Issued in 2026 based on 2025 data

2026 Water Quality Report

for Columbus and Fort Benning, GA

Columbus Water Works

Serving our Community
Protecting the Environment

*Your water is safe to drink and has **met** or **exceeded** federal and state quality requirements.*

A Message From Our President

120,000+
lab analyses performed per year

301
water professionals provide water and wastewater services 24/7/365

124
years of reliable service without a water quality violation

30
awards received in 2025 for the monitoring, production, and distribution of your drinking water

Dear Valued Customer,

I am pleased to share this year's Drinking Water Quality Report with you. As your water provider, our priority is ensuring you have safe, high-quality drinking water every time you turn on your tap.

This report provides the results of our 2025 testing and shows how your water compares to state and federal regulations designed to protect public health, and I am proud to share that our system continues to meet or exceed all requirements.

Although the work behind the scenes is highly technical, we hope this information is presented in an easy-to-understand way.

Beyond meeting today's standards, we are actively preparing for upcoming regulatory requirements to ensure we continue delivering safe, reliable water into the future.

Our team works around the clock to protect our water sources, operate our treatment facilities, and maintain the system that serves our community. We are proud to serve you and remain committed to providing dependable service.

To learn more about your drinking water or schedule a tour, please visit www.cwwga.org.

Thank you for the trust you place in us.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Cummings

President, Columbus Water Works

Where To Learn More About Your Water

What is Your Water Source? The water source for Columbus and Fort Benning Georgia is Lake Oliver (pictured above) and the Chattahoochee River respectively, which is surface water. Columbus Water Works operates and treats water for its customers under permit #CS2150000.

Source Water Assessment Plan: In March 2001, Columbus Water Works (CWW) completed a Source Water Assessment Plan (SWAP). In 2015, a second SWAP was completed for the Ft. Benning Water Treatment Plant. In 2019, CWW completed an update to the SWAP for the North Columbus Water Resource Facility located on River Road. The purpose of updating the SWAP was to identify if there were any new potential contamination sources throughout the watershed and to determine the risks these sources pose to the water supply intakes.

The overall contaminant susceptibility for Columbus and Fort Benning residents remains LOW. Some Potential Pollution Sources (PPS) include: a marina with fuel stations, sewer lift stations and pipelines, commercial and industrial areas, residential lawns, and golf courses. Columbus Water Works employs real-time detection systems to monitor and adjust treatment processes as necessary.

Questions about your water quality report? If you have any questions about the information in this report, would like more information about the SWAP, or would like to request a copy, please contact Amy Gamble-Coker, Manager of Environmental Services at (706) 649-3480 or agamble-coker@cwwga.org.

Public Meeting Information: Columbus Water Works' operations are conducted under the Board of Water Commissioners. Board Members are appointed by the Columbus Consolidated Government City Council. The Board holds regularly scheduled, open to the public, meetings at 1:30 PM on the second Monday of each month. Meetings are located at: 1421 Veterans Parkway, Columbus, Georgia 31901. Visit www.cwwga.org to verify meeting schedule.

Español? Para recibir la versión en español del Informe de calidad del agua de CWW 2026, llame al Servicio de atención al cliente al706-649-3400 o visite cwwga.org/aboutus/reports.

