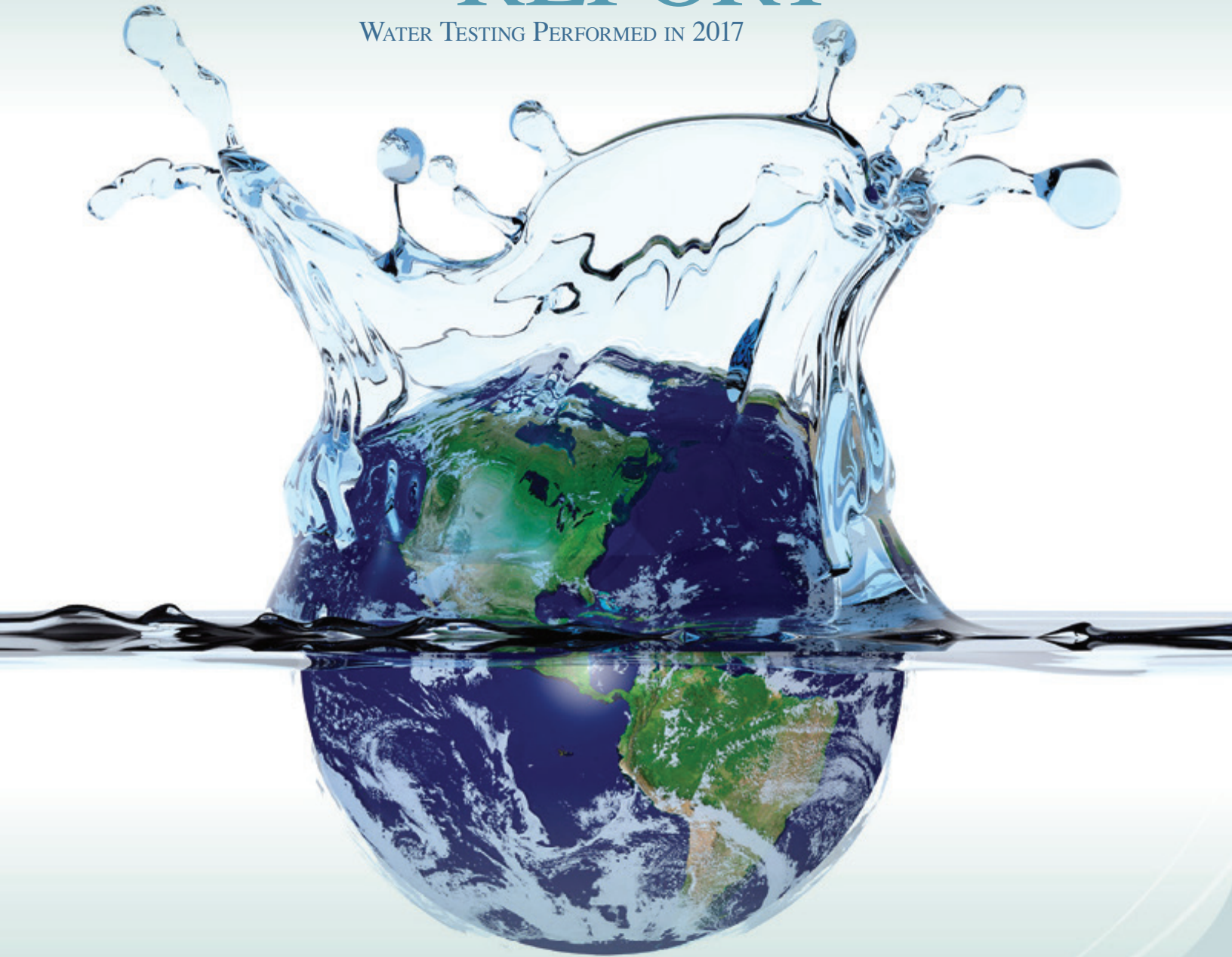


# ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

WATER TESTING PERFORMED IN 2017



*Presented By*  
**Lorain Utilities**

## Quality First

Once again, we are pleased to present our annual water quality report. As in years past, we are committed to delivering the best-quality drinking water possible. To that end, we remain vigilant in meeting the challenges of new regulations, source water protection, water conservation, and community outreach and education while continuing to serve the needs of all our water users. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to serve you and your family.

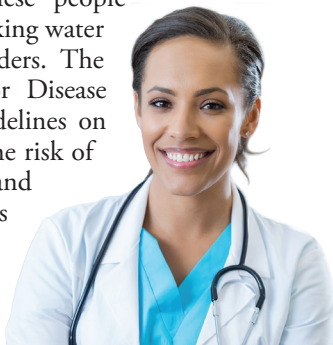
We encourage you to share your thoughts with us on the information contained in this report. After all, well-informed customers are our best allies.

