

# 2021 WATER QUALITY REPORT

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CLEAN • SAFE • RELIABLE

Este reporte incluye información importante sobre el agua potable. Para asistencia en español, favor de llamar al teléfono (407) 423-9018.



*The Reliable One*®

# A WORD FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER & CEO



At OUC — The *Reliable One*, we take our responsibility and commitment to providing clean, safe, great-tasting water very seriously. This 2021 OUC Water Quality Report affirms this commitment, backing it with a compilation of test results and other important information about the quality of the water you drink and our efforts to conserve it.

The source of your drinking water is the Lower Floridan aquifer, a well-protected reservoir located hundreds of feet below ground level. OUC treats this high-quality water with ozone, the strongest disinfectant available, and other agents that fight bacteria in water and corrosion in pipes. Additionally, our state-certified water lab conducts thousands of chemical and bacteriological water-quality tests throughout each year, including tests for more than 135 regulated and unregulated substances like lead and copper. Summaries of those results are included in this report.

I'm proud to mention that in 2021 OUC claimed the honor of being the No. 1-rated water utility in the country based on a J.D. Power Residential Water Customer Satisfaction survey. We also led our midsized peers in the South, a first in either national or regional categories as a water provider. This accolade confirms that OUC water customers are extremely satisfied.

Water is one of our most precious resources. As such, we always encourage customers to conserve water. But in August 2021 we asked you to reduce water use even further because OUC and other water utilities were experiencing a shortage of liquid oxygen (LOX). LOX is a vital component in our water-

purification process, so its availability — or lack thereof — has a direct impact on our treatment capacity. The unexpected supply constraint was due to the summer's surge in COVID-19 hospitalizations, with LOX being used as a healthcare treatment in the more severe cases.

I can't thank our customers enough for how they responded to our call to action to use less water, likely averting a boil-water alert. Their support was crucial to our ability to manage reduced LOX supplies during a time of need.

Water conservation doesn't require a lot of sacrifices, just greater efficiency. To help residential and business customers achieve this, OUC offers free conservation audits and rebates that support water efficiency upgrades. Significant investments in innovative technologies, like smart water meters and leak detection monitoring, also allow us to proactively identify areas for improvement regarding both customer consumption and our water infrastructure.

I hope the 2021 Water Quality Report reassures you that we are a responsible steward of the public's water supply. If you have any questions or concerns about water quality or conservation, please don't hesitate to contact OUC's Water Quality Lab at 407-434-2549.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clint Bullock". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'C'.

— Clint Bullock  
OUC General Manager & CEO



# SAFE, RELIABLE DRINKING WATER FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

## A NATURALLY CLEAN WATER SOURCE

OUC's water comes from the Lower Floridan aquifer, an underground reservoir that, in many places, is a quarter-mile below parts of the Earth's surface. The aquifer is fed by rainwater that goes through a filtration process as it seeps through hundreds of feet of sand and rock. OUC pumps water from the aquifer to facilities where it's treated to meet standards that ensure the water is safe to drink.

## PROMOTING WATER CONSERVATION

OUC works year-round to educate the community about the importance of protecting such a precious — and limited — natural resource. From water-conservation themed events, campaigns and student projects to proactive traditional and social media outreach during times of low rainfall or drought, we are committed to helping our customers understand the vital role water plays in everyday life and how crucial their role is in protecting it.

OUC also offers services that help customers become water-wise consumers. Our conservation team conducts home audits to search for potential sources of water loss and make recommendations on improvements. Some recommended upgrades are eligible for OUC rebates, including low-volume irrigation systems, ultra-low-flow toilets, and water cisterns. Customers also have online access to water

conservation tips and videos covering such topics as leak detection, water-wise landscaping, faucet aerators, and more. For additional information, visit [OUC.com/water](https://www.ouc.com/water).

## OZONE PROCESS PRODUCES GREAT-TASTING TAP WATER

OUC uses ozone treatment at our seven water-service plants as part of a process to produce high-quality, great-tasting tap water we call H<sub>2</sub>OUC. Ozone oxidizes hydrogen sulfide to improve taste, eliminate odor and reduce the amount of chlorine that's added to water. By law, we are required to add chlorine to our water to maintain its high quality as it flows through pipes to customers' taps. Fluoride also is added to promote healthy teeth, and we add sodium hydroxide to adjust the pH, preventing copper and lead from leaching into the drinking water from customers' plumbing, the primary source of these elements.

