

***Annual Water Quality Report for 2004***  
City of Cohoes  
97 Mohawk Street, Cohoes, NY 12047  
(Public Water Supply Identification Number NY0100192)

**INTRODUCTION**

To comply with State regulations, the City of Cohoes, will be annually issuing a report describing the quality of your drinking water. The purpose of this report is to raise your understanding of drinking water and awareness of the need to protect our drinking water sources. Last year, your drinking water met all State drinking water health standards. This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to New York State standards. Our constant goal is and always has been, to provide to you a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and to protect our water resources. If you have any questions concerning this report or concerning your drinking water please contact: *Mr. David Messier, Chief Water Plant Operator, City of Cohoes, 319 Vliet Boulevard, Cohoes, NY 12047; Telephone (518) 237-4320.* We want our valued customers to be informed about their water service. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled City Council meetings. They are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month, 7:00 PM, at the *City Hall, 97 Mohawk Street; Telephone (518) 233-2121.*

**WHERE DOES OUR WATER COME FROM?**

The City of Cohoes draws its water from the Mohawk River a "surface water" source. Water is pumped from the Niagara Mohawk Power Canal located on North Mohawk Street up to the 75 million gallon Raw Water Storage Reservoir on Upper Vliet Blvd. The treatment process at Cohoes consists of: potassium permanganate addition for taste and odor control; coagulation and flocculation using aluminum sulfate to cause small particles to stick together when the water is mixed, making larger heavier particles; sedimentation to allow the newly formed larger particles to settle out naturally; filtration to remove smaller particles by trapping them in sand filters; pH adjustment with caustic soda for corrosion control; post chlorination to prevent bacterial contamination.

In general, 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 material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activities. Contaminants that may be present in source water include microbial contaminants; inorganic contaminants; pesticides and herbicides; organic chemical contaminants; and radioactive contaminants. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the State and EPA prescribe regulations, which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water, provided by public water systems. The State Health Department's and the FDA's regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

**FACTS AND FIGURES**

The City of Cohoes provides water through 4406 residential service connections and 60 industrial services to a population of approximately 15,550 people. We also supply a small section of the Town of Colonie, which includes 6 residential services and 2 industrial services. Our average daily demand is 2.45 million gallons. Our single highest day was 3.45 million gallons. During 2004, a total of 910,493,000 gallons was pumped from the Mohawk River. Approximately 20 million gallons were used for water plant operations such as filter backwashing and sedimentation tank cleaning. Additionally, 15 million gallons were used for distribution system flushing. City residents used 523,000,000 gallons through metered sales. Of that total, the Village of Green Island purchased 10,000,000 gallons and the residents in the Town of Colonie purchased 2,300,000 gallons. This leaves an unaccounted for total of 387,493,000 gallons or approximately 42.5% lost from distribution system leaks, water breaks, fighting fires, street sweeper, Lansing Public Pool and unauthorized use.

Residential and industrial customers are billed \$3.15 per thousand gallons of water used and \$2.75 per thousand gallons for sewer. The minimum water charge is \$66.25, while the minimum charge for sewer is \$57.75 with a minimum usage of 20,000 gallons.

**ARE THERE CONTAMINANTS IN OUR DRINKING WATER?**

In accordance with State regulations, the City of Cohoes routinely monitors your drinking water for numerous contaminants. We test your drinking water for inorganic contaminants, radiological contaminants, lead and copper, nitrate, volatile organic contaminants, and synthetic organic contaminants. In addition, we test 15 samples for coliform bacteria each month. The table presented below depicts which contaminants were detected in your drinking water. The state allows us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of the data, though representative of the

water quality, is more than one year old and is noted. For a listing of all the parameters that we must analyze and the frequency of testing for compliance with the NYS Sanitary Code, see Appendix A.

It should be noted that all drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily pose a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791) or the Albany County Health Department at (518) 447-4620.

