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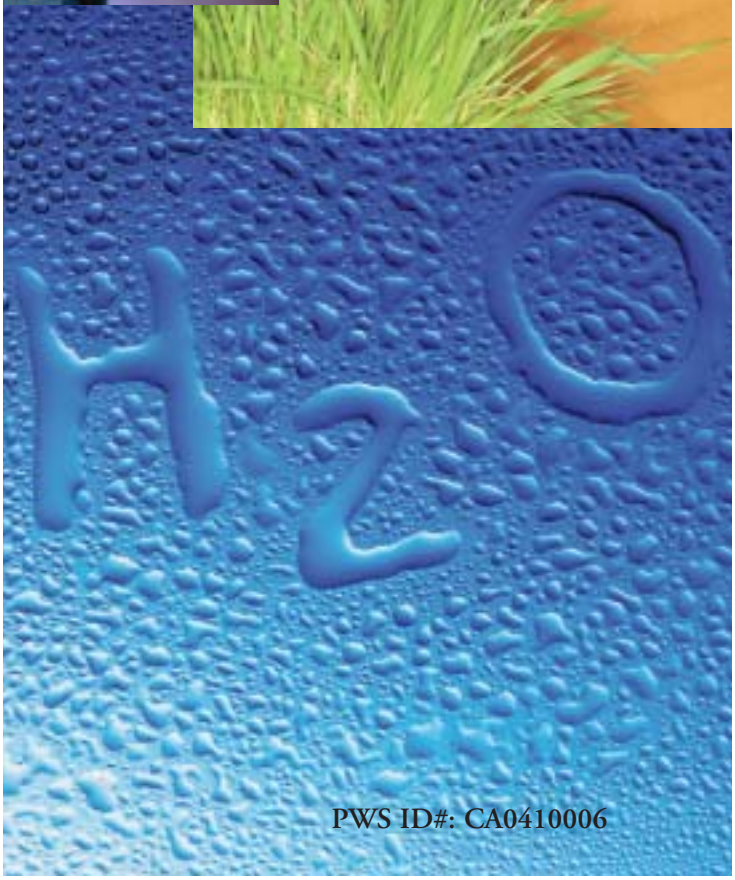
South Feather Water and Power

Annual Water Quality Report

Water testing performed in 2004



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Letter from Mike Glaze, General Manager

South Feather Water and Power's highest priority is to produce a dependable supply of top-quality drinking water for its customers. Not only have we replaced all of our old steel pipe to improve the quality of water from the treatment plant to your tap, but we are constantly upgrading the plant's equipment and technology to make it as efficient and effective as possible.

As a part of our efforts to keep your water supply dependable, SFWP has back-up electricity generators at all the Agency's primary facilities to ensure that water is available to our customers even during the power-outages that occur in our area. Additionally, we constructed a photovoltaic electricity-generating system at the treatment plant in 2004 that will protect us against future spikes in the cost of energy. Nevertheless, even though we can generate all of the electricity needed at the treatment plant with the solar system, we are still asking our customers to reduce their water usage from noon to six o'clock in the evening to make our water treatment and electricity generation as efficient and inexpensive as possible.

We are fortunate to have an abundant and pristine water source, as well as substantial storage facilities. We ask that all our customers help protect the streams and reservoirs that comprise the Agency's water supply system, including being vigilant and reporting any suspicious activity by individuals in the vicinity of Agency facilities. The assistance of our customers will enable us to maintain and guarantee the exceptional water quality we enjoy, now and into the future.

Contamination from Cross-Connections

Cross-connections that could contaminate drinking water distribution lines are a major concern. A cross-connection is formed at any point where a drinking water line connects to equipment (boilers), systems containing chemicals (air conditioning systems, fire sprinkler systems, irrigation systems) or water sources of questionable quality. Cross-connection contamination can occur when the pressure in the equipment or system is greater than the pressure inside the drinking water line (backpressure). Contamination can also occur when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to fairly routine occurrences (main breaks, heavy water demand), causing contaminants to be sucked out from the equipment and into the drinking water line (backsiphonage).

