

City of Escondido

# Water Quality Report

Reporting for Calendar Year 2021

*Escondido's Drinking Water Meets or Exceeds All State and Federal Health Standards for Water Quality*

Electronic copies of this report are available for review in English and in Spanish on the City of Escondido's website at:  
[www.escondido.org/water-quality-reports](http://www.escondido.org/water-quality-reports)

You may obtain a printed version of this report in English or in Spanish at the Utility Billing counter in Escondido City Hall. If you would like a printed version of either report mailed to your home, you can request a copy by calling 760-839-4662 or by sending an email to: [water@escondido.org](mailto:water@escondido.org)



# What is this report about?

The City of Escondido Utilities Department is pleased to present its annual Water Quality Report for calendar year 2021. The Water Division routinely monitors and tests our water supplies for the entire range of elements that have the potential to degrade the quality of your drinking water. As this report explains, Escondido meets or exceeds all State and Federal regulations for its water supplies, and provides its customers with drinking water of the highest quality.

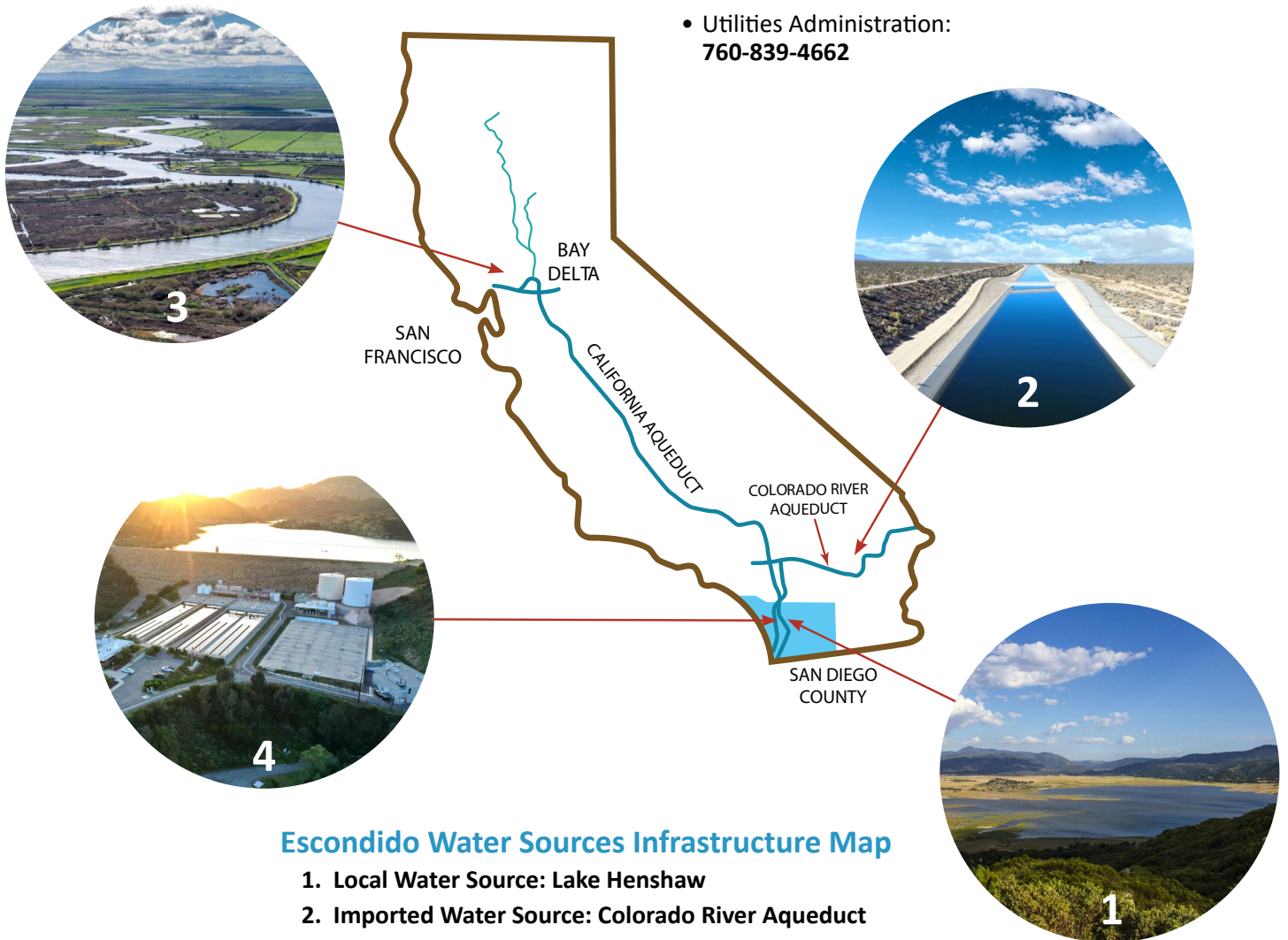
This report shows the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, giving our customers a snapshot of the quality of water we provided last year. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to state standards.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the water quality data presented in this report, please contact:

