

2026 Water Quality Report

The Forsyth County Department of Water & Sewer is proud to supply clean, reliable drinking water for all its customers.

In 2025, the year covered by this report, the water from your tap met all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state drinking water health standards. This water quality report details where your water comes from, what it contains and how it compares to standards set by the regulatory agencies.



Questions About Your Water...

SOURCE

Where does our water come from? The vast majority of Forsyth County's water comes from Lake Lanier and is treated by either Forsyth County or the City of Cumming. A small portion of Forsyth County's water comes from Fulton County (which withdraws water from the Chattahoochee River) or is obtained from local groundwater wells.

CONTAMINANTS

What is in our water?

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791). Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide similar protection for public health. Sources of drinking water—both tap water and bottled water—include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs and wells. As water travels through the ground or over the surface of land, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some instances, radioactive material. Water also can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

YOUR WATER

More than 150,000 tests are conducted annually by the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and Forsyth County to ensure you have safe drinking water. These tests monitor tap water for organisms, minerals and organic substances that could cause disease or other adverse health effects. Testing is done for over 100 different contaminants including bacteria, metals, nitrates and pesticides.

The water quality data shown in the table on page 2 lists regulated drinking water contaminants monitored during 2025, the calendar year of this report. Presence of contaminants in water does not necessarily indicate the water poses a health risk.

PRECAUTIONS

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised persons such as patients with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, those 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 healthcare providers. EPA/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: 1-800-426-4791*.

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES OF WATER CONTAMINANTS:



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 can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic waste, water discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.



PESTICIDES OR HERBICIDES may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff and residential uses.



RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINANTS can be naturally occurring or the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.



ORGANIC CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production. They also can come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, agricultural application and septic systems.

Guide to the Data Table

The table below lists all the information required by the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act. To better understand what the table tells you about your drinking water, use the tips to the right:

A&B These columns are the highest levels of each contaminant considered safe in drinking water.

C This column is the average level of each contaminant found in your drinking water during sampling by the County.

D This column is the range of each contaminant level found during sampling by the County.

A B C D WATER QUALITY DATA TABLE

Regulated Substance sampled (Unit of Measure)	MCLG	MCL	Your water	Range (low-high)	Sample date	Violation	Typical Source
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.71	0.27-1.1	2025	No	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive which promotes strong teeth; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate/Nitrite (ppm)	10	10	0.35	0.35-0.35	2025	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks and sewerage; erosion of natural deposits
Turbidity (NTU)	NA	TT=1 NTU	NA	0.07-0.70	2025	No	Soil runoff
		TT = 95% of samples ≤ 0.3 NTU		99% ≤ 0.3 NTU			
TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	NA	80	31.98	1.9-69.95	2025	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Total Coliform (% of positive samples monthly)	0	<5%	0	0-0	2025	No	Naturally present in the environment
Total Organic Carbon (ppm)	NA	TT	1.35	1.27-1.47	2025	No	Plant and animal material
Haloacetic Acid (ppb)	NA	60	26.35	4.6-43.0	2025	No	By-product of drinking water chlorination
Free Chlorine Residual (ppm)	4	4	1.91	1.32-2.37	2025	No	Water additive for disinfection
Regulated Substance sampled at the customer's tap (Unit of Measure)	Action Level	90th Percentile Sample Result*	Range (low-high)	Sample date	Violation	Typical Source	
Copper (ppm)	1.3	0.15	0.0037-0.35	2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits; leaching; corrosion of household plumbing systems	
Lead (ppb)	15	1	0.0-49	2024	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits	

* The 90th percentile sample result must be below the Action Level to maintain compliance with the Lead and Copper rule.

Lead and Copper testing is conducted every three years.
Next Lead/Copper testing: Summer 2027

WATER TERMINOLOGY

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 a margin of safety.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):

The highest level of a contaminant allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best treatment technology.

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 using disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL):

The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that adding a disinfectant is necessary to control microbial contaminants.

Action Level (AL):

The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

Treatment Technique (TT):

A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Parts per Million (ppm):

One part per million is equivalent to one minute in two years or one penny in \$10,000.

Parts per Billion (ppb):

One part per billion is equivalent to one minute in 2,000 years or one penny in \$10,000,000.

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU):

Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of water. We monitor turbidity because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.