Outside water taps and garden hoses tend to be the most common sources of cross-connection contamination at home. The garden hose creates a hazard when submerged in a swimming pool or when attached to a chemical sprayer for weed killing. Garden hoses that are left lying on the ground may be contaminated by fertilizers, cesspools or garden chemicals. Improperly installed valves in your toilet could also be a source of cross-connection contamination.

Community water supplies are continually jeopardized by cross-connections unless appropriate valves, known as backflow prevention devices, are installed and maintained. We have surveyed all industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities in the service area to make sure that all potential cross-connections are identified and eliminated or protected by a backflow preventer. We also inspect and test each backflow preventer to make sure that it is providing maximum protection.

For more information, visit the Web site of the American Backflow Prevention Association (www.abpa.org) for a discussion on current issues.

Where Does My Water Come From?

The water source for this system is derived from the watershed of the upper South Fork of the Feather River and the upper portion of the Slate Creek watershed. Through a series of dams, canals and tunnels, it is delivered to the Miner's Ranch Reservoir, which serves as the terminal reservoir for the system. Water for the treatment plant is extracted directly from the reservoir.

Is it Safe to Drink Water From a Garden Hose?

No. Substances used in vinyl garden hoses to keep them flexible can get into the water as it passes through the hose. These chemicals are not good for you nor are they good for your pets. Allow the water to run for a short time in order to flush the hose before drinking or filling your pets' drinking containers. There are hoses made with "food-grade" plastic that will not contaminate the water. Check your local hardware store for this type of hose.

Community Participation

We want our customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please call us or attend any of our regularly scheduled board of directors meetings. They are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 2:00 p.m. in the agency's conference room, 2310 Oro-Quincy Highway, Oroville, California.

For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Mr. Coffelt, Water Treatment Superintendent, at (530) 589-0212.

Important Health Information

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised 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 about drinking water from their health care providers. The U.S. EPA/CDC (Centers for Disease Control) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Source Water Assessment

A source water assessment has been completed for the sources serving the Miner's Ranch Water System. The sources are considered most vulnerable to the following activities not associated with any detected contaminants: active and historic mining operations; high-density septic systems.

A copy of the complete assessment may be viewed at DHS Valley District Office, 415 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 110, Redding, CA 96002, Attention: Richard Hinricks, (530) 224-4867, or at South Feather Water and Power, P.O. Box 581, Oroville, CA 95966, Attention: Michael Glaze, (530) 533-4578.

Sampling Results

During the past year we have taken hundreds of water samples in order to determine the presence of any radioactive, biological, inorganic, volatile organic or synthetic organic contaminants. The table below shows only those contaminants that were detected in the water. Although all of the substances listed here are under the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL), we feel it is important that you know exactly what was detected and how much of the substance was present in the water. The state requires us to monitor for certain substances less than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data are included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

PRIMARY DRINKING WATER STANDARD (Regulated in order to protect against possible adverse health effects)

SUBSTANCE (UNITS)	YEAR SAMPLED	MCL [MRDL]	PHG (MCLG) [MRDLG]	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW–HIGH	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Chlorine (ppm)	2004	[4.0 (as Cl_2)]	[4 (as Cl_2)]	0.9	0.4-1.2	No	Drinking water disinfectant added for treatment
Control of DBP precursors (TOC) (ppm)	2004	TT	NA	1.56	0.4-3.5	No	Various natural and manmade sources
Haloacetic Acids (ppb)	2004	60	NA	16.5	13-21	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	2004	80	NA	14	13-15	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection

SECONDARY DRINKING WATER STANDARD (Regulated in order to protect the odor, taste and appearance of drinking water)

