

Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for 2008

Town of Amsterdam

283 Manny Corners Road

Amsterdam, NY 12010

(Public Water Supply Identification Number NY2811730)

INTRODUCTION

To comply with State regulations, the Town of Amsterdam, will be annually issuing a report describing the quality of your drinking water. The purpose of this report is to raise your understanding of drinking water and awareness of the need to protect our drinking water sources. We are very pleased to provide you with this year's Annual Water Quality Report. The purpose of this report is to raise your understanding of drinking water and awareness of the need to protect our drinking water sources. Last year, we conducted tests for over 80 contaminants. We detected 2 of those contaminants at a level higher than the State allows. As we told you at the time, our water temporarily exceeded a drinking water standard and we modified our treatment process to rectify this problem. This report is an overview of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to New York State standards. Our constant goal is and always has been, to provide to you a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. We want you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and to protect our water resources. If you have any questions concerning this report or concerning your drinking water please contact: *Mr. Carl J. Rust, Water Superintendent, Town of Amsterdam, 283 Manny Corners Road, Amsterdam, NY 12010; Telephone # (518) 842-7961.* We want our valued customers to be informed about their water utility. If you want to learn more, please attend any of our regularly scheduled meetings. They are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, 7:00 PM at the *Town Office Building, Telephone (518) 842-7961.*

WHERE DOES OUR WATER COME FROM?

The Town of Amsterdam purchases its water from the City of Amsterdam. The City of Amsterdam's water sources are the Steele Reservoir, Ireland Vly Reservoir and Round Lake Reservoir which are located in Saratoga County, New York. The treatment process at Amsterdam Water Works consists of pre-disinfection with chlorine dioxide to protect against contamination from harmful bacteria and other organisms and reduce the formation of disinfection byproducts; microflocculation using alum and poly aluminum chloride to cause small particles to stick together when the water is mixed; filtration removes smaller particles by trapping them in sand filters; pH adjustment using lime for corrosion control, and post chlorination to prevent bacterial contamination.

In general, 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 activities. Contaminants that may be present in source water include microbial contaminants; inorganic contaminants; pesticides and herbicides; organic chemical contaminants; and radioactive contaminants. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the State and EPA prescribe regulations, which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water, provided by public water systems. The State Health Department's and the FDA's regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

FACTS AND FIGURES

The Town of Amsterdam provides water through 276 service connections (210 residential/65 commercial) to a population of approximately 2,200 people. Our average daily demand is 97,480 gallons. The total water pumped in 2008 was 35,580,454 gallons

ARE THERE CONTAMINANTS IN OUR DRINKING WATER?

In accordance with State regulations, the Town of Amsterdam routinely monitors your drinking water for numerous contaminants. We test your drinking water for inorganic contaminants, radiological contaminants, lead and copper, nitrate, volatile organic contaminants, and synthetic organic contaminants. In addition, we test 1 sample for coliform bacteria each month. The table presented below depicts which

contaminants were detected in your drinking water. The state allows us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of the data, though representative of the water quality, is more than one year old and is noted.

It should be noted that all drinking water, including bottled drinking water, may be reasonably expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily pose a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791) or the New York State Department of Health, Herkimer District Office at (315) 866-6879.

WHAT DOES THIS INFORMATION MEAN?

The table on page 4 revealed that the water level for lead from the City of Amsterdam exceeded the Action Level of 15 ppb and we are required to furnish the following educational information concerning lead. Infants and children who drink water containing lead in excess of the Action Level could experience delays in their physical or mental development. Children could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink this water over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure. Infants and young children are typically more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general population. It is possible that lead levels at your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of materials used in your home's plumbing. If you are concerned about elevated lead levels in your home's water, you may wish to have your water tested and flush your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using tap water. Additional information is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791). We are a consecutive system which purchases water from the city and they will be collecting additional lead and copper samples in the spring and fall of 2008. They are also evaluating various corrosion control technologies to lessen the amount of lead in your water.

Additionally we had an MCL violation for the Trihalomethanes and are required to furnish the following information: *Some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the MCL over many years may experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous systems and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.* Since we purchase our water from the Amsterdam Water Works, we have little control on the levels of trihalomethanes. They will be looking at various treatment technologies for trihalomethane reductions before it leaves their treatment plant. . Since we purchase our water from the City of Amsterdam, we have little control on the disinfection by product levels. The city is exploring ways to reduce THM and HAA5 levels such as the redesign of the current water treatment facility from the present direct filtration to a conventional filtration system which entails coagulation, flocculation, settling and filtration with possible additional treatment schemes such as ultraviolet (UV) disinfection and granular carbon filtration. UV does not generate THM's and HAA5's like chlorine and granular carbon will remove the organic precursor material that reacts with chlorine to form the above disinfection byproducts Both of these processes have shown reduced THM & HAA5 levels. Additionally there was a Treatment Technique violation for turbidity. In the plans for the redesign of the Amsterdam WTP, the issue of turbidity removal would also be addressed and corrected.

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.

IS OUR WATER SYSTEM MEETING OTHER RULES THAT GOVERN OPERATIONS?

During 2008, our system was in compliance with applicable State drinking water operating and reporting requirements. We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not your drinking water meets health standards. During 2008, did not test for the disinfection byproducts in the second quarter of 2008 and therefore cannot be sure of the quality of your drinking water during that time. The third and fourth quarter samples were subsequently collected.

DO I NEED TO TAKE SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS?

Some people may be more vulnerable to disease causing microorganisms or pathogens 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 from their health care provider about their drinking water. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium, Giardia and other microbiological pathogens are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

WATER CONSERVATION TIPS

The Town of Amsterdam encourages water conservation. There are a lot of things you can do to conserve water in your own home. Conservation tips include:

- ◆ Only run the dishwasher and clothes washer when there is a full load
- ◆ Use water saving showerheads
- ◆ Install faucet aerators in the kitchen and the bathroom to reduce the flow from 4 to 2.5 gallons per minute
- ◆ Water gardens and lawn for only a couple of hours after sunset
- ◆ Check faucets, pipes and toilets for leaks and repair all leaks promptly
- ◆ Take shorter showers

CLOSING

Thank you for allowing us to continue providing your family with clean, quality water this year. In order to maintain a safe and dependable water supply we sometimes need to make improvements that will benefit our customers. We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources, which are the heart of our community. Please call our office if you have questions.