

Why Are There Contaminants In Drinking Water?

As water travels over the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals, radioactive material, and other substances resulting from the presence of animal or human activity. Drinking water originates from surface water (rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, or reservoirs) and groundwater (springs and wells). Bottled water is generally from springs, wells, and public water systems (The Food and Drug Administration regulations establish safe limits for contaminants in bottled water).

DeKalb County gets its water from the Chattahoochee River, a surface water source. While some contaminants in drinking water are beneficial, the Safe Drinking Water Act, administered by the EPA and the EPD, sets regulations to limit certain contaminants in water supplied by public water systems.

To monitor the levels of substances in our drinking water, over 250 water samples are collected each month throughout the DeKalb County distribution system and tested to ensure compliance.

More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

What Might Be Present In Water Before It's Treated

Microbial contaminants:

Includes viruses and bacteria; may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

Inorganic contaminants:

Includes salts and metals, naturally occurring or from urban stormwater run-off, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil/gas production, mining or farming.

Pesticides and herbicides:

May come from agriculture, urban stormwater run-off and residential use.

Organic chemicals:

Includes synthetic and volatile chemicals; may come from by-products of industrial and septic systems.

Radioactive contaminants:

Naturally occurring or a result of oil/gas production and mining activities. One of the microorganisms of concern in surface waters is the cryptosporidium, a protozoan that has never been detected in the DeKalb County drinking water System.

The county is diligently working to ensure that this protozoan never enters the drinking water system. Ingestion of this protozoan may cause symptoms that include diarrhea, nausea, and/or stomach cramps. DeKalb County regularly monitors your drinking water for cryptosporidium.

DeKalb County Department Of Watershed Management Reminds You Not To Use Toilets As Trash Cans

DO FLUSH

The following can be flushed down the toilet



DO NOT FLUSH

The following cannot go in the toilet as they can clog pipes and septic systems.



Paper towels



Plastics



Feminine hygiene products



Medications



Cotton (Cotton swabs or balls)



Toxic substances



Cigarette butts



Disposable diapers



Wipes (Baby or flushable)



Dental floss

Information on Georgia's current drought conditions and water conservation is available on the Georgia Environmental Protection Division's website at: www.epd.georgia.gov/water-conservation

To obtain a copy of this report, please visit our website: www.dekalbwatershed.com

Join us for DeKalb County Board of Commissioners Meetings Regular meetings @ 9 a.m. on the second and fourth Tuesdays broadcast live on Comcast Channel 23 Rebroadcast Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday 9 a.m. & 7 p.m.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Billing/Water Cutoff (8:30 am - 5 pm)
404-378-4475

Emergency Repair – 24 hours
770-270- 6243

FOG Questions/Information
404-687-7150

Drinking Water Questions/Information
770-391-6047

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DEKALB COUNTY DRINKING WATER Quality Report 2026



The Consumer Confidence Report

DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management provides its customers with high quality, safe drinking water that surpasses the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) requirements. DeKalb County has consistently produced superior quality drinking water. This 2026 Drinking Water Quality Report, also referred to as the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), provides a summary of the monitoring data gathered from water quality testing during 2025.

The Purpose Of This Report Information

The U.S. Congress revised the Safe Drinking Act in 1996, requiring public water systems to send annual CCRs to all of their customers. DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management supports this effort and is proud to present this CCR. This report is in compliance with the EPA's National Primary Drinking Water Regulations.

For questions about this report, the quality of DeKalb County drinking water, or lead sampling, please call Jamilya Briggs (Assistant Laboratory Supervisor, Drinking Water) at 770-391-6050 or visit our website at www.dekalbwatershed.com. Public participation in decisions that may affect the quality of drinking water is encouraged and welcomed. For more information about DeKalb County, please visit the County's website at www.dekalbcountyga.gov.

The Source Of DeKalb's Water

DeKalb County's water intake, or water source, is located on the Chattahoochee River, north of DeKalb County and upstream from the City of Atlanta. Water is treated at the Scott Candler Water Treatment Plant and then distributed to DeKalb County customers. DeKalb County and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) have completed a source water assessment identifying potential sources of pollution to the Chattahoochee River, most recently updated in November 2023.

The results of this assessment can be found on the ARC's website at www.atlantaregional.org/natural-resources/water/metropolitan-river-protection-act/ or you can request information by mail from: Atlanta Regional Commission, Environmental Planning Division, 229 Peachtree Street NE #100, Atlanta, GA 30303.

Understanding The Water Quality Data

The water quality data table lists the regulated drinking water substances that were detected in the DeKalb County Water System during the 2025 calendar year. The presence of these substances in the water does not indicate the water poses a health risk. In addition to the parameters listed, your drinking water was also tested regularly for other parameters, including approximately 128 organic chemicals and 25 inorganic chemicals. DeKalb County collects and tests over 250 samples per month from locations throughout the distribution system. Additionally, DeKalb County also conducts 45 daily production control tests, 365 days a year.

