

# ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

Reporting Year 2025



*Presented By*  
**Oneida Water & Sewer**



Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable.  
Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

PWS ID#: TN0000532



## Consumer Confidence Report

This report is to inform you about the excellent water and services that we deliver each day. Our constant goal is to provide you with a safe and dependable supply of drinking water that meets or exceeds all U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) health standards. We have conducted numerous tests for over 80 contaminants that may be in drinking water.

In 2018 Oneida purchased a new total organic carbon (TOC) and UV254 analyzer. Powder activated carbon was added to the treatment process in 2019. In 2021 and 2022, a project was completed to install new underdrains and filter media on both filters and clarifiers. The improvements have helped make Oneida a state-of-the-art water quality treatment facility and laboratory. As new challenges to drinking water safety emerge, we remain vigilant in meeting the goals of source water protection, water conservation, and community education while continuing to serve the needs of all our water users.



## Water System Improvements

In July 2025, the Oneida Water Department completed major upgrades to its water treatment facilities with funding assistance from the Economic Development Administration and TDEC through the American Rescue Plan Act program. A key component of this project was the construction of new four-million-gallon-per-day treatment basins, at a total cost of just over \$6 million. These improvements enhance our ability to reliably meet current and future water demands while maintaining high water quality standards.

In addition to the treatment basins, the department invested in new bench-top laboratory equipment to improve in-house water quality testing and monitoring. We also installed a new multistream TOC analyzer, along with a new eight-stream manganese monitoring unit, allowing for more precise and continuous tracking of water quality throughout the treatment process. These upgrades strengthen system reliability, improve operational efficiency, and ensure we continue providing safe, high-quality drinking water to our customers.

## Future System Improvements

In addition to drinking water system improvements, the Town of Oneida is planning a \$1.2 million wastewater treatment system project anticipated to go to bid in 2026. This project is funded through the Appalachian Regional Commission with required local matching funds and is part of the community's ongoing efforts to maintain reliable and sustainable utility infrastructure.

## What Is the Source of My Water?

Your water, which is treated surface water, comes from two sources: Baker Lake and the Oneida City Park. We also purchase water from Huntsville Utility District. Our goal is to protect the water from contaminants, and we are working with the state to determine the vulnerability of our water sources to potential contamination.

## Important Health Information

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. U.S. EPA/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (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 at (800) 426-4791 or [epa.gov/safewater](https://www.epa.gov/safewater).

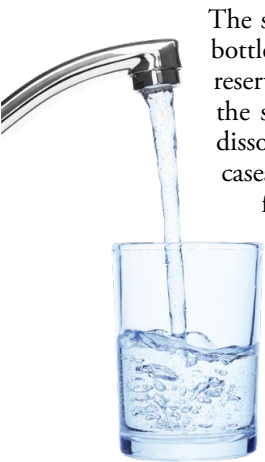


## QUESTIONS?

For more information about your drinking water, please call Ronnie Duncan or Stephen Owens at (423) 569-4008.

## Substances That Could Be in Water

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. EPA and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) prescribe regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health. Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of these contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk.



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 substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances that may be present in source water include:

Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, or wildlife;

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally occurring or may 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 may also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems; and

Radioactive Contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or may be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, call the U.S. EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

## Lead in Home Plumbing

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. Oneida Water and Sewer 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 it is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby formula. Boiling 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, or 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 it tested, contact Oneida Water and Sewer at (423) 569-4008. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at [epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://epa.gov/safewater/lead).

A lead service line inventory has been completed for our system and is accessible by contacting our office at (423) 569-4008 during regular business hours.

## How Can I Get Involved?

Our water board meets on the third Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the courtroom at City Hall, 19922 Alberta Street. Please feel free to participate in these meetings.

