

On The Water Front



Tucson Water employees work hard to ensure that our customers receive both high quality water and have easy access to information about their water quality. Each year, the technicians, chemists, and other professionals at Tucson Water's Water Quality Laboratory perform more than 20,000 individual tests to measure detectable microorganisms, organic chemicals and inorganic chemicals at 266 monitoring points. Results are reported to the appropriate federal, state and local water quality regulators – and most importantly – to our customers.

There are several ways for customers to access a wide array of interesting information about water quality:

- **Monthly Water Connection newsletter** – You'll find an entire page dedicated to groundwater quality, with key measurements for 10 neighborhood zones.
- **Speakers** – Knowledgeable professionals and scientists from Tucson Water's Public Information Office or the Water Quality Management Division will answer your questions, lead a facility tour or speak to a group.
- **Brochures** – Tucson Water publishes a wide variety of informational and educational materials on topics ranging from conservation to water quality.
- **Tucson Water Web site** – Go to www.tucsonaz.gov/water and click on the Water Quality tab for maps, FAQs, definitions, water quality reports, and archives. Go to "Water Quality in My Neighborhood" to see monitoring stations in your neighborhood and to understand what's in your drinking water.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency requires all drinking water suppliers across the nation to provide understandable information to their customers annually on monitoring that shows detectable contaminants. Tucson Water customers will receive a **2008 Annual Water Quality Report** in the mail this summer. An archive of annual reports from 1997 to 2007 can be found at www.tucsonaz.gov/water/annualrpts_archive.htm.

Since water quality and safety are a community effort, we'd like to hear from you if you have a water quality concern. Please contact our Water Quality Customer Service Office at (520) 791-5945.

Jeff Biggs, Director, Tucson Water

Your Water Connection

News & Tips for Tucson Water Customers

February 2009

www.tucsonaz.gov/water

Water 101

More Improvements to Sweetwater Wetlands

From January through April, Tucson Water will be improving the eastern half of the Sweetwater Wetlands, a 17.5 acre site that is both a wildlife habitat and a critical step in cleaning reclaimed water for our community. When complete, this Wetlands' construction will enhance Tucson Water's aggressive mosquito abatement program, reduce long-term vegetation maintenance costs, and provide a new home for wading birds.

The 2009 changes will include draining the eastern pond, removing dense vegetation, and installing a durable heavy plastic liner. The liner limits re-growth of bulrush and cattail. This dense, shallow water vegetation is a safe haven for adult mosquitoes, a shield against mosquito larvae-killing compounds, and a barrier to mosquito-eating fish. The stream feature near the facility entrance will also be cleared and modified to improve water flow and to make it more visible.

Water treated at the Wetlands filters through sediments beneath recharge basins and replenishes the local aquifer. During

Water 101 continued inside

Have a question for Water 101 or a suggestion for a topic?
Call us at 791-4331 or e-mail to TW_Web1@ci.tucson.az.us

YOUR UTILITIES

Pima County –

Recycling a Problem Substance Makes for a Cleaner Environment

Over the holiday season, the Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (RWRD) advertised its Save Our Sewers (SOS) Grease Campaign on radio and television. These advertisements aired because historically, grease-related Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs) have increased during December, January and February – months with an increase in the preparation of high-fat foods and the subsequent disposal of fats and oils down kitchen drains. Disposing fats down drains and washing greasy pots and plates allow fats to enter the sanitary sewer system. It is recommended that **cooled** grease be poured into an empty can and that residual grease and oils be wiped off pans, plates, and utensils with a paper towel prior to washing.

On the day after Thanksgiving, RWRD – in conjunction with the Pima Association of Governments and Greycle (a local environmental company) – collected used cooking oils and grease at five separate locations in the metropolitan Tucson area. The collected oils were converted into biodiesel, a cleaner burning fuel that helps to lessen our dependence on foreign oil. This year's Grease Collection event resulted in the collection and recycling of 1,710 pounds of fats and oils.

Used cooking oils and grease are accepted through the City of Tucson/Pima County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program. The main HHW site is located at 2440 West Sweetwater Drive and is open on Friday and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to noon. HHW holds monthly outreach events at a variety of locations throughout the metropolitan Tucson area. For more

information contact HHW at www.tucsonaz.gov/hhw/ or (520) 888-6947.

Your Utilities Services statement includes fees for your water, wastewater, and environmental services.

The Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department (PCRWRD) –
For more information about the regional wastewater system, call (520) 740-6500 or visit www.pima.gov/wwm.

