TOWN OF BELLINGHAM

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

DRINKING WATER QUALITY CONSUMER INFORMATON REPORT 2006

(Public Water System ID# 2025000)

Introduction

The Town of Bellingham Department of Public Works (DPW) is committed to providing our customers with high quality drinking water that meets or surpasses state and federal standards for quality and safety. The Town has made significant investments in our pumping stations, filtration plant, and corrosion control facilities and annually performs thousands of dollars worth of water quality tests to ensure that we provide sufficient quantities of safe drinking water.

Bellingham water is safe to drink. The tasks the Bellingham DPW must perform as a public water supplier under the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act 1996 Amendments insure that to be the case. If a health hazard ever occurs, the DPW will utilize every possible means to notify and protect our customers. We are pleased to compile this annual report that summarizes the 2006 calendar year water quality testing, and hope it reassures our customers of the safety of our tap water.

Where does Bellingham get its drinking water?

The Town of Bellingham's drinking water supply system includes seventeen groundwater wells, nine pumping stations, three storage tanks, and approximately eighty-five miles of water main. Thirteen wells, which are controlled by five pumping stations, are located in the southern part of Town; they draw water from the Blackstone River basin underground aquifer. Four wells, each operated by its own pumping station, are located in the northern part of Town; they draw water from the Charles River basin underground aquifer. The DPW has detailed maps showing these facilities. Anyone who would like to see a map or obtain a copy should contact the DPW.

Is our water pure?

No. Pure water would be only hydrogen and oxygen, the compound H_2O. 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. Sources of drinking water (tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, reservoirs, streams, and wells. As water travels over land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and radioactive materials, and can be polluted by animal and human activity. Contaminants that might be expected in untreated water include: microbial contaminants (such as viruses and bacteria), inorganic contaminants (such as metals and salts), pesticides, herbicides, organic chemicals from industrial or petroleum use, and radioactive materials. (See the next few pages of this report for more information on contaminants and what may cause them.)

More information on contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the USEPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

If our water is not pure, what is in it?

The answer to this question is the main purpose of this report. On the next page, you will see a table titled **Bellingham 2006 Source Water Quality Summary (Summary)**. The **Summary** is the complete list of the contaminants detected in the samples collected at our drinking water sources and from our water distribution system in 2006. The list contains only the contaminants that were detected at levels above the "detection limit". The "detection limit" is the lowest concentration of a substance that today's laboratory technology can detect.

After the **Summary** is the **2006 Contaminant Test List (Contaminant List)**. The **Contaminant List** is a complete list of the 77 contaminants for which we perform drinking water sampling and analysis in 2006. If a contaminant is listed on the **Contaminant List**, but not in the **Summary**, the results were less than modern technology can detect or effectively zero.

The **Bellingham 2006 Source Water Quality Summary** also includes contaminants we were not required to monitor in 2006, but for which we detected some level within the last six years. If there is a year noted after a contaminant, regulations did not require that we monitor for it in 2006. The number notes the last year we tested and detected this contaminant.

The Mass DEP has reduced the monitoring requirements for Synthetic Organic Compound (SOC) and Inorganic (IOC) for some of our sources because these sources are not at risk of contamination. The last samples collected for these contaminants were 2002 for SOC at all sources and 2001 for IOC at Wells 7, 8, and 12. Those sampling results were found to meet all applicable EPA and Mass DEP standards.

Bellingham 2006 Source Water Quality Summary

Substance	Units of Measure	Highest Level Detected	Lowest Level Detected	Highest Level Allowed	Goal Level	Source of Contaminant
(Contaminant)				**MCL (1)**	**MCLG (2)**	
Nitrate	ppm (3)	1.4	0.16	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium	ppm (3)	82.6	27	UR (5)		Naturally present in the environment
Dalapon (2001)	ppb (4)	2.2	0	200	200	Runoff from herbicide use on rights of way
Perchlorate (2004)	ppb (4)	1.61	0	UR (1)		Component of propellants in rockets and missiles usually associated with fireworks, road flares, or military operations.
Total Coliform Bacteria	Monthly % (7)	2.33% *** See Pg 6	0	5.0%	0	Naturally present in the environment
Gross Beta/photon emitters (2001)	mrem/yr (8)	1.93	1.93	5.0	0	Decay of natural and man-made deposits
Combined Radium – 226 & 228	pCi/L (9)	2.7	0	5.0	0	Erosion of natural deposits
Alpha Emitters (Gross Alpha Activity)	pCi/L (9)	2.6	0.34	15.0	0	Erosion of natural deposits

