

9 Jun 20

MEMORANDUM

From: Public Works Officer, Naval Support Activity Bethesda  
To: Commander, Naval Support Activity Bethesda

Subj: 2019 WSSC WATER QUALITY REPORT AND NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY  
BETHESDA SPECIFIC ADDENDUM

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5090.1E

Encl: (1) WSSC Water Quality Report  
(2) NSAB Water Quality Report Addendum

1. Per reference (a), OPNAVINST 5090.1E, the Environmental Programs Division reviews annual Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) water quality reports and conducts supplemental water sampling at NSA Bethesda.
2. Forwarded for your review is the 2019 WSSC Water Quality Report, enclosure (1). This report details the quality of water supplied to Naval Support Activity (NSA) Bethesda by WSSC, which meets or exceeds all US Environmental Protection Agency standards for safety and quality.
3. The results of this sampling are summarized in the NSA Bethesda Water Quality Report Addendum, enclosure (2), and are consistent with the WSSC report in enclosure (1). These reports may be distributed to all NSA Bethesda departments and tenant organizations.
4. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the Drinking Water/Waste Water Manager, Mr. Alex Hoffer, in the Environmental Programs Division at 301-295-2985 or the Installation Environmental Programs Director, Ms. Susan Paul, at 301-295-2482.

Sincerely,



M. E. BERNATH



**100+**  
years without a  
drinking water  
quality violation.

## A Message From the General Manager



Dear WSSC Water Customer,

As I write this letter, we are in the midst of the global coronavirus outbreak. This unprecedented health crisis has been challenging and scary for all of us. The fear of contracting the Covid-19 virus has many people buying bottled water. I want you to know that our water is safe for all uses, including drinking, cooking, bathing and hand washing.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Covid-19 virus has not been detected in drinking water. Both of our drinking water plants have recently undergone multi-million-dollar upgrades. Viruses, including Covid-19, cannot survive our state-of-the-art treatment process, which includes filtration, chlorination and ultraviolet disinfection. You do not need to spend your hard-earned money on bottled water. Our drinking water continues to undergo rigorous water-quality testing, which is far more stringent than for bottled water.

Public health and the safety of our customers is always our top priority. It's why we can proudly boast that we have never had a single drinking water quality violation in our nearly 102-year history. That's because we are singularly focused on meeting all strict state and federal safe drinking water act requirements. We also we have an aggressive water quality testing program – performing 500,000 laboratory tests per year on samples collected at both water filtration

plants and strategic locations throughout our service area.

Earlier this year, we announced that we would resume testing our drinking water for the presence of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) substances. PFAS are a group of man-made chemicals developed in the 1940s to be fire, oil, grease, water and stain resistant. The chemicals are found in a wide array of consumer and industrial products, including non-stick cookware, stain repellent, dental floss, cleaning products and cosmetics.

Our recently published test results confirm that your drinking water is safe from PFAS contamination. We will continue to test for these substances on a quarterly basis and share the results. You can find more information about PFAS at [www.wsscwater.com/pfas](http://www.wsscwater.com/pfas).

All of us at WSSC Water are committed to, and take great pride in, ensuring we deliver the essential to your home and business. In these extraordinary times, please know that we are here, working 24/7, to meet your clean-water needs. You never have to think twice about filling up your glasses or water bottles with our refreshing tap water. The proof of that commitment is in this report.

Thank you for entrusting us to deliver safe, seamless and satisfying water service to you every day.

Sincerely,

Carla A. Reid  
General Manager/ CEO

## Important Health Information from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Drinking water, including bottled water, may contain small amounts of some contaminants, but that doesn't necessarily mean the water poses a health risk.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons, such as those 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/Centers for Disease Control (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 (800-426-4791) or at [epa.gov/safewater](http://epa.gov/safewater).

## Learn More About Your Drinking Water



Get updated information about WSSC Water's water quality, our service delivery system, previous years' reports and videos and Spanish translation. Visit [wsscwater.com/waterquality](http://wsscwater.com/waterquality). For questions about your drinking water, call our Consolidated Lab at 301-206-7575.



