & precious resource. Please do your part to help protect our public water supplies.***

