

# HIGHWAY PARK UTILITIES

Highlands County Board of County Commissioners

## 2008 Water Quality Report



**H**ighway Park Utilities, which is owned by the Highlands County Board of County Commissioners, is pleased to provide you with this year's annual water quality report. We want to keep you informed about the excellent water and services we have delivered to you over the past year. Our goal is and always has been to provide to you a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. Highway Park Utilities routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws, rules and regulations. Except where indicated otherwise, this report is based on the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2008. Data obtained before January 1, 2008 and presented in this report is from the most recent testing done in accordance with the laws, rules, and regulations. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires monitoring of over 80 drinking water contaminants. The contaminants listed in the table are the only contaminants detected in your drinking water. We are pleased to report that our drinking water meets all federal and state requirements.

### Water Conservation—How You Can Help

Your own actions can have a big impact on the safety and quality of our drinking water.

There are many things you can do to help protect our drinking water supplies.

- ◆ Take care with toxic or hazardous materials to keep them from getting into our water supplies. Improperly disposing of these chemicals by releasing them onto the soil, into septic systems, or into the sewer system could cause contamination of nearby drinking water supplies. Contact the Highlands County Recycling Department to learn how to properly dispose of these materials. You can find them on the County website; <http://www.hbcc.net> Select Solid Waste from the buttons on the left, and then select Recycling. Information on the disposal of hazardous waste is detailed on their web site pages or by contacting them Monday through Friday 7 AM to 4 PM at 863-655-6477.
- ◆ Even areas that usually have plentiful supplies of drinking water periodically face shortages due to drought. Help reduce demand by making water conservation a regular part of your daily routine by installing low-flow fixtures, fixing leaky toilets, and faucets promptly and reporting leaks in your water system's distribution system to your utility. Water conservation regulations are published at <http://www.watermatters.org>; the website for the Southwest Florida Water Management District.
- ◆ Help prevent contamination of water resources, and prolong the life of your septic system, by having your septic tank inspected regularly and cleaned out when necessary, typically every three (3) to five (5) years. Contact the Highlands County Health Department in Sebring at 863-386-6040 for more information.
- ◆ Protect your family and neighbors from health hazards by protecting your water supply from backflow contamination. Install simple, inexpensive hose bib vacuum breakers on all spigots. Before starting a plumbing project, find out if a permit is required and always make sure the plumbing will be in compliance with the plumbing code. Contact your utility for cross connection control and backflow prevention requirements in your area.

Everyone can play a part in conserving our precious resource.

The sources of drinking water (both tap and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. Highway Park Utilities has two (2) groundwater wells that reach into the Floridan Aquifer in Central Florida. The water is chlorinated for disinfection purposes. 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 EPA prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) 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 contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.

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

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Contaminants 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 result from urban storm water 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 storm water runoff, and residential uses.

*Organic chemical contaminants* – including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.

*Radioactive contaminants* – which can be naturally-occurring or be a result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

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*In the table on the next page you may find unfamiliar terms and abbreviations. To help you better understand these terms we've provided the following definitions:*

**"NA"** means not applicable

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

**Initial Distribution System Evaluations (IDSE):** An important part of the Stage 2 Disinfection Byproducts Rule (DBPR). The IDSE is a one-time study conducted by water systems to identify distribution system locations with high concentrations of trihalomethanes (THMs) and haloacetic acids (HAAs). Water systems will use results from the IDSE in conjunction with their Stage 1 DBPR compliance monitoring data, to select compliance monitoring locations for the Stage 2 DBPR.

**Picocurie per liter (pCi/L)** - measure of the radioactivity in water.

**Parts per million (ppm)** or Milligrams per liter (mg/l) - one part by weight of analyte to 1 million part by weight of the water sample.

**Parts per billion (ppb)** or Micrograms per liter (µg/l) - one part by weight of analyte to 1 billion parts by weight of the water sample.

**Maximum residual disinfectant level or MRDL:** 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.

**Maximum residual disinfectant level goal or 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 Contaminant Level or MCL:** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the MCLG's as feasible using the best available treatment technology. MCL's are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink 2 liters of water every day at the MCL level for a lifetime to have a one-in-a-million chance of having the described health effect.

**Maximum Contaminant Level Goal or MCLG:** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk of health. MCLG's allow for a margin of safety.

As authorized and approved by the EPA, the State has reduced monitoring requirements for certain contaminants to less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of our data, though representative, is more than one year old.

### Highway Park Utilities Water Quality Test Results:

\*\*Results in the Level Detected column for inorganic contaminants are the highest detected level at any sampling point, depending on the sampling frequency.