To learn more about how WSSC Water can help make water and sewer bills more affordable, please visit [www.wsscwater.com/assistance](http://www.wsscwater.com/assistance) or call 301-206-4001.



Please check our website for the latest on the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and affordability information. [www.wsscwater.com/coronavirus](http://www.wsscwater.com/coronavirus).

## An Informational Statement from EPA on Lead

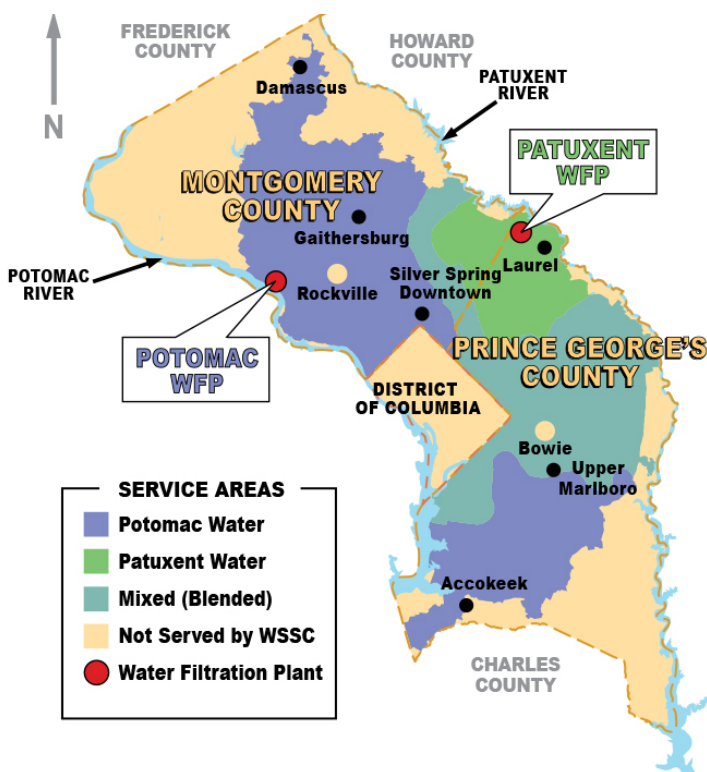
If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. WSSC Water is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, 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 two 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 (800-426-4791) or at [epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://epa.gov/safewater/lead).

WSSC Water completed its latest triennial Lead and Copper Rule tap sampling in 2017. Ninety percent of the homes we tested had lead levels less than 1.05 ppb, barely above the analytical reporting limit of 1 ppb and well below the 15 ppb level, which the EPA considers unacceptable. Information about WSSC Water lead prevention methods can be found at [wsscwater.com/lead](http://wsscwater.com/lead).

## Where Does My Water Come From?

The Patuxent and Potomac rivers are the sources of all the water we filter and process. The Patuxent Plant produces approximately 40 million gallons per day (MGD) and the Potomac Plant produces 123 MGD. The map shows the approximate service areas of both plants.



## Starting at the Source

Source water from rivers and reservoirs generally picks up contaminants before it reaches water treatment plants. As water travels over the land surface or through the ground on its way to the water body, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and vegetation/organic matter. It also can pick up pesticides, herbicides and other synthetic/volatile organic chemicals from agricultural land, golf courses, or residential and urban lands. Radioactive contaminants can be naturally occurring or the result of mining activities. Sewage treatment plants and septic systems, as well as animal waste from pets, agricultural livestock and wildlife, may be sources of microbial contaminants. The salts and byproducts from winter road treatments may also be present in source water.

Potential sources of contamination in the Potomac River watershed include runoff from urban and agricultural land uses, and potential spills from highways and petroleum pipelines. Contaminants of particular concern include natural organic matter and disinfection byproduct (DBP) precursors, pathogenic microorganisms (*Cryptosporidium*, *Giardia*, fecal coliform), taste and odor-causing compounds, ammonia, manganese, sodium and chloride from winter salt application, sediment/turbidity and algae.

