

UNIT WELL #16

Drilled in 1967, Unit Well 16 has a pumping capacity of 2400 gallons per minute. It operates year-round and primarily serves neighborhoods north of the Beltline Highway between Whitney Way and High Point Road. It also serves the Junction Ridge and Greentree neighborhoods. In 2019, Well 16 delivered 486 million gallons of water compared to its 5-year average of 472 million gallons.

Unless otherwise noted, data contained in this report, which is updated annually, are from 2019.

Bacteria

In 2019, thirty-three water samples were collected from Well 16 and tested for coliform bacteria, an indicator group of bacteria used to determine drinking water safety. None of the samples were found to have coliform bacteria present. A majority of the samples (29) were chlorinated water while four were untreated groundwater. The Water Utility chlorinates drinking water to protect against bacteria and viruses that can be present in groundwater.

Hardness and Other Minerals

Like all groundwater, water from Well 16 contains calcium and magnesium that contributes to its hardness (335 mg/L [ppm] or 20 grains per gallon). Other naturally occurring constituents that are present in water from Well 16 can be found in the [Inorganics Table](#).

Iron, Lead, and Manganese

Water from Well 16 does not contain significant amounts of iron, lead, or manganese.

Chromium

Low levels of naturally occurring chromium, including hexavalent chromium, have been found at Well 16. The level is well below the existing drinking water standard of 100 µg/L for total chromium. More information can be found on the [chromium](#) page.

Sodium

The level of [sodium](#) in Well 16 water exceeds the EPA guideline which recommends drinking water not to exceed 20 mg/L sodium. These guidelines are intended for higher risk populations including individuals with high blood pressure or on severe sodium restricted diets. In 2019, sodium at Well 16 measured 31 mg/L. Road salt application likely contributes to elevated sodium levels at some Madison wells.

Radionuclides

In 2014, water from Well 16 was tested for radium-226, radium-228, and other gross measures of radiation in water. Combined radium (226+228) measured 1.5 picocuries per liter (pCi/L) – well below the maximum contaminant level (MCL) of 5 pCi/L.

Naturally occurring, radioactive elements are found in rock, soil, water, and air. They derive from the creation of our planet and enter our bodies when we drink water, breathe air, and eat foods that contain them. Everyone is exposed to some level of radiation in everyday life. For example, uranium and thorium are found in rock and soil. In time, they decay to other elements including radium, which later decays to radon gas. Radon is the largest contributor to our daily exposure of radiation from the natural world. More information is available from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry ([ATSDR](#)).

See [ATSDR](#) for more information on radon.

Man-made Contaminants

Madison Water Utility annually tests all of its wells for man-made contaminants that may be present in groundwater. None of the volatile organic compounds (VOC) tested were detected at Well 16 in 2019.

The [Volatile Organic Compounds](#) table shows the list of substances that were tested, the results, and how the detected levels compare with the maximum contaminant levels (MCL) established by the EPA.

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

A trace amount of one PFAS, perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS), was first detected in 2017. Later, eight different [PFAS](#) were identified at Well 16. The combined PFAS level is estimated at 8 ng/L or parts per trillion (ppt).

Although there is no state or federal drinking water standard for any PFAS, Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) recommended a health-based groundwater standard of 20 ppt for two types of PFAS (PFOA+PFOS). Our website, [madisonwater.org](#), has more information about PFAS in drinking water.

Additional Information

Information on routine [water quality monitoring](#) activities, including current test results and links to additional resources, is available at [madisonwater.org](#). In addition, you can sign-up to receive periodic updates on Madison drinking water quality or the water main flushing program through the [City of Madison](#) website.

If you have questions about the information in this report or on our website, our staff would be happy to answer them. Please call the Water Quality line at 266-4654 weekdays from 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Click [here](#) to view water quality reports for other Madison municipal wells.