- Nicki Branch, Laboratory Superintendent:  
**760-839-6290, ext. 7063**

For questions regarding any other information contained in this report, please contact:

- Utilities Administration:  
**760-839-4662**



## Escondido Water Sources Infrastructure Map

1. Local Water Source: Lake Henshaw
2. Imported Water Source: Colorado River Aqueduct
3. Imported Water Source: Bay Delta
4. City of Escondido Water System:  
Lake Wohlford, Dixon Lake, Escondido-Vista Water Treatment Plant,  
Water Distribution System



# Where does my water come from?



The City's Water Division uses two sources for your drinking water. The first one is local water, which originates from the watershed and well fields located near Lake Henshaw. Water from Lake Henshaw is transferred to Lake Wohlford via the San Luis Rey River, and a canal originally constructed during the period 1894 to 1895.

The second water source is imported water that is purchased from the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA). This is "surface water" from the Colorado River Basin, and lakes and rivers in Northern California. The Metropolitan Water District (MWD) imports this water to Southern California via a 242-mile-long aqueduct that carries Colorado River water from Lake Havasu, and a 444-mile-long aqueduct bringing water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. MWD stores water in reservoirs at Diamond Valley Lake (Hemet), at Lake Mathews (southwest Riverside County), and at Lake Skinner (near Temecula). Water is also stored at six smaller Los Angeles and Orange County reservoirs located at the start of the Colorado River Aqueduct. SDCWA purchases this imported water from MWD and distributes it to water agencies throughout San Diego County, including the City of Escondido. Escondido's imported water is sometimes stored in Dixon Lake.

The raw water from these two sources is treated and disinfected at the Escondido-Vista Water Treatment Plant (WTP), jointly owned by the City of Escondido and the Vista Irrigation District, to protect you against microbial contaminants. The WTP was constructed in 1976 and has capacity to produce 75 million gallons of potable (drinking) water per day. Water treatment at the plant includes mechanical and chemical removal of impurities, followed by inactivation of pathogens (e.g. viruses, bacteria, etc.) through disinfection. The result is clear and healthful water, meeting all state and federal requirements. Drinking water is then distributed to our customers through over 440 miles of water pipeline.



To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Division of Drinking Water, prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. California Department of Public Health and U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that provide the same protection for public health.



# What were the findings of the local and imported source water assessments?

## Sanitary Surveys for Imported Water Sources

As reported on the previous page, the Water Division purchases water from the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA), who in turn purchases a majority of its water from the Metropolitan Water District (MWD). Large water wholesalers such as MWD are required by the State Water Board to conduct an initial source water assessment, which is then updated every five years through a survey of source water quality called a watershed sanitary survey. Watershed sanitary survey updates examine possible sources of drinking water contamination, including stormwater runoff, recreational activities, wastewater discharges, wildlife, fires, and other watershed-related factors that could affect water quality. The surveys then recommend actions to better protect these source waters. The most recent survey updates for Metropolitan's source waters are the:

- Colorado River Watershed Sanitary Survey - 2015 Update (will be updated again in April 2022)
- California State Water Project Watershed Sanitary Survey – 2016 Update (will be updated again in June 2022)

Treatment to remove specific contaminants can be more expensive than measures to protect water at the source, which is why Metropolitan and other water agencies invest resources to support improved watershed protection programs.