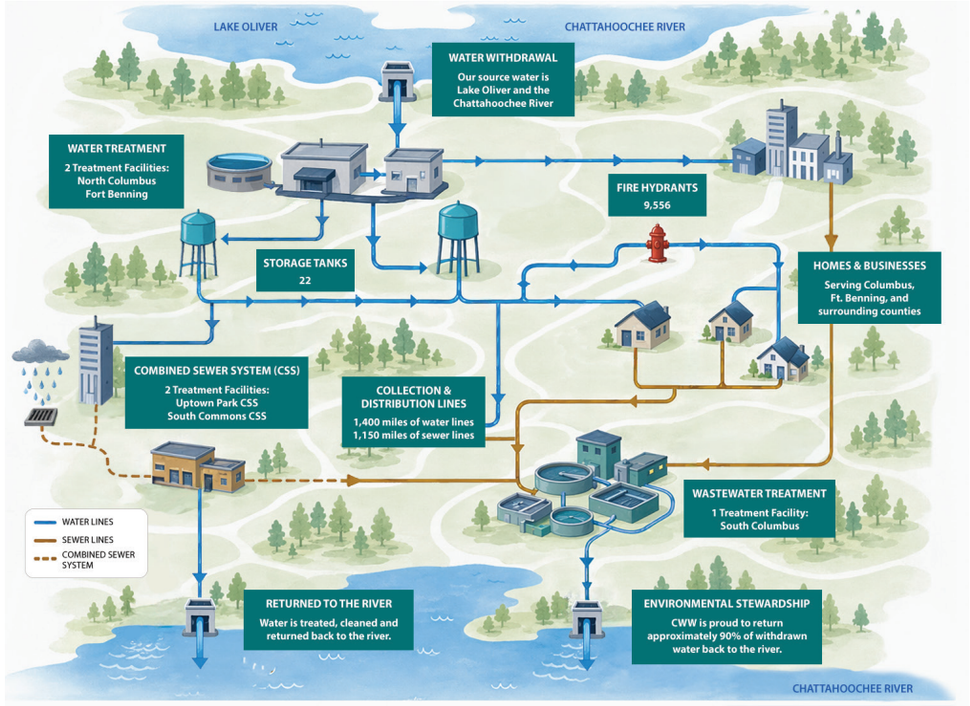
Source to Tap: How Your Water System Works

Every drop of water you use is part of a carefully managed cycle. Columbus Water Works draws water from Lake Oliver and the Chattahoochee River, where it begins its journey to your home.

At our treatment facilities, water is cleaned through a multi-step process to meet strict safety and quality standards. It is then stored in tanks and delivered through more than 1,400 miles of water lines to homes, businesses, and fire hydrants across our community.

After use, wastewater travels through over 1,150 miles of sewer lines to treatment facilities, where it is treated and safely returned to the environment. This entire system, made up of storage tanks, pump stations, and treatment plants, works together to serve Columbus, Fort Benning, and surrounding areas.

Behind it all is a dedicated team of professionals committed to maintaining this essential infrastructure. Their work ensures that every drop, from source to treatment to your tap and back again, is handled with care, precision, and a focus on quality.



Monitoring & Protecting Your Water

- On average, our water treatment plant cleans **32.61 million** gallons of water per day
- We monitor **25+ sites** along our local rivers and streams to help protect the health and quality of our environment
- We have served the community for over **124 years** without a water quality violation

PFAS Forever Chemicals

PFAS are a complex group of man-made compounds first introduced in the 1940s. Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) are two PFAS compounds receiving the most attention today. These compounds do not naturally break down, earning the nickname "forever chemicals," and can be found in everything from our soil to our water and air.

On April 10, 2024, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released final regulations for six PFAS compounds. Water utilities have until 2029 to comply with the new standard. In preparation, CWW completed a pilot project to evaluate advanced treatment technologies for PFAS removal at our Ft Benning water facility. Plans for the next pilot study for the North Columbus water facility are being finalized. Results will be reviewed to ensure compliance by the 2029 deadline. For more, visit **www.cwwga.org.**

Service Line Inventory

LEAD LINE FREE COLUMBUS
COLUMBUS WATER WORKS LEAD & COPPER INSPECTION PROGRAM

In 2022, CWW launched the Lead and Copper Inspection Program in response to the EPA's new rule mandating water utilities across the nation identify the material of all public and private water service lines/laterals in their service area.

The initial service line inventory was completed in 2024.

We are pleased to report that our inspection program has confirmed that **there are NO lead service lines or laterals in the Columbus or Fort Benning water systems.** For more details and to access the Service Line Inventory, visit **www.cwwga.org/lead.**

The Facts About Drinking Water

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk.