CITY OF COHOES						
Public Water Supply Identification Number NY01000192						
Contaminant	Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Unit Measurement	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
<b>Microbiological Contaminants</b>						
Total Coliform (sample from 12/6/2004)	N	1 positive sample	N/A	0	Any positive sample <sup>1</sup>	Naturally present in the environment
Turbidity <sup>3</sup> (Highest turbidity sample from 5/29/04)	N	0.26 <sup>1</sup>	NTU	N/A	TT=5 NTU	Soil runoff
		100%			TT= % samples < 0.3	
<b>Inorganic Contaminants (Sample data from 11/10/204 unless otherwise noted)</b>						
Barium	N	22	ppb	2000	2000	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
Chloride	N	26	ppm	N/A	250	Geology; Naturally occurring
Copper (sample data from 8/2002) Range of copper concentration	N	330 <sup>4</sup> ND-520	ppb	1300	AL=1300	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits;
Lead (sample data from 8/2002) Range of lead concentration	N	3 <sup>5</sup> ND- 5	ppb	0	AL=15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits
Manganese	N	30	ppb	N/A	300	Geology; Naturally occurring
Nitrate (as Nitrogen)	N	0.5	ppm	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
pH	N	7.7	units		6.5-8.5	
Sodium <sup>6</sup>	N	27.3	ppm	N/A	N/A	Naturally Occurring, Road salt
Sulfate	N	42	ppm	N/A	250	Naturally Occurring,
<b>Disinfection Byproducts (DBPs), Byproduct Precursors, and Disinfectant Residuals (THM &amp; HAA5 Sample data based on 4 samples/quarter from 2/11/04,5/11/04, 8/12/04 &amp; 11/10/04)</b>						
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) <sup>7</sup> Range of Values for HAA5	N	34.5 9.8-42.4	ppb	N/A	60	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHM[Total Trihalomethanes](Average) <sup>7</sup> Range of values for Total Trihalomethanes	N	66.2 31-110	ppb	0	80	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Chlorine (average) Range of chlorine residual	N	1.33 0.081-2.15	ppm	MRDLG	MRDL	Used in the treatment and disinfection of drinking water
				N/A	4	
Total Organic Carbon Raw Water Total Organic Carbon Treated Water	N	2.4-4.4 1.4—2.3	ppm	N/A	TT	Organic material both natural and man made; Organic pollutants, decaying vegetation,
<b>FOOTNOTES-</b>						
1. A violation occurs at systems collecting less than 40 samples per month when two or more samples are total coliform positive						
2. A violation occurs when a total coliform sample is positive for E. coli and a repeat total coliform sample is positive.						
3. Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system. Level detected represents the highest level detected. Distribution system turbidity performed 5 times a week with 0.26 NTU being the average level detected.						
4. The level presented represents the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of 30 test sites. The action level for copper was not exceeded at any of the 30 sites tested						
5. The level presented represents the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of 30 test sites. The action level for lead was not exceeded at any of the 30 sites tested						
6. Water containing more than 20 mg/l should not be consumed by persons on severely restricted sodium diets; Water containing more than 270 mg/l should not be consumed by persons on moderately restricted sodium diets.						
7. The average is based on a running annual average.						
<i>Non-Detects (ND)</i> - laboratory analysis indicates that the constituent is not present.						
<i>Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l)</i> - one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.						
<i>Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter</i> - one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000.						
<i>Parts per trillion (ppt) or Nanograms per liter (nanograms/l)</i> - one part per trillion corresponds to one minute in 2,000,000 years, or a single penny in \$10,000,000,000.						
<i>Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU)</i> - nephelometric turbidity unit is a measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.						
<i>90<sup>th</sup> Percentile Value</i> - The values reported for lead and copper represent the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile. A percentile is a value on a scale of 100 that indicates the percent of a distribution that is equal to or below it. The 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of the lead and copper values detected at your water system						
<i>Action Level</i> - the concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.						
<i>Treatment Technique (TT)</i> -A treatment technique is a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.						
<i>Maximum Contaminant Level</i> - The "Maximum Allowed" (MCL) is 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.						
<i>Maximum Contaminant Level Goal</i> - The "Goal"(MCLG) is 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.						
<i>Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level</i> (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.						
<i>Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal</i> (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 contamination						
N/A-not applicable						

**WHAT DOES THIS INFORMATION MEAN?**

As you can see by the table, our system had no violations. We have learned through our monitoring and testing that some constituents have been detected; however, these compounds were detected below New York State requirements. MCL's are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink 2 liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.

**IS OUR WATER SYSTEM MEETING OTHER RULES THAT GOVERN OPERATIONS?**

During 2004, our system was in compliance with applicable State drinking water operating, monitoring and reporting requirements.

**DO I NEED TO TAKE SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS?**

Some people may be more vulnerable to disease causing microorganisms or pathogens 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 from their health care provider about their drinking water. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium, Giardia and other microbiological pathogens are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

**WATER CONSERVATION TIPS**

The City of Cohoes encourages water conservation. There are a lot of things you can do to conserve water in your own home. Conservation tips include:

- ◆ Only run the dishwasher and clothes washer when there is a full load
- ◆ Use water saving showerheads
- ◆ Install faucet aerators in the kitchen and the bathroom to reduce the flow from 4 to 2.5 gallons per minute
- ◆ Water gardens and lawn for only a couple of hours after sunset
- ◆ Check faucets, pipes and toilets for leaks and repair all leaks promptly
- ◆ Take shorter showers

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

In 2004 the following projects were completed:

- ◆ Installation of new filters and SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) system for improved quality control.
- ◆ 1500 feet of new water main piping on Western Ave. to connect that portion of the city to the High Service area for improved pressure and flow.
- ◆ Water main extensions were made to York Rd. and Fourth St. plus looping of the system at New York Ave. and Massachusetts Avenue

Future projects for the year 2005 are as follows:

- ◆ Painting of medium service above ground water tank.
- ◆ Delaware Ave water main connection to new condominium development at Gansevoort St. and various looping of dead ends on north side of Van Schaick Island.

**CLOSING**

Thank you for allowing us to continue providing your family with clean, quality water this year. In order to maintain a safe and dependable water supply we sometimes need to make improvements that will benefit our customers. We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community. Please call our office if you have questions.



**City of Cohoes - Mohawk River**  
**PWS ID# NY01000192**  
**Source Water Assessment Summary**

The NYS DOH has completed a Source Water Assessment for the Mohawk River upstream of the Cohoes intake. The assessment is summarized below. The assessment includes a susceptibility rating based on the risk posed by each potential source of contamination and how likely contaminants could enter the Mohawk River. The susceptibility rating is an estimate of the potential for contamination. It does not mean that the water delivered to your home is or will become unsafe to drink. See section “Are there contaminants in our drinking water?” of this report, for information concerning low levels of contaminants in your water.

This assessment found the amount of pasture in the Mohawk River assessment area results in a potential for protozoa contamination. While there are many facilities present along the Mohawk that are permitted to discharge, they do not represent an important threat to source water quality. However, it is appears that the total amount of wastewater discharged to surface water in this assessment area is high enough to raise the potential for contamination (particularly for protozoa). Finally, it should be noted that relatively high flow velocities make river drinking water supplies highly sensitive to existing and new sources of microbial contamination.

The Cohoes water treatment plant performs multi level treatment to insure you receive safe drinking water. Additionally, as this annual report shows your water is routinely monitored for a great number of potential contaminants.

A copy of the full Source Water Assessments, including a map of the assessment area, is available for review by contacting us at the number provided in this report.