Potential sources of contamination in the Patuxent Reservoirs Watershed include transportation, agriculture, onsite septic systems, developed areas, and minor permitted discharges. Phosphorus runoff from urban/suburban and agricultural land uses is the primary contaminant of concern for this watershed. Sediment/turbidity, DBP precursors, iron, manganese, sodium and chloride from winter salt application, and pathogenic microorganisms are also concerns.

WSSC Water works with local agencies to protect the Potomac and Patuxent drinking water supplies, playing key roles in the Potomac River Basin Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership and the Patuxent Reservoirs Watershed Protection Group. Partnering with customers and neighbors is crucial to our efforts. If you are interested in learning more about how you can protect your drinking water supplies, please contact us at 301-206-8100.



# Water Quality Data

## DETECTED REGULATED CONTAMINANTS

SUBSTANCE	UNITS	PATUXENT TAP		POTOMAC TAP		MCL (or TT)	MCLG	VIOLA-TION?	MAJOR SOURCE IN DRINKING WATER
		LEVEL FOUND*	RANGE	LEVEL FOUND*	RANGE				
<b>METALS</b>									
Barium	mg/L	0.03	0.02-0.03	0.03	0.02-0.05	2	2	NO	Discharge of drilling wastes & metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
<b>INORGANIC CONTAMINANTS</b>									
Fluoride	mg/L	0.5	0.3 - 0.7	0.7	0.3 - 0.9	4	4	NO	Water additive, which promotes strong teeth; erosion of natural deposits
Nitrate	mg/L	1.5	0.8-2.4	1.5	0.7 - 2.1	10	10	NO	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
<b>MICROBIAL CONTAMINANTS</b>									
Turbidity	NTU	0.03	0.02-0.08 <sup>1</sup>	0.03	0.01 - 0.13 <sup>1</sup>	TT=1 NTU	n/a	NO	Soil runoff
	% <0.3 NTU	100%	n/a	100%	n/a	TT=95% min	n/a	NO	
Residual chlorine	mg/L	met TT requirements		met TT requirements		TT>=0.2	n/a	NO	Water additive used to control microbes
Viruses	n/a	met TT requirements		met TT requirements		TT=99.99% removal	0	NO	Human and animal fecal waste
<i>Giardia lamblia</i>	n/a	met TT requirements		met TT requirements		TT=99.9% removal	0	NO	Human and animal fecal waste
<i>Cryptosporidium</i>	n/a	met TT requirements		met TT requirements		TT=99% removal	0	NO	Human and animal fecal waste
<b>PESTICIDES &amp; ORGANIC CONTAMINANTS</b>									
Atrazine	µg/L	<0.1	n/d - 0.15	n/d	n/d - n/d	3	3	NO	Runoff from herbicide used on row crops
Simazine	µg/L	<0.07	n/d - 0.09	n/d	n/d - n/d	4	4	NO	Herbicide runoff

## DISINFECTION BYPRODUCT (DBP) PRECURSOR

Total Organic Carbon	n/a	met TT requirements		met TT requirements		TT	n/a	NO	Naturally present in the environment
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## RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINANTS

Gross Beta	pCi/L	<4	n/d - 5.1	4.6	n/d - 6.9	50 <sup>2</sup>	0	NO	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
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SUBSTANCE	UNITS	CUSTOMER TAP <sup>4</sup>				AL OF TT or MRD	MCLG OF MRDLG	VIOLA-TION?	MAJOR SOURCE IN DRINKING WATER
		90th PERCENTILE <sup>5</sup>		# of SITES ABOVE AL					

<b>METALS</b>									
Copper	mg/L	0.10		0 of 55 sites		1.3	1.3	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Lead	µg/L	1.1		1 of 55 sites		15	0	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing systems

SUBSTANCE	UNITS	DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM				MCL	MCLG	VIOLA-TION?	MAJOR SOURCE IN DRINKING WATER
		LEVEL FOUND *		RANGE					

