

STONINGTON WATER COMPANY

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PWSID ME0091510

2024 ANNUAL CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Safe Drinking Water Act requires all community water systems to distribute an annual water quality report to its customers. This is the 2024 annual water quality report of the Stonington Water Company, which covers the period from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. This annual report is intended to provide you with important information about your drinking water. We know that you count on the Stonington Water Company for a safe and reliable supply of water everyday, and we are committed to providing the highest quality of service to you.

There were no violations in 2024.

WATER QUALITY

The Safe Drinking Water Act mandates that the State of Maine, along with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), establish and enforce minimum drinking water quality standards. These standards set limits on certain biological, radioactive, organic and inorganic substances sometimes found in drinking water. The limits set on these substances are known as Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCL's). Two types of standards have been established. Primary Standards set required levels of drinking water quality to protect your health. Secondary Standards provide guidelines regarding the taste, odor, color, and other aesthetic aspects of your drinking water which do not present a health risk. The Stonington water quality is within the levels established by EPA and the State of Maine for all Primary Standards.

Responsibility for maintaining water quality resides with the Stonington Water Company's staff. The Stonington Water Company operators are licensed by the State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services. We ensure that your water is safe through regular total coliform testing and chlorine residual monitoring. These tests are conducted by the Maine State Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory, private laboratories and the Stonington Water Company.

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 human health risk. Contaminants that may be present in source water include: (1) microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage or wildlife; (2) inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, or farming; (3) pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, stormwater runoff, and residential uses and (4) organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which can come from gas stations, runoff, and septic systems and (5) radioactive contaminants which can be naturally occurring. 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. EPA/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) or online at: <https://www.epa.gov/ccr/forms/contact-us-about-consumer-confidence-reports>

Table 1 lists regulated testing conducted by the Stonington Water Company for which results were obtained in 2024. The most recent result is also included for contaminants which are not tested annually. All other tested and regulated drinking water contaminants were below detection levels. This testing is required by the State of Maine Drinking Water Program (DWP) and must be reported to all customers on an annual basis:

TABLE 1: 2024 REQUIRED STONINGTON TESTING RESULTS

CONTAMINANT	DATE	STONINGTON RESULTS	EPA LIMIT	EPA GOAL	SOURCE
MICROBIOLOGICAL					
Total Coliform (1)	Monthly Testing	0 Positive Results	1 Positive Result	0 Positive Results	Naturally present in the environment.
E. coli (2)	Monthly Testing	0 Positive Results	1 Positive Result	0 Positive Results	Human and animal fecal waste.
INORGANICS					
Barium	3/18/24	0.0018 ppm	2 ppm	2 ppm	Erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride (3)	3/18/24	0.38 ppm	4 ppm	4 ppm	Erosion of natural deposits.
Copper 90 th Percent Value (4)	Summer 2022	0.37 ppm (0.023 – 0.95 ppm)	1.3 ppm	1.3 ppm	Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
Number of Copper samples exceeding the Action Level: 0.					
Lead 90 th Percent Value (4)	Summer 2022	2 ppb (0 – 2.1 ppb)	15 ppb	0 ppb	Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
Number of Lead samples exceeding the Action Level: 0. Complete lead tap sampling data are available upon request.					
SYNTHETIC COMPOUNDS					
PFAS (8)	10/11/22	0 ppt	20 ppt	-	Household products, fabrics, cookware and cleaners.
RADIONUCLIDES					
Combined Radium (226+228)	11/23/21	4.43 pCi/L	5 pCi/L	0 pCi/L	Erosion of natural deposits.
Combined Uranium	Quarterly Testing	18.6 ppb (12.1 – 24 ppb)	30 ppb	0 ppb	Erosion of natural deposits.
Net Alpha (5)	Quarterly Testing	9.4 pCi/L (0 – 17.7 pCi/L)	15 pCi/L	0 pCi/L	Erosion of natural deposits.
Radium-226	11/23/21	2.71 pCi/L	5 pCi/L	0 pCi/L	Erosion of natural deposits.
Radium-228	11/23/21	1.72 pCi/L	5 pCi/L	0 pCi/L	Erosion of natural deposits.
Radon (6)	3/18/24	108 pCi/L	4,000 pCi/L	4,000 pCi/L	Erosion of natural deposits.
DISINFECTANTS AND DISINFECTION BYPRODUCTS					
Total Haloacetic Acids (7)	Quarterly Testing	13.5 ppb (2.6 – 22 ppb)	60 ppb	0 ppb	Byproduct of drinking water chlorination.
Total Trihalomethanes (7)	Quarterly Testing	73.8 ppb (57 – 92 ppb)	80 ppb	0 ppb	Byproduct of drinking water chlorination.
Chlorine Residual	Monthly Testing	0.05 ppm (0.02-0.07 ppm)	4.0 ppm	4 ppm	Drinking water chlorination.