## PROTECTING OUR WATER FACILITIES

Because the safety of your water is of the utmost importance, OUC goes to great lengths to keep our water treatment facilities secure. All OUC water plants are equipped with state-of-the-art security, including intrusion-detection systems, alarms, cameras and fences around the perimeter of properties. Armed security guards and law enforcement officers regularly patrol the facilities.

# MAKING WATER CONSERVATION A FUN LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Through water-conservation-themed classroom programs, OUC is teaching public school students about the importance of preserving and protecting Florida's water supply. Since 2006, more than 94,000 local students have participated in OUC's Water Color Project and Project AWESOME (Alternative Water & Energy Supply, Observation, Methods and Education). The Water Color Project encourages Orange County students to use their artistic talents to promote conservation. Fourth- and fifth-graders compete to have their artwork featured in OUC's annual Water Conservation Calendar while middle and high school students paint water-themed rain barrels for judging.

Project AWESOME delivers an interactive lab to fifth-graders in Orange and Osceola counties. Students make an aquifer, build solar-powered cars and validate the efficiency of low-flow showerheads and compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs).

OUC's efforts to spread the word on water conservation go beyond the classroom. Everyone can help save water by following a few simple tips:

- Water just once per week in cooler months and twice per week in warmer months in accordance with the SJRWMD watering restrictions at [www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions](http://www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions).
- Water your lawn before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. to minimize the amount lost to evaporation.
- Water your lawn for just 35-45 minutes per session. Turn off your irrigation system if it has rained.
- Repair leaking faucets and toilets.
- Install water-saver shower heads and take shorter showers.

*For more ways to save water, visit*  
[www.ouc.com/waterconservation](http://www.ouc.com/waterconservation).

As part of OUC's Water Color Project, elementary school students created the artwork (below), which is featured in the 2022 Water Conservation Calendar. Local middle and high school students painted the rain barrels (right).

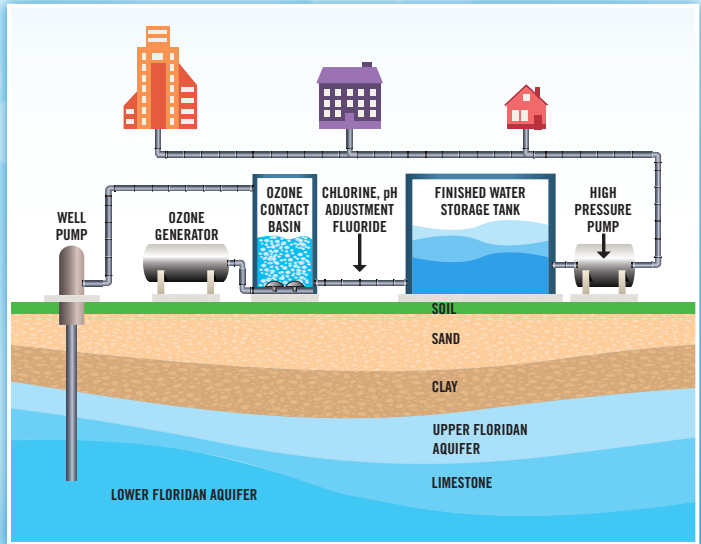




# WHERE DOES YOUR WATER COME FROM?



Well pumps at OUC's water treatment plants draw water from a natural underground reservoir called the Lower Floridan aquifer. After being sent through ozone contact basins, the water is treated with chlorine and fluoride. The water is then pumped into a finished water storage tank and distributed to residential, commercial and industrial customers. OUC pumps about 31 billion gallons of water per year to customers across a 200-square-mile service area.



## The History of Orlando's Water

The foundation for what would eventually become the Orlando Utilities Commission was laid even before the 20th century began. Through much of the 1800s, the community's only source of water was a town well located next to the Orange County Court House at the corner of Central and Main.