## Sanitary Survey for Local Water Source

In 2021, the City of Escondido and the Vista Irrigation District (VID) prepared an update to the sanitary survey of the local watershed. This survey assesses activities within the watershed that have the potential to influence the quality of water flowing into Lake Henshaw, Dixon Lake, and Lake Wohlford. While the survey identifies a number of activities that could potentially affect water quality, including residential septic facilities, highway run-off, and agricultural and recreational activities, no significant amount of contaminants were detected in the local water supply in 2021. This survey will be updated once again in 2026. A copy of the Watershed Sanitary Survey Update, which contains a Source Water Assessment Program, is available for review on the City's website via the following link:

[www.escondido.org/Data/Sites/1/media/UtilitiesAdmin/Water/WaterSanitarySurvey/Final2021WSS\\_WP.pdf](http://www.escondido.org/Data/Sites/1/media/UtilitiesAdmin/Water/WaterSanitarySurvey/Final2021WSS_WP.pdf)

## Why is there anything in my 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.

The following contaminants may potentially be present at very low concentrations in our water sources:

- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may 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 stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.
- 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.
- Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

## Should I take Precautions?

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. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by visiting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) website at:

[www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water](http://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water)

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised 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. USEPA/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are also available at USEPA's website:

[www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water](http://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water)



# How does Escondido collect and test its waters?



At the Water Treatment Plant (WTP), the Plant Operations staff monitors various stages of the treatment process, and routinely collects water samples. Testing is performed on alkalinity and turbidity in the raw water source; during the period that the water is being treated, monitoring takes place for coagulation, settling, and chlorine levels. Adjustments are made to the treatment process based upon the results from sampling and testing performed at the WTP.

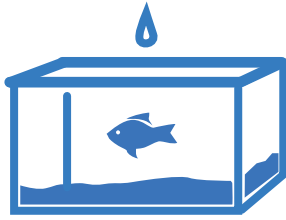
In addition, samples are collected from various points in the distribution system by both Water Distribution and Laboratory staff, and then tested at the Laboratory on a weekly basis. In 2021, 4,021 water samples were collected from the distribution system, and 27,619 lab analyses were conducted for 235 separate water constituents.

In January 2022, the annual awards presented by the California Water Environment Association recognized Escondido Lab Technician Jorge Huitron's outstanding work by naming him the Lab Analyst of the Year. Jorge (pictured, lower right) conducts complex water and wastewater analyses, from bench chemistry to bacteriological assessments, sample setup, data entry, and clean-up. He trains both new and seasoned Escondido laboratory employees based on four decades of experience, and his work assures all water supplies are safe for users.

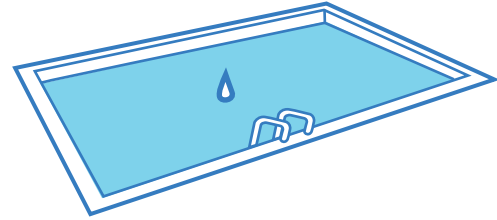
Sampling and testing Escondido's source waters, from the time they arrive at the WTP to the time that drinking water is delivered to your home, is of the utmost importance to safeguard your water supply and to ensure that the water is of the highest quality.



# What do the terms in the following tables mean?



**Milligrams Per Liter: mg/L**  
Parts per million (ppm)  
One drop in a 10-gallon aquarium



**Micrograms Per Liter: (µg/L)**  
Parts per billion (ppb)  
One drop in a residential swimming pool

## Colony-Forming Units (CFU)

### Detection Limit for Reporting (DLR):

A detected contaminant is any contaminant detected at or above its detection level for purposes of reporting.

### Disinfectants/Disinfection Byproducts Rule (D/DBPR)

### Entry Point to Distribution (EPTD)

### Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA):

The average of sample analytical results for samples taken at a particular monitoring location during the previous four calendar quarters.

### Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL):

The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. Primary MCLs are set as close to the PHGs (or MCLGs) as is economically and technologically feasible. Secondary MCLs are set to protect the odor, taste and appearance of drinking water.

### 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, set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), are not regulatory standards, not enforceable and are not required to be met by public water systems.

### 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 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.

## Micromhos Per Centimeter (umho/cm):

A measure of a substance's ability to convey electricity.

## PicoCuries Per Liter (pCi/L):

A measure of radioactivity.

## Primary Drinking Water Standards (PDWS):

MCLs for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements, and water treatment requirements.

## Public Health Goals (PHG):

The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHGs, set by the California Environmental Protection Agency, are not regulatory standards, not enforceable and are not required to be met by public water systems.

## Not Applicable (N/A)

## Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU):

Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. It is a good indicator of the effectiveness of the water treatment process and distribution system.

