We are proud to provide you with some of the nation's highest quality water that meets or exceeds all state and federal standards for drinking water.

**Our Drinking Water Sources and Treatment**

The San Francisco Regional Water Systems (SRWS) make up our drinking water source and originate from spring waterflowing down the Tuolumne River to storage in Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. The well-protected San Francisco water source is exempt from state and federal filtration. SAWS works to meet the appropriate drinking water standards for consumption, for water from Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. Our treatment consists of ultrafiltration and chlorine disinfection, pH adjustment for optimum corrosion control, and taste and odor control in the water treatment process. The SARWSS customers meet the federal and state drinking water standards. The SRWS did not see any out-of-spec-Hetch Hetchy sources in 2019.

**Protecting Our Watersheds**

The SRWS conducts watershed surveys in the Tuolumne River (Hetch Hetchy) and the San Lorenzo River (UNHHS) every five years. For the Tuolumne River, the most recent survey was completed in 2015, as part of the SRWS' drought response efforts. All these surveys together with the stringent watershed protection measures were completed by SFRWS with support from partner agencies including the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service.

**Fluoridation and Dental Fluorosis**

System-wide fluoride is added to drinking water to achieve optimal levels of fluoride in the water. The fluoride target level in the drinking water is 0.7 parts per million (ppm), consistent with the May 2015 State regulatory guidance on optimal fluoride level for water treatment.

**Dental Fluorosis**

The Centers of Disease Control (CDC) recommend an optimum fluoride level of 0.7 ppm. Water treated with fluoridation containing levels of fluoride may still have a weak stain or slight discoloration. Exposure to levels of fluoride of 1.5 ppm or above may cause dental fluorosis, a potentially irreversible condition. Dental fluorosis is assessed by a dental health professional. According to the CDC, dental fluorosis can result in mild to very mild fluorosis, and are often only visible on the tooth surface. Drinking water with this level of fluoride may also negatively impact the color or appearance of tooth fillings. Dental fluorosis may not be visible under a microscope. Even in cases where the marks are visible, they do not pose any health risk. The Centers of Disease Control (CDC) recommends that individuals who consume water containing high levels of fluoride for extended periods may consider reducing their intake of fluoride through dietary means, including cutting back on the use of fluoride-containing toothpaste. It is important to remember that the optimal fluoride level in water is 0.7 ppm, which is consistent with the May 2015 State regulatory guidance on optimal fluoride level for water treatment.
Key Water Quality Terms

The following are definitions of key terms referring to water quality standards and goals listed on the adjacent data table.

**Public Health Goal (PHG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHGs are set by the SWRCB.

**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 are set by the USEPA.

**Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. There is evidence that this level of contamination is harmful or necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

**Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG):** The level of a 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 contaminants.

**Primary Drinking Water Standard (PWS):** MCLs and MRDLs for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements, and water treatment requirements.

**Regulatory Action Level:** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment requirements or requirements that a water system must follow.

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

**Turbidity:** A water clarity indicator that measures cloudiness of the water, and is also used to indicate the effectiveness of the filtration system. High turbidity can hinder the effectiveness of disinfectants.

**Cryptosporidium:** A parasitic microbe found in most surface water. SFRWS regularly tests for this waterborne pathogen and finds it at very low levels in source water and treated water in 2019. However, current test methods approved by the USEPA do not distinguish between the species and those capable of causing disease. Ingestion of Cryptosporidium may produce symptoms of nausea, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches. Cryptosporidium must be noted to cause disease, and may be spread through means other than drinking water.

Contaminants and Regulations

Generally, the sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, oceans, 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. Such substances are called contaminants, and may be present in any source water as:

- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria that can come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.
- Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, that can be naturally occurring or result from urban runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharge, oil and gas production, mining or farming.
- Pesticides and herbicides that may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff and industrial activities.
- 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, agricultural application and septic systems.
- Radiological contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the USEPA’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4778, or at www.epa.gov/ost/water/quality.