More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

a. Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and/or wildlife.
b. Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
c. Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and/or residential uses.
d. Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and/or septic systems.
e. Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Environmental Protection Agency prescribes regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

From the EPA: Drinking Water & Your Health

Immuno-compromised: Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections.

These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Other Water Contaminants: Cryptosporidium is a protozoan parasite too small to be seen without a microscope. It is common in surface waters like lakes and rivers, especially when waters contain a high amount of sewage or animal waste.

This parasite can cause symptoms like diarrhea, nausea, stomach cramps, or all three. Because other illnesses can have similar symptoms, a special laboratory test is needed to determine if this contaminant is the cause.

Columbus Water Works has sent both treated and source water samples from our system to laboratories set up for this parasite test. The water that goes into your tap has never tested positive for this parasite; however, it may be assumed that this parasite can be found in all surface water.

Fluoride & Your Water

Fluoride is a substance that naturally occurs in water. In 1971, Columbus Consolidated Government passed City Ordinance 71-172 requiring fluoride to be added to the public water system.

As required by law and as a condition of our water treatment permit, CWW adjusts the fluoride levels during treatment to meet the required standards.

The Centers for Disease Control recommend a fluoride level of 0.7 parts per million to prevent tooth decay, while the safety standard for drinking water is 2.0 parts per million. The fluoride levels in our drinking water range from 0.56 to 1.10 parts per million, which is well within safe limits.

Columbus Water Works is closely monitoring this regulation and will make the necessary changes if new rules or guidelines are established.

Summary of 2025 Water Test Results

Turbidity
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
0.04 ppm
Range of detection
0.02 - 0.16

Highest EPA Level Allowed
TT = 1NTU

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Total Organic Carbon
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
1.6 ppm
Range of detection
1.4 - 2.2

Highest EPA Level Allowed
TT

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Fluoride
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
0.72 ppm
Range of detection
0.56 - 1.10

Highest EPA Level Allowed
4.0 ppm

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Chlorine
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
2.12 ppm
Range of detection
1.31 - 2.64

Highest EPA Level Allowed
4.0 ppm

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Haloacetic Acids
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
52.0 ppb
Range of detection
21.0 - 58.0

Highest EPA Level Allowed
60.0 ppb

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Total Trihalomethanes
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
69.0 ppb
Range of detection
27.0 - 71.0

Highest EPA Level Allowed
80.0 ppb

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Turbidity Percentage: 100% of the samples tested for turbidity were equal to or below 0.30 NTU, which meets the allowed limit for the selected TT. As a 25-year participant in AWWA's Partnership for Safe Water, CWW consistently achieves an even higher standard of 0.10 NTU.

Definition: TT (treatment technique) is defined as a required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water. Treatment techniques will vary based on the type of contaminant being treated.

Summary of 2025 Water Test Results cont...

Nitrate
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
0.60 ppm
Range of detection
0.55 - 0.64

Highest EPA Level Allowed
10.0 ppm

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Chlorite
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
0.13 ppm
Range of detection
0.04 - 0.25

Highest EPA Level Allowed
1.0 ppm

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Total Coliform Bacteria
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
1.00%
2 of 206 monthly samples

Highest EPA Level Allowed
<5%

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Copper
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
0.11 ppm
0 instances over AL

Highest EPA Level Allowed
1.3 ppm

✓ Meets EPA Standard

Lead
1/25 -12/25

Amount Found
1.8 ppb
1 instance over AL

Highest EPA Level Allowed
15.0 ppb

✓ Meets EPA Standard

The EPA's lead and copper rule mandates sampling of the internal plumbing of 50 random homes every three years.

For more information about lead and copper, see the information on page 13.

Other Information Sources

Websites with information about water quality:

Environmental Protection Agency: www.epa.gov
Georgia Environmental Protection Department: www.gaepd.gov
The Safe Drinking Water Act: www.epa.gov/sdwa
American Water Works Association: www.awwa.org

Key Terms to Know

Did You Know?
Columbus is a designated WaterFirst Community, and is recognized for excellence in water resource management and for a strong commitment to responsible, sustainable water stewardship.