## Regulatory Action Level (AL) / Notification Level (NL):

The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

## Running Annual Average (RAA)

## Treatment Technique (TT):

A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

## Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rules 4 (UCMR4)

## Water Treatment Plant (WTP)

# 2021 Water Quality Data Tables

The following tables list all of the regulated drinking water contaminants that were detected during the calendar year of this report. The presence of “contaminants” in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in these tables is from testing performed in the calendar year of the report. The EPA and the State require that monitoring for certain contaminants be performed less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.

PARAMETER (a)	Units	State MCL	PHG (MCLG)	Range	Average	DLR	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source/Comments
<b>Clarity (Turbidity) (b, c)</b>									
Turbidity of Combined Filter Effluent in WTP (at 4 hour intervals)	NTU	TT = 1	N/A	0.02 - 0.12	0.04	-	2021	No	Soil runoff.
	%	95%(<0.3)		Highest NTU = 0.12					
Turbidity in the Distribution System	NTU	5	N/A	0.05 - 0.50	0.07	-	2021	No	Sediment in distribution system.
				Highest NTU = 0.50					
<b>Microbiological Contaminants (d, e)</b>									
Total Coliform Bacteria (Monthly) in the Distribution System	%	5	(0)	0.00 - 1.07	0.16	-	2021	No	Naturally present in the environment.
				Monthly Highest = 1.07 %					
E.coli (Monthly Positive Number) in the Distribution System	Count	TT	(0)	0 - 0	0	-	2021	No	Human and animal fecal waste.
				Total Positive Number = 0					
Heterotrophic Plate Count Bacteria in the Distribution System	CFU/mL	500	N/A	< 1 - 180	< 1	-	2021	No	Naturally present in the environment.
	%	95%(<500)		% (<500 CFU/ml) = 100 %					
Heterotrophic Plate Count Bacteria in EPTD	CFU/mL	TT = 500	N/A	< 1 - 1	< 1	-	2021	No	Naturally present in the environment.
PARAMETER	Units	State MCL [MRDL]	PHG (MCLG) [MRDLG]	Range	Average	DLR	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source/Comments
<b>Disinfectants / Disinfection Byproducts in the Distribution System</b>									
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) Locational RAA (LRAA) Highest Locational RAA	µg/L	80	N/A	18 - 33	25	1	2021	No	Byproducts of drinking water chlorination. Sampled quarterly in distribution system. ( Stage 2 D/DBPR) (f)
				22 - 35	27				
				N/A	35				
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) Locational RAA (LRAA) Highest Locational RAA	µg/L	60	N/A	1 - 14	8	1	2021	No	Byproducts of drinking water chlorination. Sampled quarterly in distribution system. (Stage 2 D/DBPR) (f)
				7 - 17	11				
				N/A	17				
Total Chlorine Residual (Cl2) Running Annual Average(RAA) Highest Running Annual Ave.	mg/L	[4.0]	[4.0]	0.8 - 3.4	2.7	-	2021	No	Addition of chlorine and ammonia as a combined disinfectant, chloramine. Calculated quarterly with monthly average values.
				2.66 - 2.74	2.71				
				N/A	2.74				
Chlorite (ClO2-) Monthly Average	mg/L	1	0.05	0.09 - 0.56	0.22	0.02	2021	No	Byproducts of drinking water chlorination. Monitored during pre-chlorination with chlorine dioxide.
				0.11 - 0.52	0.22				
Chlorate (ClO3-) Monthly Average	µg/L	(NL=800)	N/A	260 - 510	350	20	2021	No	Byproducts of drinking water chlorination. Monitored during pre-chlorination with chlorine dioxide.
				280 - 490	340				
PARAMETER	Units	State MCL	PHG (MCLG)	Range	Average	DLR	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source/Comments
<b>Inorganic Contaminants - Primary Standards (Finished Water)</b>									
Barium (Ba)	mg/L	1	2	ND - 0.1	0.1	0.1	2021	No	Discharges of oil drilling wastes and from metal refineries.
Fluoride (F-)	mg/L	2	1	0.58 - 0.75	0.68	0.1	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits. Adding fluoride helps prevent dental caries in consumers. (Control Range: 0.6 - 1.2 ppm. Optimal Level: 0.7 ppm)
<b>Inorganic Contaminants - Secondary Standards (Finished Water)</b>									
Color	Units	15	N/A	1 - 1	1	-	2021	No	Decaying vegetation or other naturally occurring organic materials.
Chloride (Cl-)	mg/L	500	N/A	95 - 110	101	-	2021	No	Runoff / leaching from natural deposits. Seawater influence.
Corrosivity	SI	Non- corrosive	N/A	0.33 - 0.52	0.45	-	2021	No	Natural or industrial-influenced balance of hydrogen, carbon, and oxygen in the water. Affected by temperature and other factors.
Foaming Agents (MBAS)	µg/L	500	N/A	ND - 60	ND	(50)	2021	No	Municipal and industrial waste discharges (there is no State DLR, but analyzed laboratory DLR = 50 µg/L).
Specific conductance	umho/cm	1600	N/A	878 - 1034	970	-	2021	No	Substances that form ions when in water. Seawater influences.
Sulfate (SO4)2-	mg/L	500	N/A	200 - 220	213	0.5	2021	No	Runoff / leaching from natural deposits. Industrial wastes.
Total Dissolved Solids	mg/L	1000	N/A	531 - 660	605	-	2021	No	Runoff / leaching from natural deposits. Industrial wastes.
Turbidity	NTU	5	N/A	0.05 - 0.15	0.07	-	2021	No	Soil runoff.