<b>BACTERIOLOGICAL CONTAMINANTS</b>									
Total Coliform	% Positive per month	0.13		0 - 0.54		TT	0	NO	Naturally present in the environment
No. of <i>E. coli</i> Positive Samples	Count	0		0 - 0		0 <sup>12</sup>	0	NO	Human and animal fecal waste

## DISINFECTANT & DBPs

Residual Chlorine	mg/L	1.4 <sup>6</sup>		0.16 - 3.3 <sup>7</sup>		4.0 <sup>8</sup>	4.0 <sup>8</sup>	NO	Water additive used to control microbes
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	µg/L	41 <sup>9</sup>		8.5 - 81		60 <sup>10</sup>	n/a	NO	Byproduct of drinking water chlorination
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs)	µg/L	62 <sup>9</sup>		12 - 100		80 <sup>10</sup>	n/a	NO	Byproduct of drinking water chlorination

## DETECTED UNREGULATED CONTAMINANTS

SUBSTANCE	UNITS	PATUXENT TAP		POTOMAC TAP		MCL or TT	MCLG	VIOLA-TION?	MAJOR SOURCE IN DRINKING WATER
		LEVEL FOUND*	RANGE	LEVEL FOUND*	RANGE				
<b>METALS</b>									
Manganese <sup>11</sup>	µg/L	0.5	n/d-1	10	0.4-33	n/a	n/a	n/a	Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium	mg/L	13	10 - 22	23	10-77	n/a	n/a	n/a	
<b>DBPS</b>									
HAA5 <sup>11</sup>	µg/L	36		16 - 54		n/a	n/a	n/a	Byproduct of drinking water chlorination
HAA6Br <sup>11</sup>	µg/L	13		8 - 19		n/a	n/a	n/a	Byproduct of drinking water chlorination
HAA9 <sup>11</sup>	µg/L	48		23 - 67		n/a	n/a	n/a	Byproduct of drinking water chlorination

## Terms Defined

**MCL** - Maximum Contaminant Level. 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.

**MCLG** - Maximum Contaminant Level Goal. 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 and are non-enforceable public health goals.

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

**AL** - Action level. The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**MRDL** - Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level. 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.

**MRDLG** - Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal. 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.

**Turbidity** - A measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our treatment process.

**NTU** - Nephelometric Turbidity Unit

**mg/L** - Milligrams per liter, equal to parts per million (ppm). The equivalent of one minute in two years or one penny in \$10,000.

**µg/L** - Micrograms per liter, equal to parts per billion (ppb). The equivalent of one minute in 2,000 years or one penny in \$10 million

**ng/L** - Nanograms per liter, equal to parts per trillion (ppt). The equivalent of one minute in two million years or one penny in \$10 billion.

**pCi/L** - Pico-curies per liter (a measure of radiation)

**n/d** - Not detected

**n/a** - Not applicable

**=** Equals

**<** Less than

\* Based on yearly average except as noted.

1. Filtered water, maximum of measurements taken every 15 minutes.

2. EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for beta particles.

3. The MCL and MCLG apply to combined Radium 226 and 228.

4. Most recent sampling, between June and September 2017.

5. If more than 10 percent of sites exceed the action level, system is required to take additional steps to control corrosiveness of their water.

6. Highest running annual average (RAA).

7. All samples deemed to have detectable disinfectant residual.

8. Maximum residual disinfectant level (MRDL), the highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water; based on a running annual average (RAA).