Disinfectant By Products

Chloroform	ppb (4)	1.2	0	UR (5)		Trihalomethane; by-product of drinking water chlorination.
Trihalomethanes	ppb (4)	127.4 44.6 hra (6)	0	80	80	By Product of Drinking Water Chlorination
Haloacetic Acid (HAA5)	ppb (4)	90 33.5 hra (6)	0	60	N/A	By Product of Drinking Water Chlorination
Free Chlorine Residual	ppm (3)	2.20 0.13 hra (6)	0	4 MRDL(10)	4 MRDLG(11)	Chemical added to control microbes.

(1) **Maximum Contamination Level (MCL):** The highest level of a contaminant in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs (see below) as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

(2) **Maximum Contamination 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.

(3) **ppm** is the abbreviation for parts per million. Parts per million is the same as milligrams per liter (mg/L) which is the scientific unit of measure for most contaminants.

(4) **ppb** is the abbreviation for parts per billion. Parts per billion is the same as micrograms per liter (ug/L) which is the scientific unit of measure for some contaminants.

(5) **UR** means Un-Regulated. Unregulated contaminants are those contaminants for which the USEPA has not established drinking water standards. The purpose of unregulated contaminant monitoring is to assist the USEPA in determining their occurrence in drinking water and whether future regulation is warranted.

(6) **hra** is the Highest Running Average. The highest running average is used to determine if the MCL has been exceeded. It is the average of the last four quarterly results of the approved testing site. These results are added together and divided by 4 to yield the running average.

(7) Monthly % is the percent of a months system samples that indicate a presence of Total Coliform Bacteria.

(8) **mrem/yr** is the abbreviation for millirems per year (a measure of radiation absorbed by the body)

(9) **pCi/L** is the abbreviation for picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)

(10) **MRDL** is the abbreviation for Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level. MRDL is the highest level of disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

(11) **MRDLG** is the abbreviation for Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal. MRDLG is the level of drinking water disinfectant below, which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefit of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

The possible healthy effects from ingestion of these contaminants are listed on the next page.

2006 Contaminant Test List (77)

Barium	1,2-Dichloroethan	Chlorodibromomethane	n-Butylbenzene
Cadmium	para-Dichlorobenzene	Bromoform	Naphthalene
Chromium	Trichloroethylene	m-Dichlorobenzene	Hexachlorobutadiene
Fluoride	1,1,1-Trichloroethane	Dibromomethan	1,3,5-Trimethylbenzene
Mercury	Vinyl Chloride	1,1-Dichloropropane	p-Isopropyltoluene
Selenium	Monochlorobenzene	1,1-Dichloroethane	Isopropylbenzene
Sodium	o-Dichlorobenzene	1,1,2,2-Tetrachloroethane	Tert-butylbenzene
Antimony	trans-1,2-Dichloroethylene	1,3-Dichloropropane	Sec-butylbenzene
Beryllium	cis-1,2-Dichloroethylene	Chloromethane	Fluorotrichloromethane
Nickel	1,2-Dichloropropane	Bromomethane	Dichlorodifuoromethane
Thallium	Ethylbenzene	1,2,3-Trichloropropane	Bromochloromethane
Cyanide	Styrene	1,1,1,2-Tetrachloroethane	Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether
Sulfate	Tetrachloroethylene	Chloroethane	Coliform Bacteria
Lead	Toluene	2,2-Dichloropropane	Fecal Bacteria
Copper	Xylene (total)	o-Chlorotoluene	Radium 226
Nitrate	Dichloromethan	p-Chlorotoluene	Radium 228
Nitrite	1,2,4-Trichlorobenzene	Bromobenzene	Gross Alpha Activity
Benzene	1,1,2-Trichloroethane	1,3-Dichloropropene	
Carbon Tetrachloride	Chloroform	1,2,4-Trimethylbenzene	
1,1-Dichloroethylene	Bromodichloromethane	n-Propylbenzene	