PARAMETER	Units	State MCL	PHG (MCLG)	Range	Average	DLR	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source/Comments
<b>Inorganic Contaminants - Unregulated (Finished Water)</b>									
Boron	mg/L	(NL=1)	N/A	0.12 - 0.13	0.13	0.1	2021	No	Leaching from natural deposits. Industrial wastes. State contaminants with notification levels (NL).
Chlorate	µg/L	(NL=800)	N/A	260 - 480	320	20	2021	No	Byproduct of drinking water chlorination. Monitored during pre-chlorination with chlorine dioxide.
Manganese	µg/L	50	N/A	0.98 - 4.8	2.1	(0.4)	2019	No	Leaching from natural deposits (state DLR = 20 µg/L). UCMR4 list 1 chemical contaminants (UCMR4 DLR = 0.4 µg/L).
PARAMETER	Units	State MCL	PHG (MCLG)	Range	Average	DLR	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source/Comments
<b>Radionuclides Contaminants (Finished Water)</b>									
Gross Alpha Particle Activity	pCi/L	15	(0)	ND - 3.25	ND	3	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits.
Gross Beta Particle Activity	pCi/L	50	(0)	ND - 4.57	ND	4	2021	No	Decay of natural and man-made deposits.
Uranium	pCi/L	20	0.43	2.1 - 2.1	2.1	1	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits.
PARAMETER	Units	State AL	PHG	90th Percentile of 57 Samples	# of Sites > AL	DLR	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source/Comments
<b>Inorganic Contaminants - Copper / Lead in Residential Taps (g)</b>									
Copper (Cu)	mg/L	1.3	0.3	0.65	0	0.05	2021	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
Lead (Pb)	µg/L	15	0.2	< 5	0	5	2021	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems. Erosion of natural deposits. Number of schools requesting lead(Pb) sampling = 0
PARAMETER	Units	State MCL [MRDL]	PHG (MCLG) [MRDLG]	Range	Average	DLR	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source/Comments
<b>Additional Analyzed (Finished Water)</b>									
Total Alkalinity as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	mg/L	N/A	N/A	120 - 120	120	-	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits. Leaching.
Bicarbonate (HCO <sub>3</sub> <sup>-</sup> )	mg/L	N/A	N/A	150 - 150	150	-	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits. Leaching.
pH	Units	N/A	N/A	7.81 - 8.19	7.98	-	2021	No	
Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub>	mg/L	N/A	N/A	240 - 260	250	-	2021	No	Leaching. Hardness is mostly due to the presence of magnesium and calcium, usually naturally occurring.
Calcium (Ca)	mg/L	N/A	N/A	60 - 66	63	-	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits. Leaching.
Magnesium (Mg)	mg/L	N/A	N/A	22 - 24	23	-	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits. Leaching.
Sodium (Na)	mg/L	N/A	N/A	87 - 96	91	-	2021	No	Leaching. Sodium refers to the salt present in the water and is generally naturally occurring.
Potassium (K)	mg/L	N/A	N/A	4.0 - 4.6	4.3	-	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits. Leaching.
Silica (SiO <sub>2</sub> )	mg/L	N/A	N/A	6.4 - 8.4	7.3	-	2021	No	Erosion of natural deposits. Leaching.
Total Chlorine Residual (Cl <sub>2</sub> )	mg/L	[4.0]	[4.0]	2.8 - 3.3	3.1	-	2021	No	Addition of chlorine and ammonia as a combined disinfectant, chloramine.
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs)	µg/L	80	N/A	19 - 28	24	1	2021	No	Byproducts of drinking water chlorination.
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	µg/L	60	N/A	ND - 13	7	1	2021	No	Byproducts of drinking water chlorination.
Chlorite (ClO <sub>2</sub> <sup>-</sup> )	mg/L	1	0.05	0.14 - 0.53	0.26	0.02	2021	No	Byproducts of drinking water chlorination. Monitored during pre-chlorination with chlorine dioxide.
Total Organic Carbon(TOC)	mg/L	TT	N/A	1.4 - 3.2	1.9	0.3	2021	No	TOC provides a medium for the formation of disinfectant by-products. These by-products include TTHMs and HAA5.

