San Antonio has received the award for “Best Tasting Drinking Water in Texas.”

At SAWS we have a lot of things to celebrate. Now we have one more: The “Best Tasting Drinking Water in Texas.” Thanks to all our efforts at protecting and conserving this great resource, we were awarded this special designation by the Texas Section of the American Water Works Association. Water samples were judged on overall taste, odor, color, and clarity. As the undisputed champion, our water will go on to compete nationally. So what does this championship mean? Simply that we all share in the credit for making our water clearly the best.

**Public Participation Opportunities**

If you would like to find out more about how we can assist you in your neighborhood, visit our web site on the internet at www.saws.org.

**Protecting Our Water Sources**

![Diagram of Rainwater seeping into the Edwards Aquifer at the recharge zone.]

An aquifer is a geologic formation which may contain sand, gravel, clays and/or limestone that collects and holds rainwater as it flows through the ground. This happens over the recharge zone.

It is important to protect the recharge zone from contamination such as fertilizer, petrochemical products, and other chemical contaminants because they might eventually filter into the water supply in the aquifer. There are strict regulations about what may and may not be discharged over the recharge zone, and aquifer water is checked and analyzed regularly to be sure it is safe to drink.

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Understanding The Charts

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 allow for margin of safety.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that adverse health effects occur in humans at or below the MCL.

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.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): The level of a drinking water disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that adverse health effects occur in humans at or below the MRDL.

Inorganic contaminants:
- Such as salts and metals which 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 have a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff and residential uses.
- Organic chemical contaminants which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff and septic systems; and
- Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Points-of-entry: Entry point to the distribution system which is representative of each well after disinfection.

Nitric acid is put into the environment through feces. The presence of nitric acid in water may indicate recent contamination of the drinking water with fecal material. The table below indicates whether total or fecal coliform bacteria were found in the monthly drinking water samples submitted for testing last year.

Microbiological Contaminants Monitoring (2005)

What Are Coliforms?
Total coliform bacteria are used as indicators of microbial contamination of drinking water. Total coliform bacteria are often found in association with other microbes that are capable of causing disease. Coliform bacteria are less hardy than many other disease-causing organisms, therefore, their absence from water is a good indication that the water is microbiologically safe for human consumption.

When to test:
- Every 3 years
- Prior to and after a disruption in the water system

Lead and Copper Results (2003)

Source Water Assessments and Protection Efforts

Recall that these substances are shown in parts per million or parts per billion. One part per million equals one teaspoon in 1,302 gallons, which is enough water to fill a typical bathtub more than 40 times.

Parts per billion. One part per billion is equal to one teaspoon in 1,302,000 gallons – enough to fill a typical bathtub more than 40,000 times.

For more information on source water assessments and protection efforts at our system, please contact us at 210-704-SAWS (704-7297).

Distribution Sampling for By-Products of Drinking Water Chlorination (Disinfection) (2004)

Unregulated Contaminants (2002-2005)