City of Tucson

Environmental Services – Safe Home Needle Disposal Protects Yourself and Others

It has become common for individuals to use syringes, needles, lancets, and blades at home for medical care of family members and even pets. While it is easier and more convenient, improper disposal of home-generated “sharps” poses a potential health hazard to family members, sanitation workers, and others in our community. Although rare, serious diseases such as Hepatitis B and AIDS can result from accidental needle sticks. In addition, “sharps” in household trash can be misused or injure small children, pets and wildlife.

Needles and syringes are hazardous medical waste and should be disposed of properly. The City of Tucson and Pima County are asking residents to dispose of needles and syringes in the following manner:

- Place all “sharps” in a secured puncture-proof plastic container with a screw-on lid (for example: a rigid detergent, bleach or fabric softener bottle). Do not use a glass container.
- Once you have filled the container about 3/4 full, tightly secure the lid and reinforce with duct tape.
- Label the container “**NON-RECYCLABLE**” and dispose of it a trash container.
- Place the container in the trash; **do not place this container in a blue barrel or with recyclables.**

Loose needles or syringes should never be flushed down the toilet, or put in the trash, blue barrels or other recycling containers.

Proper disposal of “sharps” is important for public safety and health. For more information, contact City of Tucson Environmental Services at 791-3171, Pima County Department of Environmental Quality at 740-3340, Pima

County Health Department at 243-7701, or speak with your health care provider.

Environmental Services –

To ask questions or learn more about recycling, call (520) 791-5000 or visit www.tucsonaz.gov/esd or www.tucsonrecycles.org.

Water 101

More Improvements to Sweetwater Wetlands

Water 101 continued from front

periods of high water demand, this 'reclaimed water' is recovered by extraction wells and distributed for turf irrigation to schools, parks, and golf courses. Using reclaimed water for landscape irrigation conserves our drinking water and groundwater supplies. The Sweetwater Wetlands cleans 1.5 million gallons of water a day!

Wetlands' Construction Will Impact Visitor Access



There will be access to the western pond at the Sweetwater grounds during construction. Visitors can park at a new temporary parking area, located approximately 500 feet west of the closed parking lot, on the north side of Sweetwater Drive. Visitors can reach the western pond and settling basins through a new access gate on the south side of Sweetwater Drive, across the street from the temporary parking area. Portable bathroom facilities will be available in the temporary parking area during construction.

For more information about the Sweetwater Wetlands, go to www.tucsonaz.gov/water/sweetwater.htm. To schedule a guided tour of the Wetlands, contact Tucson Water at 791-4331.

Visit the Tucson Water web site at www.tucsonaz.gov/water

Your Water Connection is produced by Tucson Water. To receive a copy, or to receive this information in Spanish, call 791-4331 or mail your request to: Tucson Water, Customer Information, P.O. Box 27210, Tucson, AZ 85726-7210. City of Tucson TTY number: 791-2639

Si usted desea este documento escrito en español, por favor llame al 791-4331.



Contest Info and Entry Forms Available Now

Entry Deadline:
March 23, 2009, 4:30 PM

Award Ceremony
on April 25, 2009
at the More Green
per Drop
Festival



Xeriscape
CONTEST

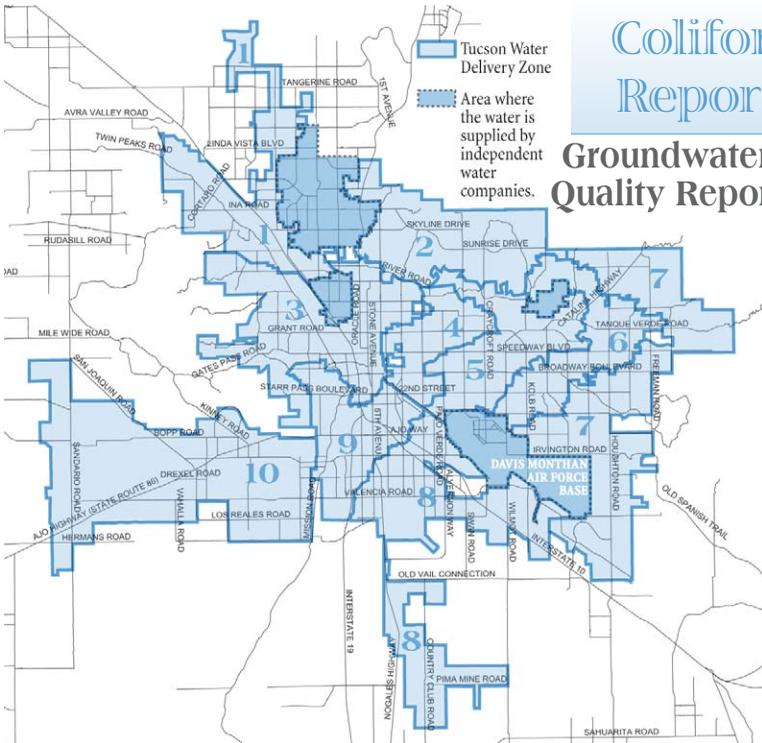
The Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) and the Tucson Botanical Gardens are once again partnering on the Annual Xeriscape Contest for 2009 with entry categories for homeowners, professionals, and special recognition. The Contest's primary purpose is to increase awareness of exemplary landscapes that are water efficient and to encourage others to utilize these innovative practices to create beautiful landscapes and conserve water. To view a photo gallery of 2008 winners or to download contest entry forms, rules, and prize information, go to www.tucsonbotanical.org, www.azwater.gov/TAMA, or call (520) 326-9686, extension 10.