## Data Table Notes

- (a) Data shown are annual averages and ranges.
- (b) This table reflects the clarity or turbidity produced at the WTP and in the distribution system.
- (c) The turbidity level of the filtered water shall be less than or equal to 0.3 NTU in 95% of the measurements taken each month and shall not exceed 1.0 NTU at any time.
- (d) Total coliform MCLs: No more than 5% of the monthly samples may be total coliform positive.
- (e) The City of Escondido Water Distribution System consists of approximately 444 miles of pipelines. Tests are performed each week at various points along the system for compliance with bacteriological and physical parameters. Of concern to all customers is the bacteriological quality of the drinking water. The distribution system table indicates the number of positive samples found in the system.
- (f) Data are calculated from the average of quarterly samples.
- (g) The Federal and State standards for lead and copper are Action Levels. If the Action Levels are exceeded, optimal corrosion control treatment may be required. The data presented in the table is the 90th percentile contaminant level from all tests performed.



## Fluoride

California state law requires that water utilities serving more than 10,000 customers supplement naturally occurring fluoride to improve oral health. The levels of fluoride in Escondido's treated water are maintained within a range of 0.6 – 1.2 mg/L, with an optimum level of 0.7 mg/L as required by the California Department of Public Health. More information about fluoridation and oral health is available from the California Water Boards at:

[www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Fluoridation.html](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/Fluoridation.html)



## Lead and Copper Rule

Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with individual customer's service lines and home plumbing. The City of Escondido is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. The Lead and Copper Rule requires the collection of special samples from designated residents every three years; these tests were last performed in June 2021. The data tables in this report show the levels of copper and lead found in the 57 homes of these selected customers, and are an indication of the degree of leaching within the customer-owned copper plumbing and brass faucets.

The next Lead and Copper Rule sampling will be performed on resident water systems in June, 2024.

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. 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 the lead in your 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:

[www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule](http://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/lead-and-copper-rule)



## Total Coliform Rule

All water systems are required to comply with the state Total Coliform Rule, and are also required to comply with the federal Revised Total Coliform Rule. The new federal rule maintains protection for public health by ensuring the integrity of the drinking water distribution system and monitoring for the presence of microbials (i.e., total coliform and E. coli bacteria). The U.S. EPA anticipates greater public health protection as the new rule requires water systems that are vulnerable to microbial contamination to identify and fix problems. Water systems that exceed a specified frequency of total coliform occurrences are required to conduct an assessment to determine if any sanitary defects exist. If found, these must be corrected by the water system.



# Frequently Asked Questions from Our Customers



## Can the COVID-19 coronavirus get into my water?

The novel coronavirus disease, COVID-19, does not present a threat to the safety of the City of Escondido's treated water supplies. The Water Treatment Plant's multi-step treatment process includes filtration and disinfection using ozone and chlorine. This advanced process removes and kills viruses, including coronaviruses, as well as bacteria and other pathogens. Ongoing monitoring demonstrates that Escondido's treated water meets or surpasses all federal and state drinking water standards and regulations, which require removal of over 99.99% of viruses. COVID-19 is transmitted person-to-person, not through water, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Why does water sometimes taste or smell strange?

