

***Kekaha-Waimea Water System  
2024***

# **Water Quality Report**

Covering the period of

**January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023**

Produced in accordance with The Safe Drinking Water Act



*Also available online at [www.kauaiwater.org](http://www.kauaiwater.org)*



This Customer Confidence Report (CCR) is produced by the Kaua'i Department of Water and describes the quality of your drinking water and where it comes from.

Providing safe drinking water is essential to our communities and it is important that our customers are informed that your water is tested on a continuous schedule through our certified laboratories and the State Department of Health.

Based on our test results, we are pleased to report that Kauai's potable water supply meets or exceeds state and federal standards of clean, safe drinking water.

A Source Water Assessment, intended to enable "well-founded, fair and reasonable decisions for the protection and preservation of Hawai'i's drinking water" has been completed by the State Department of Health and the University of Hawai'i. For further information on this assessment, please contact the Department of Water at (808)245-5455.



We welcome your interest in the Department of Water's water systems. Please refer to the directory in this report for the Department's contact numbers. The Board of Water Supply holds a monthly meeting on the third Thursday of each month and meetings are open to the public. Please call (808) 245-5406 or visit our website at [www.kauaiwater.org](http://www.kauaiwater.org) for scheduled meeting information.



Tom Shigemoto  
***Chairperson, Board of Water Supply***



**Why am I getting this brochure?** The Safe Drinking Water Act, a federal law, requires water systems to provide its customers with an annual report of the quality of their drinking water. This brochure is a snapshot of the quality of the water we provided last year. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains and how it compares to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state standards.

We are committed to providing you with information because informed customers are our best allies.

**Is my drinking water safe? Yes.** The Department of Water regularly conducts microbiological analysis and has contracted for extensive chemical testing in order to comply with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Hawai'i State standards. The standards are very strict in order to ensure safe drinking water.

**Where does my water come from?** Your water comes from ground water (**underground**) sources. Rain that falls in the mountain filters through the ground into formations called aquifers. Wells are drilled into these formations and the water is pumped out. These formations can also be found in the mountains (**still considered ground water**). Tunnels are constructed to tap these sources. The quality of groundwater is very good and requires no treatment except for disinfection (**as opposed to surface water sources that require filtration and stronger disinfection**).

The water supply for the Kekaha-Waimea Water System water system comes from the following sources:

***Kekaha, Waipa‘o Valley Well***

***Waimea Well A***

***Kekaha, Pau‘a Valley Well***

***Waimea Well B***

***Kekaha Shaft 12***

***Kapilimao Well***

All of the water is chlorinated and pumped into the distribution system or stored in the following tanks:

***Kapilimao  
500,000 gallon tank***

***Waimea  
100,000 gallon tank***

***Kekaha  
500,000 gallon tank***

***Waimea  
200,000 gallon tank***

***Waimea - 500,000 gallon tank***

## How do contaminants get into our drinking water?

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.

Therefore, 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 the water poses a health risk.

Contaminants that may be present in source water before we treat it include:

**Microbial contaminants:** Viruses and bacteria from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.

**Inorganic contaminants:** Salts and metals which can be naturally occurring or from other sources, such as urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.

**Pesticides and herbicides:** Variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff and residential uses.

**Radioactive contaminants:** Naturally occurring.

**Organic chemical contaminants:** Synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, also from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, and septic systems.

To ensure safe tap water, EPA sets limits on these substances in water provided by public water systems.

## **Should I take special precautions?**

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 healthcare providers.

EPA/CDC (Centers for Disease Control) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

More information about contaminants can also be obtained by calling the EPA's Hotline.

## ***Other Frequently Asked Questions:***

### ***What is the pH of my water?***

The pH of your water in the Kekaha-Waimea area can range from 7.4 to 7.9.

### ***What is the hardness of my water?***

The hardness of your water can range from 80 to 250 ppm.

### ***Why do I notice off-odors or taste in my water?***

Sometimes if water in your house is not used, the microbes in the pipes can grow and cause odors and funny taste. Flushing the water can resolve this problem. Water should be flushed in the morning or when not used for an extended period of time.

### ***What causes my water to look milky when it comes out of the faucet?***

Air trapped in the water lines causes this problem. Let the water sit in a glass. The water becomes clear from the bottom up if air is the cause. The water is safe to drink.

### ***Why is chlorine added to my water?***

Chlorine is added to control microbe levels in the water distribution system to keep the water safe. The chlorine level ranges between 0.2 to 0.5 ppm. The small amounts of chlorine in the water do not pose a health hazard. If you want to remove chlorine, either let it sit for a while or filter it through an activated carbon filter.

## **Water Quality Data**

We are required to test your tap water for:

- Different types of chemical contaminants: Regulated contaminants, each with a maximum contaminant level (MCL) and a maximum contaminant level goal (MCLG); and unregulated contaminants, which do not have maximum contaminant levels.
- Coliform bacteria.
- Heavy metals (lead and copper).

Remember that just because these contaminants may be present in your water, it does not mean your water has a health risk.

This past year, we tested your water for a wide array of contaminants. Most of them were not found in your water, and only those that we found are reported in the test results section that follows.

