

UNIT WELL #26

Drilled in 1987, Unit Well 26 has a pumping capacity of 2250 gallons per minute; however, the pump typically delivers 2000 gallons per minute through the use of a variable frequency drive. It operates year-round and serves Madison's Far West neighborhoods located west of Gammon Road. It is also the primary well for the Greentree Neighborhood. In 2021, Well 26 pumped 482 million gallons of water compared to its 5-year average of 503 million gallons annually.

Unless otherwise noted, data contained in this report, which is updated annually, are from 2021.

Bacteria

In 2021, four quarterly samples were collected from Well 26 and tested for coliform bacteria, an indicator group of bacteria used to determine drinking water safety. Each sample was collected and tested prior to any disinfection. None of the samples had coliform bacteria. The Water Utility chlorinates drinking water to protect against bacteria and viruses that can be present in groundwater and to provide additional protection as the water travels through water mains and premise plumbing.

Hardness and Other Minerals

Like all groundwater, water from Well 26 contains calcium and magnesium that contributes to its hardness (297 mg/L [ppm] or 17 grains per gallon). Other naturally occurring constituents that are present in water from Well 26 can be found in the [Inorganics Table](#).

Iron and Manganese

Water from Well 26 typically contains low levels of iron and manganese although the level of manganese can vary depending on well operations. At elevated levels, naturally occurring manganese can stain laundry and plumbing fixtures.

Chromium

Low levels of naturally occurring chromium, including hexavalent chromium, have been found at Well 26. 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.

Lead

Madison's groundwater supply does not contain significant amounts of naturally occurring lead.

Radionuclides

In 2020, water from Well 26 was tested for radium-226, radium-228, and other gross measures of radiation in water. Combined radium (226+228) measured 1.2 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 municipal wells for man-made contaminants that may be present in groundwater. Except for one disinfection by-product (DBP), no other volatile organic compound (VOC) was detected at Well 26 in 2021. DBPs form when chlorine interacts with impurities in groundwater. The chlorine is added to disinfect the water and guard against bacterial growth in water mains.

The [Volatile Organic Compounds](#) table lists the 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)

Five different [PFAS](#) were detected at Well 26 in 2021. The combined PFAS level is estimated at 2.4 ng/L or parts per trillion (ppt). Although there is no state or federal drinking water standard for any PFAS, in 2019 the Wisconsin Department of Health Services recommended a health-based groundwater standard of 20 ppt for two types of PFAS (PFOA & PFOS), and in 2021 the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources proposed a matching drinking water standard. 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.