Possible Health Effects for All Detected Contaminants

- Nitrate: Infants below the age of six months who drink water containing nitrate in excess of the MCL could become seriously ill and, if untreated, may die. Symptoms include shortness of breath and blue baby syndrome.
- Sodium and Sulfate: are not regulated so no health effect information is included.
- Dalapon: Some people who drink water containing dalapon well in excess of the MCL over many years could experience minor kidney changes.
- Perchlorate: is a thyroid toxicant, inhibiting the uptake of iodide necessary for the synthesis of hormones essential for normal growth, development and metabolism. Pregnant women, the fetus, infants, children up to the age of 12 and people with undiagnosed hypothyroid conditions are particularly susceptible to perchlorate toxicity.
- Total Coliform Bacteria: Coliform are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful bacteria, may be present. If Coliform were found in more samples than allowed, this would be a warning of potential problems.
- Beta/photon emitters: Certain minerals are radioactive and may emit forms of radiation known as photons and beta radiation. Some people who drink water containing beta and photon emitters in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- Combined radium: Some people who drink water containing radium 226 or 228 in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increase risk of getting cancer.
- Alpha Emitters - Gross Alpha Activity: Certain minerals are radioactive and may emit forms of radiation known as alpha radiation. Some people who drink water containing alpha emitters in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- Chloroform: (a Trihalomethane) Some people who drink water containing chloroform at high concentrations for many years could experience liver and kidney problems and may have an increased risk of cancer.
- Trihalomethanes: 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 system, and may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- Haloacetic Acids: Some people who drink water containing Haloacetic acids in excess of the MCL over many years may have an increased risk of getting cancer.
- Chlorine: Some people who use water containing chlorine well in excess of the MRDL could experience irritating effects to their eyes and nose. Some people who drink water containing chlorine well in excess of the MRDL could experience stomach discomfort.

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 special advice from their health care providers. EPA/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the USEPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791)

There are allowable or safe levels of contaminants in water. How are these levels determined?

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) prescribes regulations and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) administers regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants allowed in water provided to public water systems customers. The USEPA sets Maximum Contamination Levels, Maximum Contamination Level Goals, Action Levels, and defines allowable testing procedures for over 100 water contaminants. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that provide the same protection for public health.

Is our water safe?

YES. As a public water supply professional who must know the rules and laws that govern all public water suppliers in the United States, I feel comfortable drinking water from any bubbler or sink tap not only in Bellingham but nationwide.

In 2006, the DPW collected 615 water samples and performed tests for 77 various contaminants. We tested for Total Coliform Bacteria, Trihalomethanes (THM), Haloacetic Acid (HAA5), Nitrate, Nitrite, Tetrachloroethylene (PCE), Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC), and Inorganic Compounds (IOC), which are the primary health related contaminants. We also tested for a list of eighteen other so called Secondary Contaminants (SEC CON), which include Iron and Manganese.

We will continue this routine testing and add testing related to proposed new regulations.

If my water is so safe, why doesn't it taste better?

Our tap water is safe to drink! This is a true statement in Bellingham and for all customers of public water suppliers throughout the United States. However, to meet the extensive safe drinking water quality standards, public water suppliers must add treatment chemicals.

Caustics for corrosion control, Chlorine for disinfection and iron removal, Potassium Permanganate for manganese removal, and Alum for filtration enhancement are added to our sources. These chemicals work very well to make tap water safe, but they can often affect the water's taste and odor.

Consider the fact that the average cost for a gallon of bottled water from a store is $1.50 and the average cost for that same gallon of safe tap water is $0.004. The cleaner tasting bottled water cost 375 times more than the safe water coming out of the tap.