Clearwater Quality Report— Most recent water quality data (Dec. 8, 2008–Jan. 8, 2009)

65	Sodium (mg/L) (Dec. 12)
429.8	Mineral (mg/L) (Dec. 8 – Jan. 8 avg.)
226	Hardness (mg/L) (Dec. 12)
8.04	pH (S.U.) (Dec. 8 – Jan. 8 avg.)
Neg	Coliform Bacteria (Dec. 12)
1.02	Chlorine level (mg/L) (Dec. 8 – Jan. 8 avg.)
77.8	Temp (deg F) (Dec. 8 – Jan. 8 avg.)

Groundwater Quality Report - December 2008

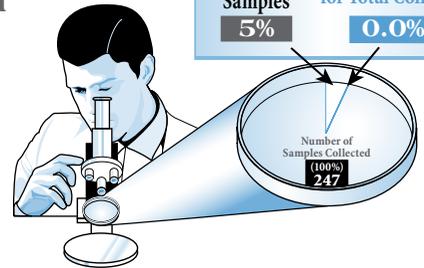
Water Quality Zone		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	System Wide
Sodium (mg/L)*	Average	61	65	61	64	58	60	47	58	58	50	58
86 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	44-82	61-69	47-67	60-66	36-66	44-68	27-64	45-66	42-66	41-65	27-82
Mineral Content (mg/L)*	Average	450	483	455	467	449	477	387	453	401	298	439
247 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	351-557	467-493	321-492	268-497	248-497	382-494	205-483	312-509	207-537	205-478	205-557
Hardness (mg/L)*	Average	196	218	212	215	192	195	158	207	193	131	195
86 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	172-223	193-231	141-241	188-222	125-223	148-229	91-223	178-231	74-237	73-220	73-241
pH (S.U.)	Average	7.8	8.0	8.0	8.0	7.9	8.0	8.0	7.9	7.8	7.9	7.9
247 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	7.4-8.1	7.9-8.1	7.7-8.2	7.9-8.1	7.7-8.1	7.8-8.2	7.7-8.2	7.6-8.0	7.5-8.0	7.9-8.1	7.4-8.2
Temperature (deg F)	Average	72	75	74	73	73	73	71	72	74	74	73
247 SAMPLING POINTS	Range	68-75	69-78	71-78	63-78	66-80	65-78	64-76	64-76	67-79	67-82	63-82



Coliform Bacteria Testing Report - December 2008

Groundwater Quality Report COLIFORM

EPA Standard for Positive Samples	Number of Positive Samples for Total Coliform
5%	0.0%

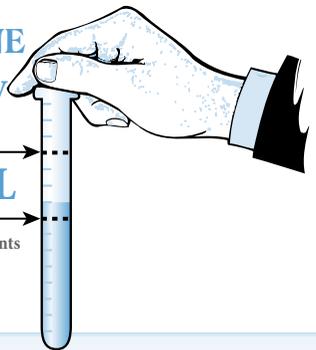


CHLORINE Monthly Average

Target = 0.8 to 1.2 mg/L

0.9 mg/L

247 Sample Points



* mg/L means milligrams per liter; 1 mg/L = 1 teaspoon in 1,302 gallons

** 17.1 milligrams per liter (mg/L) = 1 grain per gallon; Therefore, the system-wide hardness average as reported for December 2008: 195 mg/L divided by 17.1 = 11.4 grains per gallon.

To give you a more accurate measurement of the water quality in your neighborhood, the Tucson Water service area has been divided into 10 zones based on differences in water pressure and water quality. For a detailed description of the zone boundaries, call 791-4331.

With the exception of chlorine and coliform bacteria, none of the water quality parameters reported here have U.S. Environmental Protection Agency primary standards set for them. For more information about primary and secondary water quality standards, visit Tucson Water's Web site at www.tucsonaz.gov/water.