



# San José Municipal Water

## 2006 Water Quality Report

North San José, Alviso

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS REPORT**

This report contains important information about your drinking water. We hope it will provide the facts and perspective you need to make an informed evaluation of your tap water.

Water delivered in 2005 by the San Jose Municipal Water System again met all drinking water standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and California Department of Health Services (Department). This brochure summarizes last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to USEPA and DHS standards.

### **SAFEGUARDING YOUR WATER SUPPLY**

**Protecting** our water supply is important to ensure that water is safe from contamination and aesthetically pleasing for use. Protection begins in the watersheds, where people and their activities can be a major cause of source contamination. Contamination requires additional treatment, which increases the cost to deliver water to your tap.

**Conserving** water, during a drought or no drought, is a cost-effective way to ensure a reliable supply of water. Muni Water provides FREE low flow showerheads and kitchen/bathroom faucet aerators that help decrease the amount of water used. Come by our office to pick one up and learn more about lowering your water bill. Conserving energy is also important in ensuring a reliable supply of water. Rolling blackouts may affect pump stations used to move water throughout the area.

**Participating** in public meetings and events regarding water issues gives decision makers the public's perspective and a chance for you to be directly involved in protecting your water supply.

Join us in our efforts to conserve and safeguard our natural resources. Visit the following websites for more tips, rebates, free services and products, and information on future public meetings and events:

[www.sjmuniwater.com](http://www.sjmuniwater.com)

[www.sanjoseca.gov](http://www.sanjoseca.gov)

[www.valleywater.org](http://www.valleywater.org)

[www.ci.sf.ca.us/puc](http://www.ci.sf.ca.us/puc)

[www.epa.gov/safewater/](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/)

[www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ddwem/](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ddwem/)

**Understanding** that drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants will help you make an informed choice about your drinking water. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate a health risk. 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 persons and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice from their healthcare providers. USEPA/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

### **THE SOURCE OF YOUR WATER**

Across America, the sources of drinking water (both tap 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



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substances resulting from the presence of animals or human activity. Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- **Inorganic contaminants**, such as salts and metals, that 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 that are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and which can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, agricultural application and septic systems.
- **Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally-occurring or result from oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, USEPA and DHS prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Department regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled drinking water that must provide the same protection for public health.

#### **San José Municipal Water System Sources:**

We serve the Evergreen, Alviso, North San José, Edenvale, and Coyote communities of the City of San José. This report covers North San Jose and Alviso service areas only.

In the North San Jose/Alviso service area, Muni Water purchases a blend of Hetch Hetchy water and treated water from San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) and delivers it to our Alviso and North San Jose customers.

Approximately 80-90% of surface water is imported from the Hetch Hetchy watershed, an area located in Yosemite National Park. The Hetch Hetchy Reservoir captures water inflows coming from spring snowmelt runoff and the Tuolumne River. Hetch Hetchy meets EPA and DHS criteria for watershed protection, disinfection treatment, bacteriological quality and operational standards. As a result, the EPA and DHS granted the Hetch Hetchy water source a filtration exemption. Water from this source does not require filtration treatment. SFPUC maintains filtration exemption by monitoring Hetch Hetchy weather conditions, water turbidity levels, coliform bacteria levels, parasite concentrations and other pathogens, and disinfectant levels. Also, they comply with disinfection, sampling and reporting requirements and conduct regular inspections of the protected Hetch Hetchy watershed and reservoirs.

The Alameda and Peninsula watersheds provide the remaining 10-20% of the total SFPUC water supply. The Alameda watershed, located in the East Bay, consists of the Calaveras and San Antonio Reservoirs. The Peninsula watershed captures runoff in Crystal Springs and San Andreas Reservoirs and two smaller reservoirs, Pilarcitos and Stone Dam. These local sources are treated and filtered at Sunol Valley Water Treatment Plant. The SFPUC watersheds are vulnerable to contaminants associated with wildlife and to a limited extent human recreational activity. Historically, the levels of contaminants have been very low in the watersheds. Full details are given in the Drinking Water Source Assessment and Protection Program reports available at our office.