What measures are taken to insure that our water stays safe?

The EPA and DEP are continuously studying drinking contaminants and adding them to the required list if there is a potential health risk and if technology is available to yield reliable analytical results.

The MDEP put in place emergency Perchlorate regulations in 2004. We performed the required testing and detected a high level at one test site. Subsequent testing proved that the high level was a testing error and not a contamination risk. MDEP has revised the Perchlorate regulations testing requirements and monitoring will start under the new regulations in 2007.

In 2002, MDEP issued a draft of our Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) Report. The SWAP program was established under the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act and it requires every state to: Inventory land uses within the recharge areas of all public water supply sources, assess the susceptibility of drinking water sources to be contaminated from these uses, and publicize the results to provide support for improved protection.

Some of the land uses that exist within our recharge areas include: Auto Body & Repair Shops, Salvage Yards, Photo Processors, Old Landfill, Railroad Tracks, Hazardous Material Storage, Industries and Industrial Parks, Large Quantity Hazardous Waste Generators, & Underground Storage Tanks. There are others but these are considered the highest threat.

We returned the draft with our comments and corrections. We have not received a final SWAP Report from DEP as of yet. A copy of our report is available upon request from the DPW (508-966-5813) or on line at www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/2025000.pdf. The report notes that all of our sources have a high susceptibility of future contamination.

It is impossible to eliminate all threats from past and present land, but we have established protective land use restrictions that dramatically reduce our exposure to certain contaminants. The Bellingham Board of Health recently voted to adopt Floor Drain Regulations based on a model MDEP recommended. Because we have the new regulation and existing Water Resource Protection Bylaws and Water Resource District Zoning Map, (available on line at www.bellinghamma.org/DPW/36x60_WaterDistrict.pdf), we are well equipped to prevent future land uses that could further increase our susceptibility to aquifer contamination.

The Water Resources Committee (WRC) met throughout 2006 as recommended in the SWAP draft report. The WRC holds televised quarterly meetings to address issues related to not only drinking water but also stormwater and wastewater.

Is our drinking water system at risk from a terrorist attack?

The actual risk of a terrorist attacking a water supply system like ours is minimal, but the nationwide fear such an attack would create is great. This fact makes all water systems potential targets, as creating fear is a terrorist's goal.

Our system has many sources (wells) and auxiliary power capabilities. These redundancies make it hard to knock us out completely. We have studied our system's vulnerable points and discuss water system security at the Bellingham Emergency Planning Committee's meetings.

Should I be concerned about the Bacteria in my tap water?

Bacterial testing requirements for public drinking water are very strict. Drinking water samples cannot have a count of one Total Coliform Bacteria colony. Consider the fact that Coliform Bacteria is an indicator and is not generally harmful and that waters are considered safe to swim in if the count of harmful E-Coli bacteria is over 235. A **ZERO** count of non-harmful bacteria is the only allowable level in drinking water.

Each month we collect at least 40 tap water samples along with a raw and treated water sample at each active well. This is our routine Coliform Bacteria procedure. In 2006, Total Coliform Bacteria was found in four samples, one of which tested positive for Fecal Coliform Bacteria. We collected additional water samples to confirm the accuracy of the routine sample that detected Total Coliform Bacteria. The confirmation testing indicated that there was never any bacterial contamination in our system.

If we get preliminary indications of bacteria in any test, we move quickly to disinfect the system with chlorine. We are able to disinfect the entire water supply system within 24 hours, thereby minimizing any potential health risk to our customers. We activated our system wide disinfection system five times during 2006. With this quick disinfection, we never exceeded the allowable number of samples with a presence of Total Coliform Bacteria.

In the event bacterial contaminations were to occur it would be an acute health risk. You would hear about it immediately on electronic media such as radio and television. Issuing a do not drink order is a step the DPW would take immediately if there was ever any question about the safety of our drinking water. If you recall the widespread media coverage the Town of Spenser water system problems received; a similar level of coverage would occur should we ever experience an acute health risk. We are glad to say that we have never needed to issue such an order in our 68 year history as a public water supplier.