## Pharmaceuticals In Drinking Water

Pharmaceuticals In Drinking Water Flushing unused or expired medicines can be harmful to your drinking water. Learn more about disposing of unused medicines. <https://tdeconline.tn.gov/rxtakeback/>

## Source Water Assessment

The TDEC has prepared a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) report for the untreated water sources serving this water system. The SWAP report assesses the susceptibility of untreated water sources to potential contamination. To ensure safe drinking water, all public water systems treat and routinely test their water. Water sources have been rated as reasonably susceptible, moderately susceptible, or slightly susceptible based on geological factors and human activities in the vicinity of the water source. The Town of Oneida's sources rated as reasonably susceptible to potential contamination. The Huntsville Utility District source is rated as moderately susceptible to potential contamination. An explanation of Tennessee's SWAP, the source water assessment summaries, susceptibility scorings, and the overall TDEC report to the U.S. EPA can be viewed online at [tn.gov/environment/program-areas/wr-water-resources/water-quality/source-water-assessment.html](http://tn.gov/environment/program-areas/wr-water-resources/water-quality/source-water-assessment.html), or you may contact the water system to obtain copies of specific assessments.

## Test Results

Our water is monitored for many different kinds of substances on a very strict sampling schedule, and the water we deliver must meet specific health standards. Here, we only show those substances that were detected in our water (a complete list of all our analytical results is available upon request). Remember that detecting a substance does not mean the water is unsafe to drink; our goal is to keep all detects below their respective maximum allowed levels.

The state recommends monitoring for certain substances less than once per year because the concentrations of these substances do not change frequently. In these cases, the most recent sample data is included, along with the year in which the sample was taken.

We participated in the fifth stage of the U.S. EPA's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR5) program by performing additional tests on our drinking water. UCMR5 sampling benefits the environment and public health by providing the U.S. EPA with data on the occurrence of contaminants suspected to be in drinking water to determine if it needs to introduce new regulatory standards to improve drinking water quality. Unregulated contaminant monitoring data is available to the public, so please feel free to contact us if you are interested in obtaining that information. No UCMR5 contaminants were detected in our water source. If you would like more information on the U.S. EPA's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule, please call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

### REGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	MCL [MRDL]	MCLG [MRDLG]	Oneida Water & Sewer		Huntsville Utility District		VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
				AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH		
Barium (ppm)	2021	2	2	0.00517	NA	NA	NA	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Chlorine (ppm)	2025	[4]	[4]	1.54	0.98–2.14	1.59	0.90–2.20	No	Water additive used to control microbes
Combined Radium (pCi/L)	2025	5	0	1.03	NA	NA	NA	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	2025	4	4	0.573	0.451–0.673	0.53	0.47–0.58	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive that promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Haloacetic Acids [HAA5] (ppb)	2025	60	NA	25.55	9.40–31.20	45.00	26.00–45.00	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Coliform Bacteria (positive samples)	2025	TT	NA	ND	NA	ND	NA	No	Naturally present in the environment
Total Organic Carbon [TOC] (ppm)	2025	TT	NA	1.68	1.31–1.83	NA	NA	No	Naturally present in the environment
Total Trihalomethanes [TTHMs] (ppb)	2025	80	NA	32.45	14.90–36.90	28.52	6.8–52.00	No	By-product of drinking water disinfection

### Tap water samples were collected for lead and copper analyses from sample sites throughout the community

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	AL	MCLG	AMOUNT DETECTED (90TH %ILE)	RANGE LOW-HIGH	SITES ABOVE AL/TOTAL SITES	VIOLATION	TYPICAL SOURCE
Lead (ppb)	2023	15	0	ND	ND–9.36	0/30	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits

### UNREGULATED SUBSTANCES

SUBSTANCE (UNIT OF MEASURE)	YEAR SAMPLED	Oneida Water & Sewer		Huntsville Utility District		TYPICAL SOURCE
		AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	AMOUNT DETECTED	RANGE LOW-HIGH	
Sodium (ppm)	2025	5.50	NA	5.28	NA	Erosion of natural deposits; Used in water treatment
Turbidity <sup>1</sup> (NTU)	2025	0.06	0.04–0.06	0.09	0.03–0.09	Soil runoff

<sup>1</sup> 100% of our samples were below the turbidity limit. Turbidity is a measurement of cloudiness of water. We measure turbidity because it is a good indicator of the effectiveness of our filtration system.