On February 2, 2004, SFPUC successfully switched the drinking water disinfectant from chlorine to chloramine, a combination of chlorine and ammonia. It is considered a more stable, longer lasting



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disinfectant. With the conversion to chloramines, our customers in North San Jose and Alviso will continue to receive the highest quality water, which meets or exceeds more stringent present and anticipated regulatory standards. The California Conference of Local Health Officers (CCLHO), California Department of Health Services and EPA have endorsed the use of chloramine as a safe alternative to chlorine in the residual disinfection of public drinking water supplies. For more information regarding this topic, please visit our website at [www.sjmunewater.com](http://www.sjmunewater.com). SFPUC implemented its system-wide Fluoridation on November 1st, 2005. Our customers in North San Jose and Alviso have been receiving fluoridated water ever since.

#### **North San Jose Well Fields (Wells 1, 2, 3, & 4):**

Ground water from local, deep water wells is available for emergency supply. North San Jose wells were not used in 2005. A source water assessment was conducted in January of 2003 and the report is available at our office for review.

**Distribution** facilities in all service areas deliver treated surface water or groundwater through pipe mains, enclosed reservoirs, and pumping stations.

#### **HOW WATER IS TESTED AND REPORTED**

Water at various locations in the distribution system is tested weekly by a private, state-certified laboratory using the latest testing procedures and equipment. During 2005, more than 2,000 samples were collected throughout the distribution system. In addition to these tests, the District performs its own water quality analysis of the source and treated water. Lab analysis was performed for many constituents other than those listed in the tables. Only chemicals detected in the tap water are shown in the tables. Those chemicals not detected in your tap water are not included. For a complete list of all the chemicals analyzed, please contact a water quality engineer at (408) 277-3671.

Test results from our distribution analysis and those of the District are shown in Tables 1-4. Some of the data, though representative, are more than one year old. This is because DHS allows water utilities to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.

**Monitoring Violation Notice:** This notification to all of our North San Jose/Alviso customers is being performed in compliance with the laws and regulations of the California Department of Health Services (Department) to keep you fully informed about your drinking water.

Our water system violated an analytical procedure requirement for bacteriological monitoring prescribed in Section 64415 (a), Title 22, California Code of Regulations (CCR) in December 2005. Although this isolated incident was not an emergency, as our customers, you have the right to know what happened and what we did to correct this situation.

SJMWS routinely monitors for drinking water contaminants. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards. The CCR requires SJMWS to collect three (3) routine samples per week to test for the presence of coliform bacteria. SJMWS collected the three routine samples for the week of December 26. However the samples were inadvertently picked up and analyzed one week late by the laboratory. Although the samples were found to be absent of coliform bacteria, the one week holding time from sample collection to initiation of analysis exceeded the 30 hour maximum holding time prescribed in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) approved bacteriological analytical methods.



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**What should I do?** You do not need to take corrective actions. If you have specific health concerns, please consult your doctor.

**What is being done?** In an effort to continue to improve quality control and avoid a repeat of such an incident, SJMWS has made several procedural changes to the way samples are transported, stored, accounted for and delivered to the lab. We have worked with our laboratory on procedures for proper transfer and relinquishment of samples to ensure full compliance with State Department of Health monitoring regulations.

For more information please contact a water quality engineer at (408) 277-3671.

### **WATER QUALITY**

Disinfection of surface water is necessary in destroying disease-causing organisms for the protection of public health. In Evergreen, water is disinfected using chloramine (chlorine and ammonia). Except for a slight chlorinous taste or odor, chloramine is not harmful to the general public. However, they must be removed for **kidney dialysis machines and aquariums**. If you are receiving kidney dialysis treatment, please contact your doctor or dialysis technician and for pet fish, contact your local fish store for more information about special water treatment.

**Cryptosporidium and Giardia** were detected at low levels in surface water sources. These are parasitic microbes found in surface water throughout the U.S. Although filtration removes them, most commonly-used filtration methods cannot guarantee 100% removal. Current test methods do not allow us to determine if the organisms are dead or if they are capable of causing disease. Ingestion may cause cryptosporidiosis, an abdominal infection. Symptoms of infection include nausea, diarrhea, and abdominal cramps. Most healthy individuals can overcome the disease within a few weeks. However, immuno-compromised people are at greater risk of developing life-threatening illness. We encourage immuno-compromised individuals to consult their doctor regarding appropriate precautions. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least minute amounts of some contaminants including Cryptosporidium and Giardia. The presence of small amounts of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800)-426-4791.