Action Level (AL): The concentration of the contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements, which a water system must follow.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): The level of drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contamination.

Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU): Measurement of the clarity (turbidity) of water.

parts per million (ppm): One part substance per million parts water (or milligrams per liter).

parts per billion (ppb): One part substance per billion parts water (or micrograms per liter).

parts per trillion (ppt): One part substance per trillion parts water (or nanograms per liter).

Treatment Technique (TT): A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Drinking Water Analysis Table

Regulated Substance Tested and Detected	Highest EPA Level Allowed (MCL)	EPA Goal (MCLG)	Amount Detected	Range of Detection	Dates of Sampling (Mo./Yr.)	Does it meet Standards?	Possible Source of Substance
Fluoride, ppm	4	4	0.72	0.56 - 1.10	1/25 -12/25	✓	Water additive promoting strong teeth
Nitrate, ppm	10	10	0.60	0.55 - 0.64	1/25 -12/25	✓	Runoff from fertilizer use
Chlorite, ppm	1	0.8	0.13	0.04 - 0.25	1/25 -12/25	✓	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Turbidity, Maximum NTU	TT = 1 NTU	N/A	0.04	0.02 - 0.16	1/25 -12/25	✓	Soil runoff
Turbidity, TT %	TT = %≤ 0.30 NTU	0	100.0%	N/A	1/25 -12/25	✓	Soil runoff
Haloacetic Acids (HAA), ppb	60	N/A	52	21.0 - 58.0	1/25 -12/25	✓	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM), ppb	80	N/A	69	27.0 - 71.0	1/25 -12/25	✓	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Organic Carbon, ppm	TT	N/A	1.6	1.4 - 2.2	1/25 -12/25	✓	Naturally present in the environment
Total Coliform Bacteria Highest Percent (percent of monthly samples positive for bacteria)	<5%	0	1.00%	*2 of 206 samples	1/25 -12/25	✓	Naturally present in the environment

* Sites were resampled and no coliform was detected.

Quick Fact
Columbus Water Works has a comprehensive corrosion control program designed to balance the water chemistry preventing deterioration of pipe materials within our system. For details, visit www.cwwga.org.

Drinking Water Analysis Table (continued)

Regulated Substance Tested and Detected	Highest EPA Level Allowed (MRDL)	EPA Goal (MRDLG)	Amount Detected	Range of Detection	Dates of Sampling (Mo./Yr.)	Does it meet Standards?	Possible Source of Substance
Chlorine, ppm	4	4	2.12	1.31 - 2.64	1/25 - 12/25	✓	Water additive used to control microbes

Lead and Copper at the Tap	EPA Action Level (AL)	EPA Goal (MCLG)	Amount Detected	# of Sites Found Above AL	Dates of Sampling (Mo./Yr.)	Does it meet Standards?	Possible Source of Substance
Lead, ppb	15	0	1.8	*1 (50 sites Sampled)	1/25 -12/25	✓	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Copper, ppm	1.3	1.3	0.11	0 (50 sites Sampled)	1/25 -12/25	✓	Corrosion of household plumbing systems

Note: Detected amounts are annual averages or running annual averages. Lead and Copper data presented in this report are from the most recent test done in accordance with drinking water regulations. Sampling is performed every three years as required by regulations.

* Although 1 site tested above the action level, the standard of 90 percent of test sites being within the regulated limits was met.

Drinking Water Analysis Table (continued)

Regulated Substance Tested and Detected	Highest EPA Level Allowed (MCL)	EPA Goal (MCLG)	Amount Detected	Range of Detection	Dates of Sampling (Mo./Yr.)	Does it meet Standards?	Possible Source of Substance
PFOA, ppt	4	0	7.5	3.0 - 18.0	1/25 - 12/25	**No	Man-made compound used in products and manufacturing
PFOS, ppt	4	0	4.8	2.1 - 7.3	1/25 - 12/25	**No	Man-made compound used in products and manufacturing
PFHxS, ppt	10	10	2.2	<1.7 - 2.8	1/25 - 12/25	Yes	Man-made compound used in products and manufacturing
Mixture of two or more: PFNA, HFPO-DA, PFBS, PFHxS	Hazard Index = 1	Hazard Index = 1	0.24	0 - 0.24	1/25 - 12/25	Yes	Man-made compound used in products and manufacturing

** The Environmental Protection Agency released final regulations for PFAS compounds on April 10, 2024. Water utilities have until 2029 to comply with the new standards. These substances are collected and tested monthly as part of our regular water quality testing.

