Dear Customer:

We are pleased to present you with this year’s Water Quality Report. The First Taxing District Water Department has again achieved the goal of meeting the very stringent water quality standards set by federal and state regulatory agencies. This report covers water testing performed throughout 2019.

Our top priority is to provide a safe and reliable supply of drinking water to all of our customers. Each year the water department’s laboratory processes thousands of water quality analyses for compliance purposes. This testing includes the source water, the treated water as it leaves the filtration plant and well field, and the water as it travels through the distribution system pipes and into your homes and businesses.

Water quality has continued to be a topic of interest in Norwalk and throughout our region, with important issues like lead, PFAS, and other contaminants in the news this year. Please take this opportunity to read the report and educate yourself on water quality.

You are always welcome to attend our monthly Board of Commissioners meetings in our main office, 12 New Canaan Avenue, Norwalk 06851. The times and dates of meetings are posted on our website at www.firstdistrictwater.org/boc-meetings. Please also feel free to call or write to us and to visit our website at www.firstdistrictwater.org for additional information.

Sincerely,
Commissioners, First Taxing District

Elsa Peterson Obuchowski
Chairman
Commissioners: Elsa Peterson Obuchowski, Chairman; Thomas Callen, Esq.; Jadin T. Seed, Sr.
District Treasurer: Rosa M. Murray
General Manager, District Engineer: Domblick M. Di Gangi, P.E.
12 New Canaan Avenue - PO Box 27 - Norwalk, CT 06852
203-847-7387 - info@firstdistrictwater.org
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How FTDWD Water Is Treated

The reservoir water is filtered at our treatment plant in New Canaan. The filtered water is then disinfected with chlorine to protect against any bacteria. We carefully monitor the amount of chlorine, adding the lowest quantity necessary to ensure the safety of your water without compromising the taste. Finally, chemicals are added to adjust the acidity, reduce the hardness, and control the pipes. This protects the pipes and keeps leading of minerals such as lead and iron to a minimum. Fluoride is also added to prevent tooth decay. At the well field, the ground water is filtered naturally by sand and gravel. The water is then treated in a similar manner at the surface water with the addition of aeration which removes contaminants and raises the pH.

Conserve Water and Save Money

Fix leaks: This one step alone could cut your water usage by almost 20 percent.

Indoors:
- Trim a minute off the length of your showers. You’ll save on your water-heating bills, too.
- Turn off the water while lathering up, shaving, or brushing teeth.
- Use a bucket to capture shower and bath water while you wait for it to warm up. Then use it in your toilet tank or to water plants.
- Wash full loads only in your dishwasher and your washing machine.

Outdoors:
- Water outdoors only when and where needed, not on a set schedule.
- Water only on cloudy days or at night or in the evening.

For more ways to conserve visit www.firstdistrictwater.org/a-way-ways-to-conserve-water

Water Sources and How We Protect Them

Protecting the water supply at its source is the first step in achieving the water department’s goal of providing safe drinking water to its customers. The District’s reservoirs, located in Litchfield, NY and New Canaan, CT, hold approximately one billion gallons of water. The source of the water is the watershed land covering 10 square miles in New Canaan, Ridgefield and Wilton, CT and Litchfield, NY. Rainfall and snowmelt from this land are channeled into wells, groundwater, creeks and streams and then into our reservoirs. Disturbance or pollution on watershed land can directly affect the drinking water reservoirs.

Measures to protect the watershed land and reservoirs include frequent patrolling of the area. Open communications with both the local police and the departments in our watershed towns is essential. We also work closely with local governments focusing attention on new land development in our watershed. When necessary we actively oppose unsuitable development and, where appropriate, work to get modifications to reduce the impacts of development. Each year our water treatment operators visit the properties on the watershed as part of our sanitary survey requirement.