Non Detect (ND):

The contaminant was not present or was below the detection limits of the testing procedure.

Not Applicable (NA):

This does not apply to the contaminant listed.

Learn More About Water Issues

Be an active part of your community and learn more about water issues in Forsyth County by attending the Board of Commissioners meetings, as advertised on the County Website www.forsythco.com.

Lead and Copper Service Line Inventory

Link for Water Service Line Survey, Inventory, and Quick Check for Lead Guide:



The Forsyth County Department of Water & Sewer (FCDWS) is actively complying with the EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI), which requires all water distribution systems to develop and submit a Service Line Inventory (SLI) to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD). Since mid-2022, FCDWS has been compiling this inventory through staff interviews, visual inspections, and data review from the County Tax Assessor and Geographic Information System (GIS). Homes/buildings constructed in 1990 or later are not considered to contain LSLs (Lead Service Lines) due to a nationwide ban in the late 1980s.

Status through January 2026:

- 68,747 service lines were evaluated, of which only 3,808 remain to be assessed on the private side.
- No lead service lines (LSLs) have been identified so far. The County's service line inventory status is available on the 'GIS Service Line Inventory Portal'. (see link below or scan QR code)
- The most recent water samples collected by FCDWS in 2024 are within the 90th percentile Action Level for lead.

The service line from the water meter to the house/building is private, meaning it is owned and maintained by the property owner. Since the County has no direct control over these private service lines, information on these lines is not always provided for or recorded in County records. This also includes properties that were previously connected to a groundwater well but have since transitioned to the county's water distribution system. To complete the required SLI documentation, FCDWS is requesting property owners or residents report their service line material by any of the following methods:

- Complete the Water Service Line Survey (See link below or scan QR code)
- Have a licensed plumber inspect your service line (if your property was built before 1990) and report the findings to us
- Self-report using the "Quick Check for Lead Guide" (See link below or scan QR code)
- Write us at 2435 Freedom Parkway, Suite 1200, Cumming Georgia, 30041 Attn: Service Line Inventory
- Contact Customer Service at (770) 781-2160

Your participation is needed to update the inventory of private service line materials for our community. Thank you for your cooperation!