Testing The Quality Of Drinking Water

Tap water is tested for various water quality parameters to ensure that the water is safe for people to drink. These parameters are selected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD). Testing for these water parameters is required by law. DeKalb County drinking water is tested as often as hourly, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at the water treatment plant and five days a week throughout the water distribution system. DeKalb County tests its water in full compliance with requirements set by the EPA and the EPD. Tests are performed by, or under, the direct supervision of State-certified operators and laboratory analysts.

DeKalb County 2025 Water Quality Data

Regulated Chemicals Tested and Detected							
DeKalb County Water							
Chemical	Units	Result*	Range of Detections	Highest Level allowed (MCL)	Ideal Goals (MCLG)	Violation	
Fluoride	ppm	0.8	0.5 to 1.5	4.0	4.0	NO	
Nitrate (as Nitrogen)	ppm	0.8	0.6 to 0.8	10	10	NO	
Chlorine, Free	ppm	1.70	1.63 to 1.77	MRDL<4	MRDL<4	NO	
Bromate	ppb	<5	0 to <5	MRDL<5	MRDL<5	NO	
Total Trihalomethanes (THMs)	ppb	28	15.7 to 50.9	80	N/A	NO	
Total Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	ppb	9.0	4.9 to 19.2	60	N/A	NO	
2025 Copper and Lead Test Results from Consumer's Tap							
DeKalb County Water							
Chemical	Units	90th Percentile	Sites Exceeding AL	Range Of Detections	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	Ideal Goals (MCLG)	Violation
Copper	ppm	0.02	0	0.000 to 0.038	AL<1.3	AL<1.3	NO
Lead	ppb	5.6	1	0 to 930	AL<15	Zero	NO
Other Regulated Parameters and Micro-organisms							
DeKalb County Water							
Parameter	Units	Result*	Range of Detections	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	Ideal Goals (MCLG)	Violation	
Turbidity (NTU)	NTU	0.20 ^b	N/A	TT<1NTU	N/A	NO	
		99.00%	N/A	TT-Percentage of readings <0.3 NTU	N/A	NO	
Total Organic Carbon (TOC)	RR	1.04	0.84 to 2.00	TT-TOC removal ratio (RR) ≥ 1 ^c	N/A	NO	
Total Coliforms	P/A	0.14% per month	0% to 0.41%	Not more than 5 % per month	Zero	NO	
<small>This report includes data collected between Jan. 1 and Dec 31, 2025 by DeKalb County Watershed Management. ^aValue represents the annual average unless otherwise noted. ^bValue represents the highest level detected. ^cTT requires a removal ratio (RR) of 1.0 or higher, calculated quarterly as a running annual average.</small>							

Understanding The Terms In This Table

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

BDL - Below Detection Limit: he value of a result is below the smallest amount of a substance that a method can reliably distinguish from zero.

Contaminant - Any physical, chemical, biological, or radiological substance or matter in water.

MCL - Maximum Contaminant Level: The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible, using effective treatment.

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.

MRDL - Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level: The highest level of a disinfectant (such as chlorine) 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 contaminants.

NTU - Nephelometric Turbidity Units: Measurement of turbidity.

ppm - Parts per million: One part per million is equivalent to one minute in two years or one penny in 10 thousand dollars.

ppb - Parts per billion: One part per billion is equivalent to one minute in 2,000 years or one penny in 10 million dollars.

P/A - Presence/Absence: Presence/Absence of total coliform; absence is measured as less than 1 colony forming unit per 100 milliliters of drinking water.

RR - Removal Ratio: The ratio of total organic carbon removed from raw water.

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

Other: N/A – not applicable; < - less than; ≥ - greater than or equal to. *The EPD mandates tri-annual copper & lead testing for the distribution system. This round of sampling was conducted in 2024. These tests are in addition to routine testing performed by DeKalb County.

Supplemental Lead and Copper Information For GA 0890001 Water System

Exposure to lead in drinking water can cause serious health effects in all age groups. Infants and children can have decreases in IQ and attention span. Lead exposure can lead to new learning and behavior problems or exacerbate existing learning and behavior problems. The children of women who are exposed to lead before or during pregnancy can have increased risk of these adverse health effects. Adults can have increased risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, kidney or nervous system problems.

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You share the responsibility for protecting yourself and your family from the lead in your home plumbing. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposures.

Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly.

Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formula, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry, or a load of dishes. If you have a lead service line or galvanized requiring replacement service line, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact DeKalb County Department of Watershed Management via our website www.dekalbcountyga.gov/departments/watershed-management/business-services/lead-copper-rule-revisions-program to find out more information. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

The Service Line Inventory (SLI) is a requirement under the Lead and Copper Rule to help water systems identify and replace lead service lines. It mandates that all public water systems develop and maintain an inventory of service line materials to assess the presence of lead and protect public health. The inventory will support proactive lead reduction efforts and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements to minimize lead exposure in drinking water. To access the SLI for DeKalb County Watershed, go to www.dekalbcountyga.gov/departments/watershed-management/business-services/lead-copper-rule-revisions-program and click "Check your line".



Report information on these regulations is available on the EPA's drinking water website at www.epa.gov/safewater, or from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.