Procedures to protect our groundwater sources in the Kellogg-Dearing well field continue through the Aquifer Protection Area Regulations. The Norwalk Zoning Commission has used its authority to register and regulate businesses that pose a potential risk to our drinking water. The commission continues to provide updates to the registrants and work closely with the water department to protect our well field.

Customer Inquiries

Hardness

Many customers have asked about the hardness level of our water because distilled and hot water heater manuals may ask for this information. Hardness in water is determined by the calcium and magnesium (both metallic minerals) content in the water. Our water has a moderate hardness in the range of 40-100 mg/l or (2.8-7.4) grains per gallon.

Leak

Lead in water remains in the news as communities try to reduce the chance that lead from plumbing components will end up in the drinking water. The First District’s water is lead-free when it leaves our treatment plant but lead can enter the water as it travels through a lead service pipe, lead solder or household plumbing containing lead. Please contact us if you are interested in testing your drinking water for lead. Please read more about lead under “Lead and Drinking Water” at the end of this report.

Source Water Assessment

A source water assessment performed by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health indicated that the surface water source has a moderate susceptibility and the groundwater source a high susceptibility to potential sources of contamination. This does not imply poor water quality but does indicate the need for protection. The completed assessment report can be found on the Department of Public Health website:

Additional source water assessment information can be found at the Environmental Protection Agency website at:
www.epa.gov/sourcewaterprotection
Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)  

**Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)** are a group of man-made chemicals that have been manufactured and used in a variety of industries around the globe, including in the United States since the 1940s. PFAS and their breakdown products are found in water, soil, and air, and can accumulate in the human body — meaning they can build up over time and persist. There is evidence that exposure to PFAS can lead to adverse human health effects. Recently, testing methods have improved allowing these substances to be detected at much lower concentrations. Testing for PFAS in 2019 compared to 2018 with the more sensitive method found PFAS at levels below half of the 30 ppb Drinking Water Health Advisory established by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health for the sum of five PFAS. The FTWMD has adopted operational measures to minimize the levels in the finished water. We have also started the process to design and build a treatment plant that will be able to remove PFAS from groundwater sources.

In addition to improvement in testing methods, public concern and awareness has also increased, prompting the EPA to develop a PFAS Action Plan in 2019. Additionally, the EPA is working toward creating a MCL for PFAS. Parallel to the EPA, the State of Connecticut published a PFAS Public Health Advisory in November 2019 and will be working with the drinking water community to consider a MCL for PFAS.

During the interim, the FTWMD utilizes the EPA and CT DOH health advisory level of 30 ppb and has been promptly sampling its water for the presence of PFAS. The FTWMD’s treated water has met well below these levels (see table), and will continue to be monitored.

### Health Information

This statement is prescribed by the US Environmental Protection Agency for water systems that deliver water that may contain contaminants that pose a risk to public health. It is based on scientific information and consultation with other federal, state, and local health and environmental agencies.

### Lead and Drinking Water

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Although the minimum level of lead poisoning in children results from eating lead-based paint chips, lead in drinking water also should be considered. Lead in water primarily comes from the materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. Here are the common sources of lead in household water:

**Lead service pipes**: The pipe that connects the water main to the street to your household plumbing. A portion of this pipe is in public space (first District Water’s responsibility) and a portion is in private property (property owner’s responsibility). A “partial” service line may be where a portion of the pipe is replaced, but a portion remains in public or private property.

**Lead solder**: Connects pipes in home plumbing.

**Brass fixtures, value or fitters**: Can contain up to eight percent lead.

**Galvanized iron pipes**: A type of household plumbing that can be a source of lead in homes that have, or had, a lead service line.

The Water Department is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components of each home. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may want to have your water tested. For assistance with lead sample testing please contact the Manager of Water Quality at waterquality@ftwmd.org or 203-229-7273.

When your water has been sitting unused for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for at least two minutes before using water for drinking or cooking.

More information on lead in drinking water can be found at [www.epa.gov/water/lead](http://www.epa.gov/water/lead) or by calling the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791.