Contaminant & Unit of Measure	Dates of Sampling (mo./yr.)	MCL Violation Y/N	**Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
<b>Inorganic Contaminants</b>							
11. Barium (ppm)	7/06	N	.021	NA	2	2	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits.
16. Fluoride (ppm)	7/06	N	0.05	NA	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories. Water additive which promotes strong teeth; when at optimum levels between 0.7 and 1.3 ppm. Highway Park Utilities does not use fluoride as an additive.
20. Nitrate (ppm)	5/08	N	0.07	NA	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural dep.
23. Sodium (ppm)	7/06	N	13.3	NA	NA	160	Salt water intrusion, leaching from soil.

**Stage 1 Disinfectant and Disinfection By-Product** For bromate, chloramines, or chlorine, the level detected is the highest running annual average (RAA), computed quarterly of monthly averages of all samples collected. For haloacetic acids or TTHM, the level detected is the highest RAA, computed quarterly, of quarterly averages of all samples collected if the system is monitoring quarterly or is the average of all samples taken during the year if the system monitors less frequently than quarterly. Range of Results is the range of individual sample results (lowest to highest) for all monitoring locations, including Initial Distribution System Evaluation (IDSE) results as well as Stage 1 compliance results.

Disinfectant or Contaminant & Unit of Measure	Dates of Sampling (mo./yr.)	MCL or MRDL Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG or MRDLG	MCL or MRDL	Likely Source of contamination
78. Chlorine (ppm)	Monthly, 2008	N	0.63	0.5 – 0.8	MRDLG=4	MRDL =4	Water additive used to control microbes
79. Haloacetic Acids (five) (HAA5) (ppb)	7/06	N	8.2	NA	NA	MCL = 60	By-product of drinking water disinfection
80. TTHM [Total Trihalomethanes] (ppb)	7/06	N	39.7	NA	NA	MCL = 80	By-product of drinking water disinfection

### Lead & Copper (Tap Water)

Contaminant & Unit of Measure	Dates of Sampling (mo./yr.)	AL Violation	90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Result	No. of Sampling sites exceeding the AL	MCLG	AL (Action Level)	Likely Source of contamination
84. Copper (ppm) (tap water)	9/06	N	0.09	0	1.3	1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives.
85. Lead (ppb) (tap water)	9/06	N	1.0	0	0	15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems, erosion of natural deposits

**Nitrates:** As a precaution we always notify physicians and health care providers in this area if there is ever a higher than normal level of nitrates in the water supply.

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. Highway Park Utilities is 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. 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 <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>

### SPECIAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised 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 their drinking water from their health care provider. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the:

**Safe Drinking Water Hotline**  
1-800-426-4791

**Source Water Assessment & Protection Plan:** In 2008 The Department of Environmental Protection performed a Source Water Assessment on our system. The assessment was conducted to provide information about any potential sources of contamination in the vicinity of our wells. There are seven (7) potential sources of contamination identified for this system with a moderate susceptibility level. The assessment results are available on the FDEP Source Water Assessment and Protection Program website <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/swapp> or they can be obtained from the Highway Park Utilities office at 505 South Commerce Avenue, Sebring, FL 33852.

*We're very pleased to provide you with this year's Annual Water Quality Report. We want to keep you informed about the excellent water and services we have delivered to you over the past year. This report shows our water quality results and what they mean. If you have any questions about this report or concerning your water utility, feel free to call any of the numbers listed*

*Highway Park Utilities*

Highway Park Utilities  
505 S. Commerce Ave.  
Sebring, FL 33870

PRESORTED  
FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
US POSTAGE PAID  
LAKELAND FL  
PERMIT NO. 5591

FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED

Highway Park Utility Customer  
East of US 27, North of Camp Florida  
South of Lake McCoy & West of Lake Huntley  
Lake Placid Florida 33852

**Highway Park Utilities**  
505 S. Commerce Ave.  
Sebring, Florida 33870  
863-402-6786 or 863-699-3716  
Mon - Fri 7:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Ramon D. Gavarrete, P.E. 863-402-6877  
County Engineer/Utilities Director  
Robert Diefendorf, E.I. 863-402-6877  
Utilities/Transportation Project Manager  
863-402-6786

Nancy Zurcher Utilities Specialist II  
Shantay Hammond Utilities Specialist I  
David Jones Utility Technician II  
Lane McGee Utility Technician I  
Lake Placid Direct Line  
699-3716

*Highway Park Utilities* is part of the Highlands County Engineering Department; open Monday thru Friday from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Payments can be made at the office or at the drop box in Lake Placid. It is located in the Highlands County Building Department at 101 N. Main St in Lake Placid. We are governed by the Board of County Commissioners. You are welcome to attend their meetings on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) and third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Tuesdays of each month at 600 S. Commerce Ave., Sebring. Sessions begin at 9:00 AM.

Your Commissioners are: Barbara Stewart Edgar Stokes  
C. Guy Maxcy Don Bates  
Jeff Carlson

Landlords & Businesses are encouraged to share this report with non-billed water users. Additional copies of this report are available at the Placid Utilities office or at:  
**Highlands Co. Health Dept. 7205 S. George Blvd. Sebring, FL 33875**