Understanding Lead and Drinking Water

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and in home plumbing.

Columbus Water Works - GA2150000 - is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time.

You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter, certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead, is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure the filter is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling water does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formula, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes.

If you have a lead service line or galvanized requiring replacement service line, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, contact 706-649-3480. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at **www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.**

Lead and Copper Range Data								
Analyte	Dates of Sampling (Mo./Yr.)	EPA Goal (MCLG)	EPA Action Level (AL)	Range Low	Range High	Units	Violation	Does it meet Standards?
Lead	1/25 -12/25	0	15	0	19.0	ppb	No	✓
Copper	1/25 -12/25	1.3	1.3	0.005	0.170	ppm	No	✓

To access all individual Lead Tap Sample results for Columbus Water Works please call 706-649-3480 or email agamble-coker@cwwga.org.

Serving Our Community

Our connection to the community is an important part of the work we do every day. In addition to providing safe, reliable water, we are committed to being an active partner in the Chattahoochee Valley.

Throughout the year, our team works alongside local organizations, schools, and community groups to support education, outreach, and environmental stewardship.

This includes helping support efforts like Help the Hooch, where we work with partners to protect and care for our local waterways, and engaging with students through events such as Local Opportunities for Today & Tomorrow (LOTT), which introduces students to various career opportunities.

We are also proud to support Fort Benning, serving our soldiers and their families while also providing reliable water service to surrounding counties and communities across our region.

Did You Know?

Columbus Water Works offers guided tours of our facilities, giving you a behind-the-scenes look at how your water is treated and delivered. It's a great opportunity for students, groups, and customers to learn more.

Partners In Education

We are grateful to serve as an educational partner through the Chamber's Partners in Education program.

As a Partner at Large and dedicated partner with Richards Middle School, we support learning across the Chattahoochee Valley, reaching more than 1,000 students each year through tours, presentations, and events. These efforts help students better understand water, the environment, and career opportunities in our community.

AWARD SPOTLIGHT

GAWP Plant of the Year
Fort Benning Water Treatment Plant & Camp Darby Range

GAWP Platinum Compliance Awards
3 Plants & 9 wells

GAWP Platinum System Excellence Award
Collection & Distribution System

GAWP Platinum QA/QC Laboratory
Water and Wastewater

GAWP: Georgia Association of Water Professionals

Columbus Water Works
Post Office Box 1600
Columbus, GA 31902

Our Mission...

To serve our community; to provide safe, reliable water; to protect public health and our watershed; and to leave a legacy of financial and environmental stewardship.

Our Vision...

To lead the Chattahoochee Valley to health and prosperity by operating a first-class water utility.

S **ervice First:** We approach every task with a can-do attitude, focusing on solutions, empathy, and customer-oriented service.

E **thics and Integrity:** We act honestly and sincerely in all our dealings, building trust through transparency and open communication.

R **espect for All:** We ensure inclusion, fairness, and a strong awareness of the differences that make our community unique.

V **alue Excellence:** We hold ourselves accountable, continuously training and developing our team to excel in every aspect of our work.

E **nvironmental and Economic Stewardship:** We practice sustainability and resilience, with a commitment to fiscally and environmentally sound practices that protect our resources.

Columbus Customers:

Office: 1421 Veterans Parkway

Office Hours: M-F 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
General Information/Emergencies:
(706) 649-3400

Fort Benning Customers:

If you have problems with your service, contact:

Residential: 706-685-3929
Commercial: 706-545-2518