When your water tastes or smells strange, the problem might be in the water or it might not. The taste of drinking water is affected by its mineral content as well as the presence of chlorine, which is used to protect against potential bacterial contamination. Sometimes plumbing can cause a metallic flavor, especially if the water has been sitting in pipes for many hours. Taste, however, does not indicate a higher or lower degree of water quality.

Harmless algae in locally-stored water can cause musty or fishy odors, especially during the hot summer months. Even after chlorine has been added to disinfect the water, these odors may persist. In addition, many people mistakenly confuse odors from their sink drain with the smell of their tap water. The odor may actually be coming from the drain, where bacteria grow on food, soap, hair, and other things that are trapped there. Gases in the drain that smell get stirred up when water goes down the pipe. Odor can also come from bacteria growing in water heaters - usually ones that have been turned off for a while or have the thermostat set too low.

For odor, consider these questions: Does it come from only one faucet? Does it go away after running the water for a few minutes? If the answer is yes to either question, the source of the odor is probably within your plumbing system. If no to both questions, please call Water Distribution staff at 760-839-4668.

## How do I test for a leak in my home?

Many times a leak is not visible on the surface, either in the yard or in the house. A quick way to test your private side plumbing for a leak is to shut off all water sources throughout your property, and check to see if the "tattletale" indicator on your meter is spinning. If it is spinning, you may have a leak on your property.

Another way to determine if you have a leak begins by writing down the current reading on your water meter. For the next two hours, make sure that all water sources in your home remain unused (such as faucets, toilets, washing machine, and garden hoses), and turn off any "automatic" water sources (such as the icemaker and irrigation system). After the two-hour period has expired, reread your meter. If the reading on the meter has increased, you have a leak.



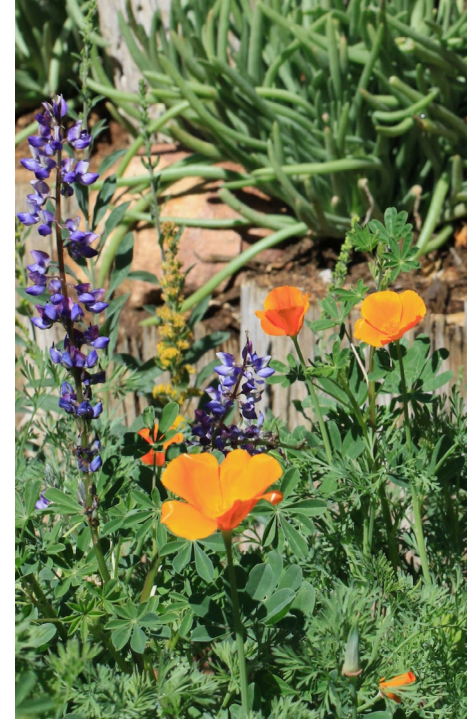
## How does Escondido's water meter exchange program work?

The Water Division's meter exchange program is designed to comply with American Water Works Association and manufacturing recommendations. The City's goal is to exchange each water meter within its service area on a 15-year cycle. A few questions Water staff commonly receive are:

- Will I be charged for the new meter? No, the cost of the meter exchange, and routine maintenance performed on the meter, are covered by the monthly water charges that you pay to the City.
- How long does this process take? The average meter exchange takes approximately 20 minutes. Often, the exchange occurs while the customer is not at home. The Water Division representative will knock on your door before interrupting your water service. If you are using water at the time of the exchange, the representative will come back later that day to complete the work.
- Why do you have to change my meter? Water meters have internal parts that wear over time. In order to maintain accurate measurement of water usage, it is important that the meter is exchanged within the 15-year lifespan.

## Water – A Precious Resource

In these times of drought, it's more important than ever that we use every drop of water wisely. Landscaping is one of our home's biggest water users. Are there changes you can make to have a California-friendly yard? Check out these Escondido neighbors - so many low water use plants, materials, and styles to choose from:



If you're interested in re-making your home's landscaping, we can help with the entire process.

Visit [www.watersmartsd.org/residential/landscape-makeover-program/](http://www.watersmartsd.org/residential/landscape-makeover-program/) for videos, tips, rebates, and free classes.



We can all follow the advice of Enzo, an Escondido student, to "Save water for a better future." Small actions add up to big savings if we all do our part.

- 💧 Wash only full loads of laundry or dishes.
- 💧 Fix leaks or breaks as soon as possible.
- 💧 Turn off irrigation before, during, and after rain.
- 💧 Water your plants, not the sidewalk or streets.
- 💧 What other actions can you take?