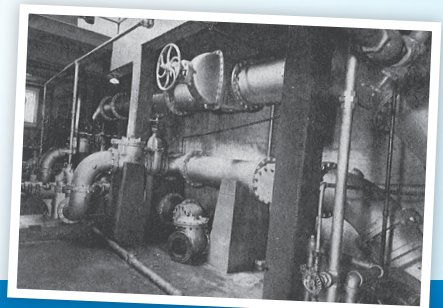
The Orlando Water Company was formed in 1886 and consisted of a plant and distribution system, which used Lake Highland as its source. In 1889, additional water mains – including about 13.5 miles of pipe – were laid to serve many areas of Orlando with a safe domestic supply and fire protection.

Four years later, a foreclosure resulted in a new corporation, the Orlando Water and Sewerage Company, which was purchased within a year to form the Orlando Water & Light Company (OWLC). Using an additional water supply, Lake Concord, OWLC boosted the system to 23 miles of mains and pipes,

covering every part of the City and more than 100 fire hydrants. In 1917, the first filtered treatment facilities were built to begin treating lake water before passing it into the city mains.

In 1922, the City of Orlando purchased OWLC to form the Orlando Utilities Commission. OUC – *The Reliable One*, as you know us today, pumps water from the pristine Lower Floridan aquifer to provide safe, clean, great-tasting water to the residents of Orlando and parts of unincorporated Orange County.

OUC's water pumping equipment from the 1930s.





# WATER QUALITY TEST RESULTS

## ALL TEST RESULTS WELL BELOW ALLOWABLE LEVELS

As shown in the following tables, OUC 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, 2021. Data obtained before January 1, 2021, and presented in this report is from the most recent testing done in accordance with the laws, rules, and regulations.

Inorganic Contaminants							
Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of Sampling (mo/yr)	MCL Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
Barium (ppm)	02/20	N	0.034	0.011–0.034	2	2	Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	02/20	N	0.64	0.13–0.64	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits; water additive that promotes strong teeth when at the optimum level of 0.7 ppm
Nitrate (as Nitrogen) (ppm)	03/21	N	0.06	ND–0.06	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits
Selenium (ppb)	02/20	N	0.8	ND–0.8	N/A	50	Discharge from petroleum and metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits; discharge from mines
Sodium (ppm)	02/20	N	13.7	7.16–13.7	N/A	160	Salt water intrusion; leaching from soil
Asbestos (MFL)	06/20	N	0.99	0.20–0.99	7	7	Decay of asbestos cement water mains; erosion of natural deposits

### STAGE 1 DISINFECTANTS AND DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS

Disinfectant or Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	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
<b>Bromate (ppb)</b>	01/21–12/21	N	3.2	ND–10.1	MCLG=0	MCL=10	By-product of drinking water disinfection
<b>Chlorine (ppm)</b>	01/21–12/21	N	1.3	0.2–2.2	MRDLG=4	MRDL=4	Water additive used to control microbes

*For bromate and chlorine, the level detected is the highest running annual average (RAA), computed quarterly, of monthly averages of all samples collected. The range of results is the range of results of all the individual samples collected during the past year.*

### STAGE 2 DISINFECTANTS AND DISINFECTION BY-PRODUCTS

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of Sampling (mo/yr)	MCL Violation Y/N	Level Detected	Range of Results	MCLG	MCL	Likely Source of Contamination
<b>Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) (ppb)</b>	02/21–11/21	N	32.13**	5.75–36.95	N/A	MCL=60	By-product of drinking water disinfection
<b>Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) (ppb)</b>	02/21–11/21	N	75.71**	19.72–72.10	N/A	MCL=80	By-product of drinking water disinfection

*\*\* Compliance levels are based on the locational running annual averages and include results from previous quarters not reported under the Range of Results column.*





## RESULTS OF COPPER AND LEAD SAMPLING AT CUSTOMER TAPS

The following results are from tests conducted in July 2020 (the most recent available in accordance with FDEP regulations). The tests confirm that the levels of lead and copper in tap water sampled in homes were below the Action Level (AL).