There are a few ways that Drinking Water can become contaminated in the pipe system after being pumped from a clean source.

Stagnation & Discoloration

Water can deteriorate in the pipes before it gets to the tap. To avoid this, we routinely perform hydrant flushing. Flushing cleans out any water that may be stagnating in the piping system and also removes iron and manganese particles that coat the walls of water pipes.

Iron and Manganese can cause severe water discoloration but are not harmful to drink. Iron and manganese is our greatest water quality problem. Even with flushing, some areas of town experience chronic discoloration. Please call us anytime you get discolored water as it will help us improve flushing to reduce and ideally eliminate the problem.

Cross Connections - Backflow

The drinking water supply system can be contaminated if water from a customer's building flows back into the water supply system. This can occur if the water main pressure drops, or if the interior plumbing from a building is not properly installed. This backflow occurs through a plumbing connection that is called a Cross-Connection. *(Definition from MDEP "Protecting Your Water" flyer - A Cross-Connection occurs whenever a potable water line is directly or indirectly linked to a piece of equipment or piping containing non-potable water.)* To avoid this possibility, the DPW administers the Cross-Connection Control Program. Under this program, all commercial properties are routinely surveyed to be sure that special protective check valves are installed and maintained. The Cross-Connection Control Program and the Plumbing Code help to insure that the risk from this form of system contamination is avoided.

Residential water customers also need to be aware of this risk and understand how to prevent backflow at their homes. A backflow event can occur at a home as well as a business and can draw contaminants into YOUR water system, placing you and your family at the greatest risk.

The potential for backflow through a cross connection seems remote but the consequences are severe. Cross connection backflow has the greatest potential for having your water contaminated to a degree that it can cause immediate illness or death. Imagine taking a drink of water that is laced with pesticides or lawn chemicals.

Some things you should do to prevent backflow at your home:

- Have all changes to your plumbing system done by a licensed plumber.
- Install and maintain hose bib vacuum breakers on all outside faucets. (The hose bib vacuum breaker isolates garden hose applications. Garden hoses are the most likely source of residential backflow. Hoses left in a swimming pool, on the ground in a puddle, or connected to a lawn or garden chemical sprayer without a hose bid vacuum breaker creates a potential for water system contamination.)
- Do not attach any pesticide, chemical, or any other non-potable liquid applicator to your water line.
- Survey your home to make sure no hoses or pipes are connected to a potential source of contamination. *(Please contact the DPW (508-966-5813) or Plumbing Inspector (508-966-5821) if you have any questions about the plumbing at your house. We will gladly perform a survey of your plumbing free of charge.)*

Contact us to get more information about Cross-Connections and our program to prevent them, or for a copy of the MDEP "Protecting Your Water" Flyer.

Corrosion

Tap water can have high levels of Lead and Copper due to corrosion of internal plumbing pipes and fixtures. The regulations, known as the Lead and Copper Rule, require that we test samples from residential customer's water taps. This testing is performed to confirm our ability to control internal pipe and plumbing corrosion. The Lead and Copper Rule is different from other USEPA regulations in that it uses an Action Level for the contaminant as opposed to a Maximum Contamination Limit. *(See the 2006 Lead and Copper Summary on the next page for the definition of Action Level.)* The way the Lead and Copper Rule works is the Town must take residential first draw tap water samples from a specific list of homes that are the most likely to yield the highest Lead and Copper levels. The results are tabulated and the 90th percentile is compared with the Action Level. If the result is below the Action Level, no additional action is needed. If the result is above the Action Level, additional action is required to reduce the customer's exposure to these contaminants.

In the early 1900's, when the Lead and Copper Rule took effect, we were exceeding the Action Level. We constructed Corrosion Control Facilities to address the problem and now feed Caustic Soda (NaOH) into the source water that lowers the water's acidity (raises the pH). This thereby reduces corrosion and our Lead and Copper levels.