## Community Participation

You are invited to participate in our public forum and voice your concerns about your drinking water. City Council meets the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month beginning at 6 p.m. at City Hall, 200 West Erie Avenue, Lorain, Ohio.

## 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 may 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 and Prevention) 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 or <http://water.epa.gov/drink/hotline>.



## Substances That Could Be in Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA prescribes regulations limiting the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which 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 contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

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, in some cases, radioactive material, and substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. 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, or 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 may 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.

For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, call the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

## QUESTIONS?

For more information about this report, or for any questions relating to your drinking water, please call Chad Johnson, Water Treatment Superintendent, or Skipp DeLeve, Chief Chemist, at (440) 204-2280.

## Protecting Your Water

Bacteria are a natural and important part of our world. There are around 40 trillion bacteria living in each of us; without them, we would not be able to live healthy lives. 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, however, because it indicates that the water may be contaminated with other organisms that can cause disease.

In 2016, the U.S. EPA passed a new regulation called the Revised Total Coliform Rule, which requires additional steps that water systems must take to ensure the integrity of the drinking water distribution system by monitoring for the presence of bacteria like total coliform and *E. coli*. The rule requires more stringent standards than the previous regulation, and it requires water systems that may be vulnerable to contamination to have in place procedures that will minimize the incidence of contamination. Water systems that exceed a specified frequency of total coliform occurrences are required to conduct an assessment of their system and correct any problems quickly. The U.S. EPA anticipates greater public health protection under the new regulation due to its more preventive approach to identifying and fixing problems that may affect public health.

Although we have been fortunate to have the highest-quality drinking water, our goal is to eliminate all potential pathways of contamination into our distribution system, and this new rule helps us to accomplish that goal.



Water treatment is a complex, time-consuming process.

## Source Water Assessment

The Lorain Water System uses surface water drawn from Lake Erie. For purposes of source water assessments, in Ohio, all surface waters are considered to be susceptible to contamination. By their nature, surface waters are accessible and can be easily contaminated by chemicals and pathogens. Compared to ground water, contaminants in surface water tend to move swiftly, so an upstream spill may rapidly arrive at the public drinking water intake with little warning or time to prepare.

The City of Lorain's intake is located in close proximity to the Black River, which increases the susceptibility of the source water to contamination. The City of Lorain's drinking water source protection area contains a moderate number of

potential contaminant sources. These include accidental spills, releases associated with commercial shipping and recreational boating, air contaminant deposition, contaminants from industries and agricultural run-off, contaminants associated with oil and gas production and transportation, sediments from river dredging and disposal operations, natural erosional processes, contaminated storm water runoff from urban areas, municipal and home sewerage treatment system discharges, and combined sewer overflows.

The City of Lorain's Public Water System treats the water to meet drinking water quality standards, but no single treatment technique can address all potential contaminants. Implementing measures to protect Lake Erie and the Black River can further decrease the potential for negative impacts on water quality.

If you would like to review or receive a copy of the Source Water Assessment Plan, please feel free to contact Superintendent Chad Johnson at (440) 204-2280.



## Where Does My Water Come From?

The City of Lorain uses surface water drawn from an intake in Lake Erie as a source of our drinking water. The intake is located in the central basin of Lake Erie, west of the Black River Harbor at a depth of approximately 20 feet.

Ninety-five percent of Lake Erie's total inflow of water comes via the Detroit River water from all the upper lakes -- Superior, Michigan, and Huron -- the St. Clair River, Lake St. Clair, and numerous tributaries. The rest comes from precipitation. Lake Erie is the shallowest of the Great Lakes and is especially vulnerable to fluctuating water levels. The average depth of Lake Erie is only about 62 feet (210 feet, maximum). It therefore warms rapidly in the spring and summer, and frequently freezes over in winter. Lake Erie is the 11th largest lake in the world (by surface area), and the fourth largest of the Great Lakes in surface area and the smallest by volume. This lake measures 241 miles across and 57 miles from north to south, and the lake's surface is just under 10,000 square miles, with 871 miles of shoreline. The central basin averages 60 feet in depth and provides some protection from algae blooms and runoff. In contrast, the western basin averages only 24 feet, leading to higher concentrations of organics.

## Lead in Home Plumbing

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. We are 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 2 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. A list of laboratories certified in the State of Ohio to test for lead may be found at <http://www.epa.ohio.gov/ddagw> or by calling (614) 644-2752. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead).

## About our Reporting Violations

During the spring of 2017, the City of Lorain did not report, for the month of April, a non-detect total microcystin's result that had been analyzed at the Lorain WTP laboratory to the OEPA. Upon being notified of this reporting violation by the Environmental Protection Agency, we took steps to assure this will not happen again. We do not believe that missing this reporting requirement had any impact on public health and safety.



Also for the month of April 2017, the management staff at the Lorain WTP failed to submit the Monthly Operating Report to the OEPA by the 10th day of May 2017. We do not believe that missing this reporting requirement had any impact of public health and safety.