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mo/yr)	AL Exceeded (Y/N)*	90th Percentile Result	Number of sampling sites exceeding the AL	MCLG	AL	Likely Source of Contamination
<b>Copper (tap water) (ppm)</b>	07/20	N	0.6	1	1.3	1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives
<b>Lead (tap water) (ppb)</b>	7/20	N	3	0	0	15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits

\*The Action Level (AL) is exceeded if the concentration in more than 10% of the tap samples (90th Percentile Result) is greater than the established AL.



# KEYS TO ABBREVIATIONS

**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.

**AL:****Action Level.**

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

**ppm:****Parts Per Million.**

One part by weight of analyte to 1 million parts by weight of the water sample.

**ppb:****Parts Per Billion.**

One part by weight of analyte to 1 billion parts by weight of the water sample.

**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.

**RAA:****Running Annual Average.**

The average of results computed quarterly, of monthly averages of all samples collected during the previous four calendar quarters.

**N/A:****Not Applicable.****ND:****Not Detected.**

Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

**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.

**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.

**MFL:****Million Fibers Per Liter.**

Measure of the presence of asbestos fibers that are longer than 10 micrometers.

## More About Lead and Copper

The primary source of lead and copper in tap water is customer's plumbing. These elements can possibly leach into the water from a building's plumbing through corrosion if the water has been standing in the pipes for several hours. To prevent corrosion from occurring, OUC has effectively implemented system-wide corrosion-control treatment. At the treatment plants, sodium hydroxide is added to the water to increase the water's pH and thus prevent corrosion.

Buildings at risk for lead or copper in the water are those that have lead services or that have lead solder in copper pipes.

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. OUC 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 at 1-800-426-4791 or online at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

## Constantly Testing Your Water

OUC's Water Quality Laboratory is certified by the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) and is accredited to perform a wide scope of analyses. Certification is maintained through an on-site assessment every two years and performance of proficiency testing twice a year. Chemists at OUC's Water Quality Laboratory perform thousands of chemical and bacteriological tests annually to ensure that your drinking water meets or exceeds all state



and federal regulations. Customers can continue to enjoy OUC's water knowing that it is tested regularly and surpasses the highest quality standards. For more information about OUC's drinking water, call our Water Quality Laboratory at 407-434-2549 to talk to a water quality professional. Information is also available online at [www.ouc.com](http://www.ouc.com).

## Source Water Assessment

In 2021 the Florida 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 67 unique potential sources of contamination identified for this system with low to high susceptibility levels. The results of the Source Water Assessment are not a reflection of our treated water quality, but rather a rating of susceptibility of contamination under guidelines of the Florida DEP SWAPP program. The latest Source Water Assessment was completed in 2021 and the report is available online at [www.dep.state.fl.us/swapp](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/swapp).

# EPA STATEMENT ABOUT WATER RESOURCES, CONTAMINANTS

Sources of drinking water (both tap and bottled) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs and wells. As water travels over the surface of land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring, and, in some cases, radioactive materials. But it also picks up substances related to animals or human activity. 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 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 can come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff and septic systems.
- **Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally occurring or the result of oil and gas production, and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water provided by public water systems is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amounts of certain contaminants in water. Meanwhile, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulates limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

All drinking water, including bottled water, may be reasonably expected to contain minute amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants in water does not necessarily pose health risks.

More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at [1-800-426-4791](tel:1-800-426-4791).

## WHAT THE EPA SAYS ABOUT MCLs AND HEALTH EFFECTS



The Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) established by the EPA are set at very stringent levels. To understand the possible health effects described for many regulated constituents, a person would have to drink two 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.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised people, such as those with cancer who are undergoing chemotherapy, those who have undergone organ transplants, those with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, and some elderly and infants, can be particularly at risk for infections. These people should consult with their healthcare providers about drinking water. EPA and Center 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 EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at [1-800-426-4791](tel:1-800-426-4791).



ORLANDO UTILITIES COMMISSION  
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Orlando, Florida 32801  
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## 2022 COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

July 12	October (no meeting)
August 9	November 8
September 13	December 13

*Dates, times and locations subject to change.*

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*For ways to attend an OUC Commission  
Meeting, please visit [ouc.com/commission](http://ouc.com/commission)*

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