9. Highest locational running annual average (LRAA).

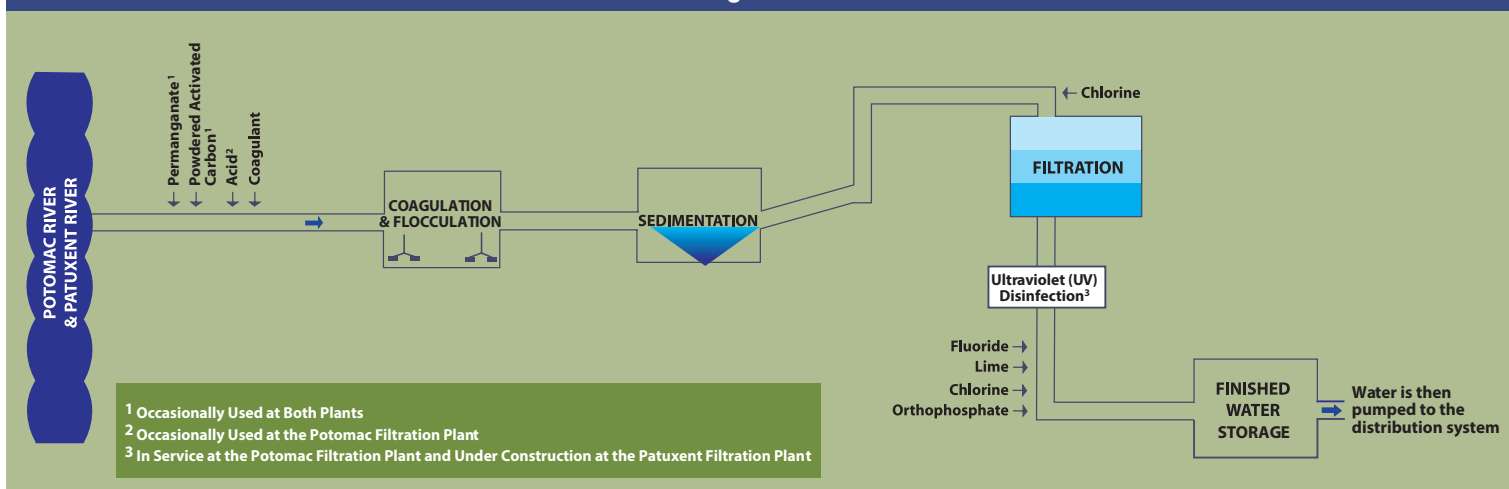
10. Maximum contaminant level based on LRAA.

11. Unregulated contaminants were monitored according to State of Maryland legislation requiring WSSC Water to continue latest cycle of UCMR. Federally required UCMR3 monitoring ended in 2014. For full results and explanations, see [wsscwater.com/ucmr3](http://wsscwater.com/ucmr3).

12. Routine and repeat samples are total coliform positive and either *E. coli* positive or system fails to take repeat samples following *E. coli* positive routine sample or system fails to analyze total coliform positive repeat sample for *E. coli*.

13. WSSC Water believes a sampling bottle error led to a result that does not represent treated drinking water but instead reflects untreated source water.

## WSSC Water Drinking Water Filtration Process



### Water is Treated to EPA Standards

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations, which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. As stewards entrusted to provide safe drinking water to our customers, WSSC Water produces water to meet or exceed EPA standards.

WSSC Water drinking water undergoes extensive purification and treatment after it arrives at the plant and before it is sent to the distribution system for delivery to half a million homes and businesses. Our water filtration process includes: coagulation and flocculation (to make small particles and microorganisms in the raw source water adhere to each other); sedimentation (to remove most of those particles and microorganisms); filtration (to remove nearly all the remaining particles and microorganisms); UV treatment (as a precautionary barrier for pathogens); chlorination (for disinfection); lime addition (to minimize the potential for dissolving lead solder used in older homes); and fluoridation (to prevent tooth decay). Orthophosphate is also added to help minimize lead corrosion and copper pipe pinhole leaks in home plumbing.

### Information on *Cryptosporidium* Health Effects and WSSC Water Treatment

*Cryptosporidium* is a microbial pathogen found in surface water throughout the U.S. *Cryptosporidium* must be ingested to cause disease, and it may be spread through means other than drinking water. Ingestion of *Cryptosporidium* 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 adults, infants and small children, and the elderly are at greater risk of developing life-threatening illness. We encourage immuno-compromised individuals to consult their doctor regarding appropriate precautions to take to avoid infection.

WSSC Water concluded monitoring of *Cryptosporidium* for a two-year period (March 2015 through February 2017) as required by the EPA. The results indicate that our Potomac and Patuxent sources are not affected by *Cryptosporidium*. While our existing treatment processes meet EPA requirements for addressing concerns about *Cryptosporidium*, as an extra precaution, we have installed UV disinfection at both the Potomac and Patuxent plants to provide an extra barrier of protection against *Cryptosporidium*.