Help us save by reporting water waste or pollution at **760-839-4668** or through the City's **Report It!** app. Residents can download the app at [www.escondido.org/report-it](http://www.escondido.org/report-it).

# Improving Escondido's Water System

## W 7th Avenue and S Broadway Water Main Replacement Project

This project will replace water mains in W. 7th Avenue (from Quince Street to S. Broadway) and in S. Broadway (from W. 7th Avenue to W. Valley Parkway) that were constructed in the early 1950s. The project replaces existing cast iron water pipeline with PVC pipeline, and replaces existing water services, water meters, and fire hydrants.

Estimated Project cost: \$4.1 million

Estimated completion: September 2022



## Lindley Reservoir Replacement Project

The two major elements of the Lindley Reservoir Tank Replacement Project are: 1) construction of two, 1.5 MG, partially buried concrete water tanks and related valves, pipelines, etc.; and 2) demolition and removal of the existing 2 MG, above ground, steel water tank. In addition to increased storage capacity (2 MG to 3 MG), two reservoir tanks will protect water quality and provide more reliable and efficient water storage, as one tank will remain in service while the other undergoes maintenance.

Estimated Project cost: \$16.3 million

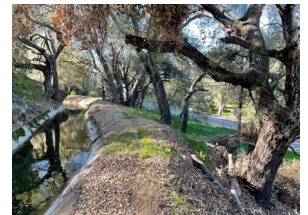
Estimated completion: October 2022

## San Pasqual Undergrounding Project

This project will satisfy the City's obligation under the San Luis Rey Indian Water Rights Settlement Agreement, which stipulates that approximately 2.5 miles of the Escondido Canal that cross the San Pasqual Indian Reservation must be replaced with an underground pipeline. Parties to the agreement are the United States; the La Jolla, Rincon, San Pasqual, Pauma, and Pala Bands of Mission Indians; the San Luis Rey Indian Water Authority; the City of Escondido; and the Vista Irrigation District (VID). VID is responsible for 50 percent of the project costs.

Estimated Project cost: \$50 million

Completion deadline: May 2023



## Lake Wohlford Dam Replacement Project

A design for the new, replacement dam to be constructed just downstream of the existing dam has been completed, and environmental permit applications for the project have been submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board. The City is preparing a draft inundation study and map for the proposed dam, and will submit these items to the State Division of Safety of Dams. The Water Division has secured \$14.9 million in Prop 1E grant funding for this project, and the City Council has authorized a loan in an amount up to \$66 million from the US EPA's Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Program.

Estimated Project cost: \$88.5 million

Estimated completion: Unknown at this time

## Utilities Administration

201 N. Broadway  
Escondido, CA 92025  
760-839-4662

Hours: Monday – Thursday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

## Utilities Water Division

Christopher W. McKinney, Director of Utilities  
Reed Harlan, Deputy Director of Utilities / Water  
Clay Clifford, Water Treatment Plant Superintendent  
Federico Jimenez, Water Distribution Superintendent  
Darren Southworth, Canal Superintendent

## Escondido City Council

760-839-4638

Paul McNamara, Mayor  
Tina Inscoe, Deputy Mayor (District 2)  
Consuelo Martinez, Council Member (District 1)  
Joe Garcia, Council Member (District 3)  
Michael Morasco, Council Member (District 4)

## Escondido City Manager's Office

760-839-4631

Sean McGlynn, City Manager  
Christopher W. McKinney, Deputy City Manager  
Joanna Axelrod, Deputy City Manager  
Rob Van De Hey, Deputy City Manager

The Escondido City Council is the governing authority for the City's Water Division. Unless the City Council schedules otherwise or cancels a meeting, regular meetings are convened on the first four Wednesdays of every month at 5:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 201 N. Broadway. For your convenience, City Council meetings are aired live on Cox Communications Channel 19 (Escondido ONLY) and AT&T U-verse Channel 99. The meetings are also streamed live at: [www.escondido.org/meeting-broadcasts](http://www.escondido.org/meeting-broadcasts). Re-broadcasts of the meetings are aired on Sunday and Monday nights at 6:00 p.m. on Cox Channel 19 (Escondido ONLY) and AT&T U-verse Channel 99, and archived meetings are available for viewing online at the City Council link listed above.