## Water Treatment Process

The treatment process consists of a series of steps. First, raw water is drawn from the Lake Erie intake where potassium permanganate is added for zebra mussel control and for preliminary disinfection. A rotating screen removes fish and debris. The water then is treated with alum and polymer. The addition of these substances cause small particles to adhere to one another and become bigger (flocculation). At this point caustic soda (used to adjust the final pH and alkalinity) and powdered activated carbon (used to remove toxins taste and odor compounds and algal toxins) is added to the water. During flocculation the large particles become heavy enough to settle into a basin from which sediment is removed. At this point, the water is filtered through layers of granular-activated carbon and refined filter sand. As smaller, suspended particles are removed, clear water emerges.

Chlorine is added as a precaution against any bacteria and viruses that may still be present. (We carefully monitor the amount of chlorine, adding the lowest quantity necessary to protect the safety of your water without compromising taste.) Finally, fluoride (used to prevent tooth decay) and a corrosion inhibitor (used to protect distribution system pipes) are added before the water is pumped to an underground reservoir, three water towers, and into your home or business.

## What's a Cross-connection?

Cross-connections that 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 continuously jeopardized by cross-connections unless appropriate valves, known as backflow prevention devices, are installed and maintained. We have surveyed industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities in the service area to make sure that potential cross-connections are identified and eliminated or protected by a backflow preventer. We also inspect and test backflow preventers to make sure that they provide maximum protection.

For more information on backflow prevention, contact the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

## Test Results

Our water is monitored for many different kinds of substances on a very strict sampling schedule. The information in the data tables shows only those substances that were detected between January 1 and December 31, 2017. Remember that detecting a substance does not necessarily mean the water is unsafe to drink; our goal is to keep all detects below their respective maximum allowed levels. The State recommends monitoring 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.

We participated in the 3rd stage of the U.S. EPA's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR3) program by performing additional tests on our drinking water. UCMR3 benefits the environment and public health by providing the EPA with data on the occurrence of contaminants suspected to be in drinking water, to determine if the EPA needs to introduce new regulatory standards to improve drinking water quality. Contact us for more information on this program.

Note that we have a current, unconditioned license to operate our water system.

### REGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Barium (ppm)	2017	2	2	0.02	0–0.02	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Chlorine (ppm)	2017	[4]	[4]	1.37	1.30–1.37	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Fluoride (ppm)	2017	4	4	0.99	0.28–1.15	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive that promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Haloacetic Acids [HAA] (ppb)	2017	60	NA	10.3	6.0–16.3	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Nitrate (ppm)	2017	10	10	1.5	0–1.5	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	2017	80	NA	22.6	12.6–37.5	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Organic Carbon [TOC] <sup>1</sup> (ppm)	2017	TT	NA	1.0	1.0–1.5	No	Naturally present in the environment
Turbidity <sup>2</sup> (NTU)	2017	TT	NA	0.16	0.04–0.16	No	Soil runoff
Turbidity (Lowest monthly percent of samples meeting limit)	2017	TT = 95% of samples meet the limit	NA	100	NA	No	Soil runoff

### Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AL	MCLG	AMOUNT DETECTED (90TH% TILE)	RANGE LOW-HIGH	SITES ABOVE AL/ TOTAL SITES	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Copper (ppm)	2016	1.3	1.3	0.083	0–0.160	0/30	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits
Lead (ppb)	2016	15	0	0	0–9.3	0/30	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

### UNREGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	TYPICAL SOURCE
Bromodichloromethane (ppb)	2017	6.6	3.8–10.1	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Chloroform (ppb)	2017	13.7	7.5–24.2	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Dibromochloromethane (ppb)	2017	2.3	1.3–3.2	By-product of drinking water disinfection

### OTHER SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH
Br2 Acetic Acid	2017	1.0	0–1.0
Cl2 Acetic Acid (ppb)	2017	4.9	3.3–7.4
Cl3 Acetic Acid (ppb)	2017	5.1	2.2–7.9
Orthophosphate (ppm)	2017	0.69	0.60–0.86

<sup>1</sup> The value reported under Amount Detected for TOC is the lowest ratio between percentage of TOC actually removed to the percentage of TOC required to be removed. A value of greater than one indicates that the water system is in compliance with TOC removal requirements. A value of less than one indicates a violation of the TOC removal requirements.

<sup>2</sup> Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. It is monitored because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the filtration system.

## Definitions

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

**LRAA (Locational Running Annual Average):** The average of sample analytical results for samples taken at a particular monitoring location during the previous four calendar quarters. Amount Detected values for TTHMs and HAAs are reported as the highest LRAAs.

**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.

**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 contaminants.

**NA:** Not applicable

**NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Units):** Measurement of the clarity, or turbidity, of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

**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).

**removal ratio:** A ratio between the percentage of a substance actually removed to the percentage of the substance required to be removed.

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