**Microbiological Contaminants**

Total Coliform Bacteria  
Fecal Coliform Bacteria

**Radioactive Contaminants**

Alpha emitters  
Beta/photon emitters  
Radium

**Inorganic Contaminants**

Antimony  
Arsenic  
Asbestos  
Barium  
Beryllium  
Cadmium  
Chromium  
Copper  
Cyanide  
Fluoride  
Lead  
Mercury  
Nitrate  
Nitrite  
Selenium  
Thallium

**Organic Contaminants**

2,4-D  
2,4,5-TP [Silvex]  
Acrylamide  
Alachlor  
Atrazine  
Benzo(a)pyrene  
Carbofuran  
Chlordane  
Dalapon  
Di(2-ethylhexyl) adipate  
Di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate  
Dibromochloropropane  
Dinoseb  
Diquat  
Dioxin  
Endothall  
Endrin  
Epichlorohydrin  
Ethylene dibromide  
Glyphosate  
Heptachlor  
Heptachlor epoxide  
Hexachlorobenzene  
Hexachlorocyclopentadiene  
Lindane  
Methoxychlor  
Oxamyl [Vydate]  
PCBs [Polychlorinated biphenyls]  
Pentachlorophenol  
Picloram  
Simazine  
Toxaphene

**Volatile Organic Contaminants**

Benzene  
Carbon tetrachloride  
Chlorobenzene  
o-Dichlorobenzene  
p-Dichlorobenzene  
1,2-Dichloroethane  
1,1-Dichloroethylene  
Cis-1,2-Dichloroethylene  
trans-1,2-Dichloroethylene  
Dichloromethane  
1,2-Dichloropropane  
Ethylbenzene  
HAA (Haloacetic Acid)  
Styrene  
Tetrachloroethylene  
1,2,4-Trichlorobenzene  
1,1,1-Trichloroethane  
1,1,2-Trichloroethane  
Trichloroethylene  
1,2,3-Trichloropropane  
THMs [Total trihalomethanes]  
Toluene  
Vinyl Chloride  
Xylenes

**Unregulated Contaminants**

2,4,5-T  
2-4-DB  
Aldicarb  
Aldicarb sulfone  
Aldicarb sulfoxide  
Aldrin  
Butachlor  
Carbaryl  
Dicamba  
Dieldrin  
3-Hydroxycarbofuran  
Methiocarb  
Methomyl  
Metolachlor  
Metribuzin  
Molinate  
Nickel  
Paraquat  
Propachlor  
Propoxur  
Sodium  
Sulfate  
Thiobencarb

## Results:

The following tables list all the drinking water contaminants that were found in the previous year, unless otherwise noted.

The State requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary from year to year. Thus, some of the data, though representative of the water quality, is more than one year old.



*Photo: Kekaha Elementary School students at the Department of Water's Make a Splash water education festival (2019).*

## ***Terms and abbreviations used below:***

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

**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.

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

**n/a:** not applicable.

**nd:** not detectable at testing limit.

**ppm:** parts per million or milligrams per liter  
(corresponds to one penny in \$10,000).

**ppb:** parts per billion or micrograms per liter  
(corresponds to one penny in \$10,000,000).

**pCi/L:** picocuries per liter  
(a measure of radiation).

**mrem/year:** millirems per year  
(a measure of radiation exposure).

### Microbiological Contaminants:

Substance	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	EPA MCLG	Highest Monthly # of Positive Samples	Date	Violation	Source of Contaminant
None Detected						

### Inorganic Contaminants:

Substance	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	EPA MCLG	Highest Level Detected	Detection Range	Date	Violation	Source of Contaminant
Chromium (ppb)	100	100	12	2-12	2022	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Nitrate (ppm)	10	10	2.1	1.6-2.1	2023	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits

## Organic Contaminants:

Substance	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	EPA MCLG	Highest Level Detected	Detection Range	Date	Violation	Source of Contaminant
TTHMs (Total trihalo-methanes) (ppb)	80	NA	1.9	-	2022	No	By-Product of drinking water chlorination

## Lead and Copper Rule Compliance:

Substance	Action Level	EPA MCLG	90th Percentile Value	Detection Range	# of Sites Found Above AL	Date	Source of Contaminant
Lead (ppb)	15	0	<2.5	ND	0/20	2021	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	0.18	ND-0.2	0/20	2021	Corrosion of household plumbing systems

The Kekaha-Waimea system is in compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule Requirements and is on a reduced monitoring schedule. Samples for lead and copper will be taken and analyzed every three years from residential customers.

### Unregulated Contaminants:

Substance	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	EPA MCLG	Highest Level Detected	Detection Range	Date	Violation	Source of Contaminant
Silica (ppm)	-	-	69	-	2020	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	-	-	111	83-111	2022	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Sulfate (ppm)	250	-	35	10-35	2023	No	Erosion of natural deposits

### Radioactive Contaminants:

Substance	Highest Level Allowed (MCL)	EPA MCLG	Highest Level Detected	Detection Range	Date	Violation	Source of Contaminant
Alpha Emitters (pCi/L)	15	0	13	ND-13	2016	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Beta Emitters (pCi/L)	-	50*	4	ND-4	2016	No	Erosion of natural deposits

\*The MCL for beta emitters is 4 mrem/year. EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for beta emitters.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Department of Water is responsible for providing high quality drinking water but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in you water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

## For more information:

<b>Who</b>	<b>About</b>	<b>Number</b>
Kaua'i Dept. of Water	General Inquiries Water Quality Report	(808) 245-5400
State Dept. of Health	Contaminants, health effects	(808) 586-4258
EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline	Contaminants, health effects	1-800-426-4791

*This report is updated annually and is also available online at  
[www.kauaiwater.org](http://www.kauaiwater.org)*