### Notice of Availability of Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Data

As part of the EPA's fourth Unregulated Contaminants Monitoring Rule (UCMR4) program, WSSC Water collected and analyzed four sets of quarterly drinking water samples starting in March 2018. In addition to these quarterly samples, WSSC Water collected bi-monthly cyanotoxin samples between July 2018 and October 2018. HAA5, HAA6br, and HAA9 make up a group of contaminants known as disinfection byproducts and are only tested in the distribution system. All remaining contaminants, such as manganese and cyanotoxins, are only monitored from the treated drinking water produced at each water filtration plant. Only four of the 30 tested contaminants were detected in 2018 and all detections were at low levels (parts per billion range). The detected contaminants are listed in this report.

The EPA has not established maximum contaminant levels for these unregulated contaminants, and the human health effects of these contaminants at the levels they were found is unclear. If you are interested in learning more about the results, please contact us at 301-206-7575 or visit [wsscwater.com/ucmr4](http://wsscwater.com/ucmr4). More information on UCMR4 is also available on the EPA's website: [epa.gov/dwucmr/fourth-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule](http://epa.gov/dwucmr/fourth-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule).



# 2019 Water Quality Report

## Naval Support Activity Bethesda, Maryland



In accordance with Navy Policy, Naval Support Activity (NSA) Bethesda is providing you with the 2019 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report.



NSA Bethesda purchases drinking water from the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). The water originates from the Potomac River and the Patuxent River and is treated in two water treatment plants, the Potomac and Patuxent Water Filtration Plants. WSSC uses chlorine as a disinfectant. NSA Bethesda distributes WSSC water to its tenants, including the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center without further treatment.

WSSC tests the drinking water it produces for nearly 200 substances. Detections are reported in the 2019 WSSC Annual Water Quality Report (appended). Additional information can be found at WSSC's website at: [www.wsscwater.com](http://www.wsscwater.com)

In addition to State mandated monitoring conducted by WSSC, NSA Bethesda monitors the drinking water distribution system for specific substances according to Navy Policy (OPNAVINST 5090.1E Chapter 21). The data from the monitoring is provided in the table below.

### NSA Bethesda 2019 Water Quality Data

Distribution System							
Substance	Unit	MCLG	MCL	Level Found	Range	Violation?	Major Sources in Drinking Water
<b>Bacteriological Contaminants</b>							
Total Coliform	# of positive samples per month	0	No more than 1 positive monthly sample	1	0-0	Yes	Naturally present in the environment
No. of E. coli positive routine samples		n/a	n/a	0	0-0	No	Bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes.
No. of E. coli positive repeat samples		0	0	0	0-0	No	

#### Terms Defined:

**MCL:** Maximum Contaminant Level. 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

**MCLG:** Maximum Contaminant Level Goal. The level of contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

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

**µg/L :** micrograms per liter, equal to parts per billion (ppb). The equivalent of a minute in 2,000 years or a penny in \$10 million.

**ND:** Not detected

**n/a :** Not applicable

**Questions?** Contact NSA Bethesda, Environmental Program Division (EPD), at 301-295-2985.

Coliforms are bacteria which 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. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed, and this was a warning of potential problems. When this occurs, we are required to resample upstream and downstream of the sampling location for total coliform and E. coli as well as conduct assessments to identify and correct any problems that were found during the assessments.

In calendar year 2019, NSAB had a routine sampling event in June in which drinking water samples from one sampling location tested positive for total coliform. Upon resampling, the upstream location also tested positive for total coliform. Further re-sampling at this location tested negative for both total coliform and E. coli. NSAB conducted an assessment of the water distribution system to determine the cause for the positive coliform results. The assessment determined that because the sampling locations are at the end of a main line, there is no recirculation of the water in this area which contributed to the positive coliform samples. Increased pipeline flushing is now regularly conducted at hydrants near these buildings to improve water quality.