This year's testing once again confirmed that we have an effective system of corrosion control and no risk of high lead or copper levels in our tap water. Our levels were so low that we were not required to perform tap water sampling in 2009. Sixty resident's tap water samples were tested in 2006 and the results are summarized on the next page.

2006 Lead and Copper Sampling Summary

The Summary lists the worst results for Lead and Copper from the sixty samples collected during 2006.

Contaminant	Unit of Measure	90th Percentile	Action level (AL) (3)	Number of Sites that Exceeded the AL (3)	Number of Sites Allowed to Exceed the (AL)(3)	Action
Lead	ppb (1)	7.0	15.0	0	7	Continue Corrosion Control (Caustic)
Copper (4)	ppm (2)	0.641	1.3	0	7	Continue Corrosion Control (Caustic), Perform added sampling to insure Optimized Corrosion Control.

1. **ppb** is the abbreviation for parts per billion. The AL for Lead is set in this unit of measure.
2. **ppm** is the abbreviation for parts per million. Parts per million is the same as milligrams per liter (mg/L) which is the scientific unit of measure for most contaminants.
3. **AL** is the concentration of a contaminant that, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements, which a water system must follow.

The source of Copper in tap water is corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives.

Possible Health Effects of Copper and Lead in Drinking Water

- Copper: Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's Disease should consult their personal doctor.
- Lead: Infants and children who drink water-containing lead in excess of the action level could experience delays in their physical or mental development and could show slight deficits in attention span and learning abilities. Adults who drink water containing lead in excess of the action level over many years could develop kidney problems or high blood pressure.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER:

Monitoring requirements not met for Trihalomenthanes (October 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005).

We violated monitoring and reporting requirements of the Mass. Drinking Water Regulations. Even though this was not an emergency, as our customers, you have the right to know what happened and what we are doing to correct the situation.

We are required to monitor your drinking water for specific man-made and naturally occurring contaminants on a regular basis. Results of regular monitoring are an indicator of whether or not our drinking water meets health standards. During the monitoring period of October 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005, we did not monitor for Trihalomethane; therefore, cannot be sure of the quality of our drinking water during that time.

There is nothing that you, as a customer of the Bellingham public water supply system, need to do at this time.

In response to this monitoring and reporting violation of Mass. Drinking Water Regulations, the Bellingham DPW has taken the following corrective action. We collected the missed Trihalomethane sample in the first quarter of 2006 and will continue to do so each quarter as required by the Disinfection By-Product Rule (DBPR) section of the Regulations.

The monitoring was done in the fourth quarter for Haloacetic Acid, the other required contaminant as part of the DBPR. We thought we had collected samples for Trihalomethane monitoring as we always collect them at the same time as the Haloacetic Acid monitoring. There was some confusion about which sample bottles were needed for both Haloacetic Acid and Trihalomethane. Another factor was that the laboratory did not send their report on the Haloacetic Acid test (sample collected on November 15th) until after December 31, 2005. This made it impossible to collect a sample in December, and thereby correct the error before the end of the monitoring period.

The DBPR uses an average of four quarters of monitoring results; therefore, our averages will be missing this quarter until we get a full year of results (four quarters of 2006). Although all samples were properly collected in 2006, we continue to issue this notice as we were effectively out of compliance for the first three quarters of 2006.

We do not anticipate any issues with the DBPR requirements for water safety. We only add disinfectant for very short periods of time and monitoring results are rarely at levels that would cause any concern about drinking water safety. We accidentally did not complete the required sampling and will make every effort to avoid this or similar errors in the future.

More information on contaminants in drinking water and why they may be in the water.

Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, that may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.

Pesticides and Herbicides, may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, that can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial, or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.

Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, that are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

Radioactive Contaminants, that can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

If you want to know more about the Bellingham water supply system, have any other questions about the report, or would be interested in volunteering to help us with our water education programs, please call Donald DiMartino, Director of the Bellingham Department of Public Works, at 508-966-5813. The DPW office is located at 26 Blackstone Street beside the Fire Station.