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### Pollutants in the water; how much is dangerous?

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The Environmental Working Group in Washington, D.C., analyzed millions of water quality test results at 47,667 drinking water utilities in the nation.

Nationwide, the study showed more than 300 pollutants between 2004 and 2009. Some of the utilities reviewed and the results included:

N.J. American Water Co.

N.J. American Water Co serves 217,230 customers in parts of Harding, Mendham, Mendham Township and Mount Olive.

The report indicated 45 pollutants found and that 23 chemicals exceeded health guidelines. Concentrations were in the area of parts per billion and were similarly found in other systems.

Among chemicals detected that were over accepted health guidelines included Bromodichloromethane, a disinfection byproduct formed when chlorine, chloramines or other disinfectants react with organic and inorganic matter in water. The concentration was found to be an average of 6.07 parts per billion.

Uranium was detected in concentrations of an average of 6.02 parts per billion.

Lead was found in concentrations of an average 1.65 parts per billion. Lead commonly enters water by corrosion of household plumbing systems, discharge of industrial pollution and erosion of natural deposits.

Other detected contaminants above health limits were nitrates which enter water from fertilizer runoff, leaching from septic tanks, and erosion of natural deposits. Also, chloroform ,a disinfection byproduct; copper, a naturally occurring metal and drinking water contaminant that enters tap water by corrosion of household plumbing systems and erosion of natural deposits.

#### Mount Olive Villages Water System

The system serves 5,000 people in the Eagle Rock, Hensyn and Kings Village apartments:

A total of 19 chemicals were detected in tests and 10 chemicals were found to exceed the health guidelines, concentrations similar to those of N.J. American. They included such contaminants as copper, lead, radium, uranium, bromoform, methyl tert-butyl ether, a fuel additive that had been used as an octane enhancer in unleaded gasoline; chloroform, Selenium, a naturally occurring element that contaminates water due to mining or petroleum refining, fly-ash and aluminum released from metal refineries and mining operations.

#### Mount Olive Township Main

The system serves 6,800 people. A total of eight pollutants were found, including five chemicals that exceeded health guidelines. Pollutants in excess of health guidelines included uranium, radium, tetrachloroethylene. Among other chemical pollutants found were nitrate and barium.

Washington Twp.Municipal Utilities Authority

The utility serves 4,675 people.

A total of 22 chemicals were found, including 10 which exceeded health guidelines.

Exceeding guidelines were levels of bromodichloromethane, radium, bromoform, dichloroacetic acid and lead.

Among other chemicals detected were nitrate, chloroform, barium, selenium, mercury, chromium and copper.

Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority

The Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority serves 32,500 people.

A total of 20 pollutants were found, including eight exceeding health guidelines.

In excess of health guidelines were levels of bromodichloromethane, dichloroacetic acid, bromoform, uranium and radium.

Among other chemicals found were chloroform, trichloroacetic acid, dibromoacetic acid, barium and nitrate.

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