Definitions:

- Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water.
- Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health.
- Running Annual Average (RAA): The Average of all monthly or quarterly samples for the last year at all sample locations.
- Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant that, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.
- 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 contaminants.

Units:

pCi/L = picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)
 ppm = parts per million or milligrams per liter (mg/L.)
 ppt = parts per trillion or nanograms per liter (ng/L)

pos = positive samples
 ppb = parts per billion or micrograms per liter (µg/L)

Notes:

- 1) Total Coliform Bacteria: Reported as the highest monthly number of positive samples, for water systems that take < 40 samples per month.
- 2) E. coli: Bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Human pathogens in these wastes can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches or other symptoms. They may pose a greater health risk for infants, young children, the elderly and people with severely-compromised immune systems.
- 2) Arsenic: While your drinking water may meet EPA's standard for Arsenic, if it contains between 5 to 10 ppb you should know that the standard balances the current understanding of arsenic's possible health effects against the costs of removing it from drinking water. EPA continues to research the health effects of low levels of arsenic, which is a mineral known to cause cancer in humans at high concentrations and is linked to other health effects such as skin damage and circulatory problems.
- 3) Fluoride: Fluoride levels must be maintained between 0.5 to 1.2 ppm, for those water systems that fluoridate the water. Stonington does not fluoridate its drinking water.
- 4) Lead/Copper: Action levels (AL) are measured at consumer's tap. 90% of the tests must be equal to or below the action level.
- 5) Net Alpha: Action Level over 5 pCi/L requires testing for Radium 226 and Radium 228. Action Level over 15 pCi/L requires testing for Uranium. Compliance is based on Gross Alpha results (20.95 pCi/L) minus Uranium results (14.45 ppb) = Net Alpha. Net Alpha is 11.3 pCi/L, which is below the 15 pCi/L standard (annual 2023).
- 6) Radon: The State of Maine adopted a Maximum Exposure Guideline (MEG) for Radon in drinking water at 4,000 pCi/L, effective January 1, 2007. If Radon exceeds the MEG for water, treatment is recommended. It is also advisable to test indoor air for Radon.
- 7) TTHM/HAA5: Total Trihalomethanes and Haloacetic Acids (TTHM and HAA5) are formed as a by-product of drinking water chlorination. This chemical reaction occurs when chlorine combines with naturally occurring organic matter in water.
- 8) PFAS: The degree of risk depends on the level of chemicals and duration of exposure. Lab studies of animals exposed to high doses of PFAS have shown numerous negative health effects such as issues with reproduction, growth and development, thyroid function, immune system, neurology, as well as injury to the liver. Research is still relatively new, and more needs to be done to fully assess exposure effects on the human body.

The data presented in Table 1 demonstrates that the Stonington Water Company has been in complete compliance with the requirements for bacteria sampling and has not experienced any positive results for Total Coliform. Total Coliform is used as an indicator parameter for water supply bacterial contamination. This data also shows that the Water Company is in compliance with Arsenic, Barium, Fluoride, Radionuclides, PFAS, and Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts. The Water Company tests annually for lead and copper at ten homes during each sampling event. Copper testing in 2022 was in complete compliance with a result of 0.37 ppm as compared to the EPA limitation of 1.3 ppm. The lead sampling in 2022 was also in compliance with a result of 2 ppb versus an EPA standard of 15 ppb. The next round of sampling will occur this year in 2025. 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 Stonington Water Company 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 Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at:

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>

WATER SUPPLY/DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION

The Water Company has been obtaining water from seven of its groundwater wells located near Burntland Pond. Prior to that, water had been pumped from the pond itself. Public water service is available in the village area of the community. The Water Company provided water service to about 276 connected customers in 2024. The Water Company supplied an average of 33,732 gallons of water per day or 12.35 million gallons of potable water to customers in 2024. The Water Company has a 500,000-gallon steel storage tank off of Sunset Avenue that can supply water for up to several days during average water use to the community. This water storage tank also is used for peak flow fluctuations in the system during periods of hydrant flushing and for fire protection purposes. The Water Company maintains fire protection through 26 hydrants.