**Fluoride** is added to the naturally occurring level in Evergreen to help prevent dental caries in consumers. The SFPUC System-Wide Fluoridation Project became operational by November 2005. A public outreach program was conducted by SFPUC to inform the public in advance about the change in the fluoride level of their water. An informational brochure was also sent out to customers in North San Jose/Alviso by San José Municipal Water System, prior to the start of fluoridation.

**Hardness** consists mainly of calcium and magnesium salts. Although it does not pose a health risk, it may be considered undesirable for other uses. Some benefits in reducing hardness or water softening are reduction in soap usage, longer life for water heaters, and a decrease in incrustation of pipes. Some disadvantages are increase in sodium intake (depends on type of softener used), requires proper maintenance/servicing, and may adversely affect plants and landscaping. To convert hardness from ppm to grains per gallon, divide by 17.1.

**Radon** is a radioactive gas that you can't see, taste, or smell. It is found throughout the U.S. Radon can move up through the ground and into a home through cracks and holes in the foundation. Radon can build up to high levels in all types of homes. Radon can also get into indoor air when released from tap water from showering, washing dishes, and other household activities. Compared to radon entering the



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home through soil, radon entering the home through tap water will in most cases be a small source of radon in indoor air. Radon is a known human carcinogen. Breathing air containing radon can lead to lung cancer. Drinking water containing radon may also cause increased risk of stomach cancer. If you are concerned about radon in your home, test the air in your home. Testing is inexpensive and easy. For additional information, call your State radon program or call EPA's Radon Hotline (800-SOS-RADON).

**Turbidity** is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. It is monitored because it is a good indicator of water quality. High turbidity can hinder the effectiveness of disinfectants. The turbidity standard for unfiltered supplies is 5 NTU. Filtered water turbidity must be less than 0.3 NTU 95% of the time and at no time higher than 1 NTU. All sources met the standards 100% of the time.

#### DEFINITIONS:

**Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. Primary MCLs are set as close to the PHGs (or MCLGs) as is economically and technologically feasible. Secondary MCLs are set to protect the odor, taste, and appearance of drinking water (aesthetics).

**Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs are set by the USEPA.

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL):** The level of a disinfectant added for water treatment that may not be exceeded at the consumer's tap.

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG):** The level of a disinfectant added for water treatment below which there is no known or expected health risk. MRDLGs are set by the USEPA.

**Notification Level (NL):** Health-based advisory levels established by the California Department of Health Services for chemicals in drinking water that lack maximum contaminant levels (MCLs).

**Public Health Goal (PHG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHGs are set by the California Environmental Protection Agency.

**Primary Drinking Water Standard (PDWS):** MCLs for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements, and water treatment requirements.

**Treatment Technique (TT):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**Regulatory Action Level (AL):** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC):** Wholesaler of treated surface water that is delivered to Alviso and North San José service areas by SJMWS.

**Santa Clara Valley Water District (District):** Wholesaler of treated surface water that is delivered to the Evergreen service area by SJMWS.

**Source Water:** Raw water that has not been treated to meet drinking water standards.

**Treated Water:** Drinking water that has been treated to meet EPA and DHS drinking water standards.



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### WHO TO CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this report or the quality of your water, please contact a **water quality engineer at (408) 277-3671**.

For more information about contaminants and potential health effects call the **EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791**.

### 2005 STATISTICS

Population Served	12,600
Number of Metered Customers	2,690
Water Service Area in Square Mile	5.3
Miles of Water Main	61
Annual Water Production (million gal.)	1,585.5
Maximum Daily Production (million gal.)	7.8

The Municipal Water System is a City-owned water utility retailer that has served customers since 1961, more than 40 years. We are committed to delivering a reliable water supply that meets or exceeds all drinking water health standards. Our office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for holidays. For more information, visit our website at [www.sjmunewater.com](http://www.sjmunewater.com) or call Customer Service at (408) 277-4036.