

Sodium in Drinking Water



"Water is the best of all things."
(Pindar)

Sodium is a naturally occurring mineral that is found in varying amounts in drinking water around Tucson and averages about 40 milligrams per liter (mg/L). While sodium is not regulated as a contaminant in drinking water, it may be a concern with persons on a low or restricted sodium diet. Less than 1 percent of your daily salt intake comes from drinking water. Food usually is the most significant source of sodium in a person's diet. For example, if your water contains 40mg/L (154 mg per gallon) of sodium and you drink a gallon of water (16-8 oz glasses) in one day you will get less than 160 milligrams of sodium. Eating two ¼ pound hamburgers will amount to 2400 milligrams of sodium.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends a daily sodium intake of no more than 2400 milligrams. Low sodium diets are typically between 1000 to 2000 milligrams per day. Persons on severely restricted sodium diets may want to consult their health professional regarding sodium levels in water.

What's a Milligram per Liter?

Substances in water are often measured in very small units. Many of the dissolved minerals such as sodium and calcium monitored by Tucson Water are measured in milligrams per liter but reported as parts per million. One milligram per liter is the same as one part per million. To give you an idea of how small these units are, we offer the following examples:

One part per million or a milligram per liter is the same as:

2 ounces of water in a typical 15,000-gallon backyard swimming pool.

1 teaspoon in 1,320 gallons.

1 second of time in 11.6 days.

EMPACT: Environmental Monitoring for Public Access and Community Tracking

EMPACT

EMPACT News - Water Info Now is published by the EMPACT Team led by Tucson Water and provides up-to-date information about water quality in the greater Tucson area. To be added to the mailing list, please call 791-5080, ext. 1372 or email DQuinta1@ci.tucson.az.us.

Esta información está disponible en español. Por favor llame al 791-5080, ext. 1372.

For more information about the EMPACT program for Tucson's water quality reporting, visit the Tucson Water web site at www.ci.tucson.az.us/water. For more information about the USEPA's EMPACT programs nationwide, visit the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/empact/index.htm>.

1/1,000,000=?
1 tsp./1,320 gals.
1 sec./11.6 days
2 oz./15,000 gals.

Partner in focus

The keys to the EMPACT project are its community focus and the circle of partners that have joined Tucson Water in developing water quality information and communicating about it to citizens. Each issue of EMPACT News will feature one of the project partners.

Arizona Department of Environmental Quality

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality's (ADEQ) mission is to protect public health by administering our state's environmental quality laws and delegated federal programs to prevent, control and abate pollution of our air, water and land resources in a manner that promotes productivity, quality, service and advocacy for Arizona.

To accomplish its mission, ADEQ is organized into three program divisions: Air Quality, Waste Programs, and Water Quality. The department's Air Quality Division issues permits to regulate industrial air pollution sources, regulates vehicle emissions, monitors and assesses the ambient air, and develops air quality improvement strategies. The department's Waste Programs Division implements programs to minimize waste generation, identifies and corrects improper waste management practices, and oversees the clean-up of hazardous waste sites. The department's Water Quality Division regulates drinking water and waste water systems, monitors and assesses waters of the state, and provides hydrologic analysis to support hazardous site remediation.

ADEQ's role as a partner in the EMPACT project is to verify Tucson Water's compliance with federal and state drinking water regulations as stated in the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Arizona Administrative Code. The latest ADEQ Compliance Status Report for Tucson Water is available for viewing on ADEQ's web page at www.adeq.state.az.us/environ/water/compliance/empact.html.

Tucson Water's EMPACT Community Partners

These organizations have joined with Tucson Water in the EMPACT Program to develop and communicate water quality information to the residents of Tucson.

Tucson Unified School District

U. of A., Department of Soil, Water & Environmental Science

U. of A., Water Resources Research Center

U. of A., Southwest Environmental Health Sciences Center

U. of A., National Science Foundation, Water Quality Center

Pima County Health Department

Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Pima County Wastewater Management Department

Arizona Department of Environmental Quality

Tucson-Pima Public Library

City of Tucson Department of Neighborhood Resources

Water Quality in the News

Are You Poisoning Your Water?

Household Hazardous Waste and the Quality of Your Water—What You Should and Shouldn't Do

If one of our neighbors dropped a poisonous substance into our community's water supply, it would be considered a serious crime and a state of public emergency could be declared. But, when you dump a can of paint thinner down the drain or throw an old car battery in your trash, or pour old antifreeze and motor oil into the storm sewer, alarms are not sounded, or news flashes issued. Yet, the impact on your water resources could be just as disastrous.

Common household and automotive products become a hazard to our drinking water when disposed of improperly. Some, like paint thinner, car batteries or antifreeze, are pretty obvious, but there are many that you might not ordinarily think of such as polishes, insecticides and glues. We now understand that we cannot just pour our wastes down the drain or discharge them into our sewers without thinking of their impact on our water quality.

Tucson/Pima County Household Hazardous Waste Program is a nationally recognized, award-winning community-based program that accepts household hazardous waste from Tucson area residents free of charge. As of April 2003 Tucson residents have properly disposed of over 800,000 pounds of household hazardous waste helping to preserve the quality of our water. For more information call 888-6947 or visit <http://www.deq.co.pima.az.us/waste>.

Information on other recycling resources is available at:

Recycling Info Line: 791-5000

www.recyclearizona.net; www.tucsonrecycles.org; www.cityoftucson.org/solwaste

The EMPACT Program

Tucson Water has teamed with a diverse group of local water, environmental, health care, and education organizations to gather water quality information and develop new ways to communicate that information to citizens. In this way, important water quality information not only reaches Tucson Water customers, but also the many special interest or special needs groups with which each partner works. The EMPACT Program is funded by a grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.



Linda Cline, Community Outreach Coordinator, Southern Regional Office, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality.