SUBSTANCE (UNITS)	YEAR SAMPLED	SMCL	PHG (MCLG)	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW–HIGH	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Chloride (ppm)	2004	500	NS	3.5	3.2-4.1	No	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits; seawater influence
Specific Conductance (µmhos/cm)	2002	1,600	NS	50	NA	No	Substances that form ions when in water; seawater influence
Total Dissolved Solids [TDS] (ppm)	2002	1,000	NS	42	NA	No	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits
Turbidity (NTU)	2004	1	NS	0.04	0.02-0.07	No	Soil runoff

UNREGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNITS)	YEAR SAMPLED	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW–HIGH	TYPICAL SOURCE
Sulfate (ppm)	2002	5.1	NA	Runoff/leaching from natural deposits

Table Definitions

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

MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level): 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 (SMCL) are set to protect the odor, taste and appearance of drinking water.

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 are set by the U.S. EPA.

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

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

NA: Not applicable

NS: No standard

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

PHG (Public Health Goal): 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 EPA.

ppb (parts per billion): One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

ppm (parts per million): One part substance per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

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

µmhos/cm (micromhos per centimeter): A measure of electrical conductance.

Substances That Might Be in Drinking Water

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 activity.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA and the California Department of Health Services (CDHS) prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain substances in water provided by public water systems. CDHS regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some substances. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk.

Substances that may be present in source water include:

Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife;

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may 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, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and which can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems;

Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

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

What Causes the Pink Stain on Bathroom Fixtures?

The reddish-pink color frequently noted in bathrooms on shower stalls, tubs, tile, toilets, sinks, toothbrush holders and on pets' water bowls is caused by the growth of the bacterium *Serratia marcesens*. *Serratia* is commonly isolated from soil, water, plants, insects, and vertebrates (including man). The bacteria can be introduced into the house through any of the above mentioned sources. The bathroom provides a perfect environment (moist and warm) for bacteria to thrive.

The best solution to this problem is to continually clean and dry the involved surfaces to keep them free from bacteria. Chlorine-based compounds work best, but keep in mind that abrasive cleaners may scratch fixtures, making them more susceptible to bacterial growth. Chlorine bleach can be used periodically to disinfect the toilet and help to eliminate the occurrence of the pink residue. Keeping bathtubs and sinks wiped down using a solution that contains chlorine will also help to minimize its occurrence.

Serratia will not survive in chlorinated drinking water.

Naturally Occurring Bacteria

The simple fact is, bacteria and other microorganisms inhabit our world. They can be found all around us: in our food; on our skin; in our bodies; and, in the air, soil and water. Some are harmful to us and some are not. Coliform bacteria are common in the environment and are generally not harmful themselves. The presence of this bacterial form in drinking water is a concern because it indicates that the water may be contaminated with other organisms that can cause disease. Throughout the year, we tested more than 252 samples (21 samples every month) for coliform bacteria. In that time, none of the samples came back positive for the bacteria. Federal regulations now require that public water testing positive for coliform bacteria must be further analyzed for fecal coliform bacteria. Fecal coliform are present only in human and animal waste. Because these bacteria can cause illness, it is unacceptable for fecal coliform to be present in water at any concentration. Our tests indicate no fecal coliform is present in our water.

Water Conservation Tips

Water conservation measures are an important first step in protecting our water supply. Such measures not only save the supply of our source water, but can also save you money by reducing your water bill. Here are a few suggestions:

Conservation measures you can use inside your home include:

- Fix leaking faucets, pipes, toilets, etc.
- Replace old fixtures; install water-saving devices in faucets, toilets and appliances.
- Wash only full loads of laundry.
- Do not use the toilet for trash disposal.
- Take shorter showers.
- Do not let the water run while shaving or brushing teeth.
- Soak dishes before washing.
- Run the dishwasher only when full.

You can conserve outdoors as well:

- Water the lawn and garden in the early morning or evening.
- Use mulch around plants and shrubs.
- Repair leaks in faucets and hoses.
- Use water-saving nozzles.
- Use water from a bucket to wash your car, and save the hose for rinsing.

Information on other ways that you can help conserve water can be found at www.epa.gov/safewater/publicoutreach/index.html.