## Count on Us

Delivering high-quality drinking water to our customers involves far more than just pushing water through pipes. Water treatment is a complex, time-consuming process. Because tap water is highly regulated by state and federal laws, water treatment plant and system operators must be licensed and are required to commit to long-term, on-the-job training before becoming fully qualified. Our licensed water professionals have a basic understanding of a wide range of subjects, including mathematics, biology, chemistry, and physics. Some of the tasks they complete on a regular basis include:

- Operating and maintaining equipment to purify and clarify water.
- Monitoring and inspecting machinery, meters, gauges, and operating conditions.
- Conducting tests and inspections on water and evaluating the results.
- Maintaining optimal water chemistry.
- Applying data to formulas that determine treatment requirements, flow levels, and concentration levels.
- Documenting and reporting test results and system operations to regulatory agencies.
- Serving our community through customer support, education, and outreach.

So the next time you turn on your faucet, think of the skilled professionals who stand behind each drop.

## Why We Test So Often

Drinking water is one of the most closely monitored resources in the United States. Water systems regularly test for bacteria, disinfectants, metals, organic chemicals, radioactive substances, and many other contaminants. Some tests are performed daily, while others are conducted weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually, depending on regulatory requirements and system size. Microbiological testing for bacteria, such as coliforms, ensures that disinfection is working properly. Turbidity monitoring confirms effective filtration. Chemical testing verifies that treatment processes remain optimized. All certified laboratories must meet strict quality assurance requirements to ensure accurate results. When results approach regulatory limits, corrective actions are taken immediately.

## About Our Monitoring Waivers

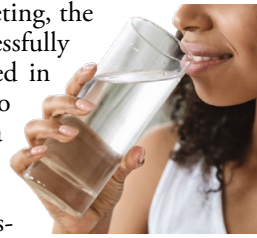
Our system operates under two monitoring waivers granted by the state, which reduce sampling frequency for parameters that have consistently demonstrated low or nondetected results:

Total Organic Carbon (TOC) Reduced Monitoring Waiver, issued August 21, 2023. This waiver allows us to monitor TOC quarterly instead of monthly, provided TOC in finished water remains below 2.0 parts per million (ppm).

Synthetic Organic Compounds (SOC) Reduced Monitoring Waiver, most recently renewed October 15, 2025. This waiver maintains our SOC monitoring schedule at once every nine years.

## Tap vs. Bottled

Thanks in part to aggressive marketing, the bottled water industry has successfully convinced us all that water purchased in bottles is a healthier alternative to tap water. However, according to a four-year study conducted by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), bottled water is not necessarily cleaner or safer than most tap water. In fact, about 40 percent of bottled water is actually just tap water, according to government estimates.



The FDA is responsible for regulating bottled water, but these rules allow for less rigorous testing and purity standards than those required by the U.S. EPA for community tap water. For instance, the high mineral content of some bottled waters makes them unsuitable for babies and young children. Further, the FDA completely exempts bottled water that's packaged and sold within the same state, which accounts for about 70 percent of all bottled water sold in the United States.

People spend 10,000 times more per gallon for bottled water than they typically do for tap water. If you get your recommended eight glasses a day from bottled water, you could spend up to \$1,400 annually. The same amount of tap water would cost about 49 cents. Even if you installed a filter device on your tap, your annual expenditure would be far less than what you'd pay for bottled water.

For a detailed discussion on the NRDC study results, visit [goo.gl/Jxb6xG](https://www.nrdc.org/stories/2015/06/24/bottled-water-is-not-necessarily-cleaner-or-safer-than-most-tap-water).

## Definitions

**90th %ile:** The levels reported for lead and copper represent the 90th percentile of the total number of sites tested. The 90th percentile is equal to or greater than 90% of our lead and copper detections.

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

**Herbicide:** Any chemical(s) used to control undesirable vegetation.

**MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level):** 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.

**MCLG (Maximum Contaminant Level Goal):** 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.

**MRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level):** 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.

**MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal):** 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.

**NA:** Not applicable.

**ND (Not detected):** Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.

**NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Units):** Measurement of the clarity, or turbidity, of water. Turbidity in excess of 5 NTU is just noticeable to the average person.

**pCi/L (picocuries per liter):** A measure of radioactivity.

**Pesticide:** Generally, any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest.

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

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

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