Radon and uranium occur naturally in the ground water below the wells. The Water Company operates a treatment system to remove these contaminants. All but one of the wells flow through two ion exchange tanks that remove uranium from the water. All of the water then flows through two parallel air stripping systems that remove radon. Prior to air stripping, sodium hypochlorite (bleach) is added for disinfection.

SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

In March 2003, the Town adopted a zoning ordinance as part of a wellhead protection initiative to help prevent source contamination.

SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT

The sources of drinking water can include rivers, lakes, ponds, 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 human or animal activity. The DWP has evaluated all public water supplies as part of the Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP). The assessments included geology, hydrology, land uses, water testing information, and the extent of land ownership or protection by local ordinance to see how likely our drinking water source is to being contaminated by human activities in the future. Assessment results are available at the DWP. For more information about the SWAP, please contact the DWP via telephone at 287-2070.

SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS/HIGHLIGHTS

In 2024, the Stonington Water Company continued the program to optimize well operations with the goal of maintaining full standpipe levels, conducted leak detection investigations and made repairs where leaks were located, identified faulty curb stops by leak detection and repaired them as required, continued the process to locate and raise buried distribution isolation valves and aggressively worked to replace old, broken and suspect water meters with new units.

In 2024, we used grant money to complete a hydrogeological evaluation of the existing water supply sources. The goals were to redevelop one of the existing wells and possibly drill one additional well.

In 2024, we hired T. Buck Construction to replace the transmission main from the treatment plant building to Cemetery Road and then along Sunset Avenue to the standpipe. This project will result in maintaining better pressure, improving water quality and potentially reducing the amount of lost water in the system. The old transmission line was over 150 years old and has exceeded its useful life. This project was completed in 2024.

The Water Company also designed and bid the School Street water main replacement project which only had one bid. This project has since received additional funds and will be rebid in 2025.

FUTURE PLANS AND NEEDS

Based on recommendations from the 2024 hydrogeological evaluation, we are in the process of bidding to have a contractor clean and redevelop one of the existing supply wells with the goal of increasing the amount of available water during peak use. Our expectation is this work will occur in the fall of 2025. We are also using this grant money to explore commissioning one of the previously drilled test wells in the Duncan wellfield.

Additional funding has been obtained to replace the old water main on School Street. This project will be out to bid again early in 2025. Construction is expected to occur in 2026.

The Water Company also received grant funds to replace a portion of its water meters with smart meters which will aid in leak detection.

The Water Company received grant funds to design a replacement water storage tank with a larger capacity. The design will be completed in 2025 with planned construction for 2026.

LEAD SERVICE LINE INVENTORY

On October 8, 2024, the Stonington Water Company completed the Lead Service Line Inventory (LSLI) as required by the Lead and Copper Rule. The entire Water Company LSLI spreadsheet is available for downloading and review on the Town website at the following link:

https://www.stoningtonmaine.org/_cmsupl/dpt/swc-lead-service-line-inventory-10-8-24.xlsx?1744150677

CONTACT INFORMATION

This report is a summary of the Water Company's activities during the past year. If you have any questions about your water quality, the information contained in this report, or your water service in general, please call the Stonington Water Company at (207) 367-2351 extension 15. You may also direct questions or concerns to the DWP at (207) 287-2070 or the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791. The Stonington Water Company Utility Board meets at the Town Hall at 32 Main Street every third Monday at 7:00 PM. The public is welcome to attend the meetings and ask questions during the public comment period.

Please share this information with anyone who drinks this water (or their guardians), especially those who may not have received this report directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this report in a public place or distributing copies by hand, mail, email, or another method.