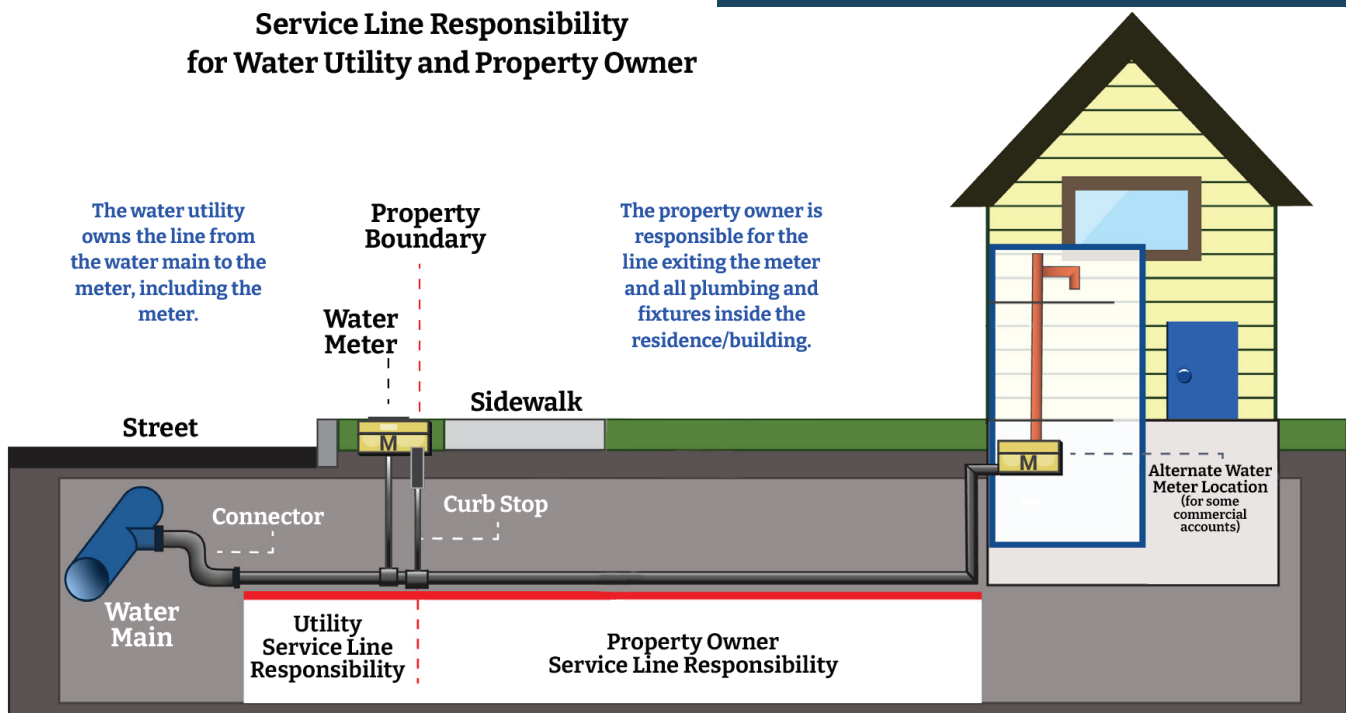
EFFECTS OF LEAD IN WATER

82
Pb
lead
207.2

According to the EPA, 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 parts used in service lines and in home plumbing. The Forsyth County Department of Water & Sewer is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing 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 can help protect yourself and your family 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 Hank Jones, Water/Wastewater Plant Manager at 678-455-8394. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at <https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Water Service Line Inventory: www.forsythco.com/waterserviceline
Información relacionada disponible en español: <https://espanol.epa.gov/plomo>

Service Line Responsibility for Water Utility and Property Owner



The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District completed a *Source Water Assessment Plan* for Forsyth County that itemized potential sources of water pollution within the Lake Lanier watershed.

Source Water Assessment Plans:

- Delineate the watershed area for each public drinking water source
- Contain an inventory of potential sources of contamination within that watershed
- Determine the susceptibility of the water supply to contamination within the watershed assessment area

The Forsyth County Source Water Assessment Plan is available for review at

www.forsythco.com

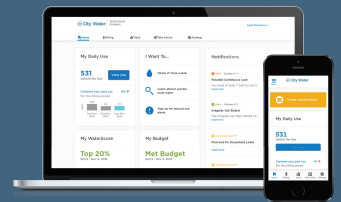


WaterSmart

We are excited to offer WaterSmart to Forsyth County water customers, a free online portal to help you better manage your water usage, get leak alerts and potentially avoid water damage to your property!

Using WaterSmart is easy. Just follow these three steps:

1. **Log on:** www.forsythco.com/watersmart
2. **Register.** Use the 12 digits of the account number (ex. 123456-123456) on your water bill and the ZIP code of your service address.
3. **Personalize.** Answer the simple profile survey to see how your water use compares with similar properties.



PFAS

PFAS (Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) are a group of man-made chemicals that have been used in industry and consumer products worldwide since the 1940s, particularly in products that resist grease, water and oil. Although some types of PFAS are no longer used, various products may still contain PFAS.

The EPA has recently established a national primary drinking water regulation for PFAS that sets enforceable limits and requires monitoring of public water supplies.

Your drinking water provided by the Forsyth County Department of Water & Sewer (FCDWS) continues to meet all federal and state water quality requirements. Recent PFAS testing of Forsyth County's drinking water in November 2025 was not found at levels at or above EPA's Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs).

For additional information:

<https://www.epa.gov/pfas>

Water Quality: Taste and Odor (MIB & Geosmin)

At times, customers may notice an earthy or musty taste or odor in their water. This is caused by naturally occurring compounds called MIB and Geosmin, which are produced by cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) in warm, sunlit surface waters. These conditions are most common in late summer and early fall.

Although some people can detect these compounds at very low levels, MIB and Geosmin are harmless, and the water remains safe to drink and in full compliance with all drinking water standards. However, they are not easily removed by traditional treatment methods.

Our 40 MGD (Million Gallons Per Day) water treatment plant can treat up to 16 MGD using ozonation, an advanced process that effectively reduces MIB and Geosmin while enhancing overall water quality. We are currently in the design phase of a full-plant ozonation system, which is expected to be operational in 2028. This upgrade will further strengthen our ability to manage seasonal taste and odor events and maintain high-quality drinking water for our community.