



# Brewer Water Department 2013 Water Quality Report

This is the annual water quality report of the Brewer Water Department serving the City of Brewer as well as customers in Eddington, Holden, and Orrington. This report is intended to provide our customers with important information about their drinking water. We know that you count on a safe and reliable supply of water every day and we are dedicated to providing the highest quality of service to you.



**Brewer Water Dept.**  
223 Green Point Rd.  
Brewer, ME 04412



**Office**  
(207)989-4214  
Fax (207)989-2883  
Plant (207)843-7182  
Fax (207)843-7189

**PWS#90220**

The Brewer City Council meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM in the Brewer City Hall Council Chambers. The Public is always Welcome.

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## Water Supply/System Information

### Source Water

Hatcase Pond, located in Dedham and Eddington, has been the primary water source for the City of Brewer, and parts of Eddington, Holden and Orrington, since the 1950's. From the beginning, the District and now the Department realized the importance of protecting this pristine water supply. Today, the Water Department owns over 300 acres of the 1,707 acres in the watershed, and has acquired conservation easements on an additional 1,091 acres. The Department maintains an active monitoring program of all land use activity in the watershed. Our goal is to maintain a high quality water supply for our current customers and for future generations. Protecting the Hatcase Pond watershed from contaminants is an important focus of the Brewer Water Department. We are one of only ten public water utilities in Maine that has been granted a waiver (December 1991) from filtration. This waiver, in addition to saving rate payers a multi-million dollar investment in filtration facilities, recognizes the excellent quality of our source of supply and our watershed protection activities.

We are currently under a three-year waiver from testing for synthetic organic contaminants, which include pesticides, herbicides, and semi-volatile organic compounds. The Department is also on reduced monitoring for bromate, a compound created by the ozonation of surface water, if the surface water has naturally occurring bromide. Fortunately, bromide is in very low concentrations in Hatcase Pond.

### Treatment

Treatment techniques used by the Department to ensure the safety of the water at your tap, include ozonation and chloramination. Ozone gas, a powerful disinfectant, is used to provide primary disinfection. Chloramines, a combination of chlorine and ammonia, are used to provide a disinfectant residual in the distribution system. Ozone levels at the plant and chloramine residuals in the distribution system are continuously monitored to ensure adequate disinfection has occurred, prior to delivery to you. Since surface waters in Maine are naturally acidic, sodium carbonate (soda ash) is added to raise the pH and alkalinity of the water to make it less corrosive to metal pipes. This not

only protects our distribution system from corrosion but also reduces the amount of lead and copper that can leach out of your home's plumbing system. The success of our corrosion control program is reflected by the reduced monitoring for lead and copper to every 3 years. Our final treatment technique is the addition of fluoride (hydrofluorosilicic acid) to promote improved dental health. In January 2011 the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the American Dental Association changed the recommendation for fluoride levels from a level of 1.2 ppm to 0.7 ppm.

### Distribution System

Our distribution system includes 24 miles of transmission mains and more than 47 miles of distribution mains. The Department serves about 9,000 people through 3,700 individual service connections. We also provide fire protection throughout our service area via 443 hydrants. In 2013, we produced 286 million gallons of water. The average daily usage was 783,800 gallons, with a maximum day usage of 1,105,000 gallons on January 30th.

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Brewer Water Department can be summarized as follows:

- To provide high quality drinking water to our customers.
- To provide continuous, uninterrupted service to our customers.
- To do so at the most reasonable cost possible.
- To hold the protection of Hatcase Pond, and it's watershed, above all other considerations.

## How Brewer Water Fulfilled our Mission in 2013

**Provide high quality drinking water**— Hatcase Pond provides some of the finest drinking water in Maine. We continue to monitor and protect this amazing resource through inspections and active management of the surrounding area. Our 3 plant operators continuously maintain and monitor our treatment systems to ensure we provide you with the highest quality drinking water possible.

**Provide uninterrupted service to our customers**— In 2013, we had 8 leaks requiring repairs. Service reductions were short and the mains were repaired quickly due partly to the type and location of the breaks but mostly due to our crew's ability to keep water service intact during repairs.

**Most reasonable cost possible**— Brewer Water has not had a rate increase in over eight years. In fact, the only rate change we've had during that period was a 7% reduction in rates, effective in December of 2008. One of our uppermost priorities continues to be rate stability for our customers.

**Protect Hatcase Pond**— At the end of 2013 the Brewer Water Department either owns or has conservation easements on all but approximately 300 acres within the watershed. The remaining 300 acres are owned by approximately 15 different families, with the majority of acreage located more than 1/2 mile from the pond. Discussions with these families regarding conservation easements, are on-going. Our crew continuously inspects the pond and surrounding area for potential hazards and takes care of them immediately if found.



## Water Quality

### WATER QUALITY

We ensure that your water is safe through regular monitoring and testing of water quality. These tests are conducted by our own state-certified water testing laboratory as well as the State of Maine Health and Environmental Testing Laboratory (HETL). This report includes a comprehensive summary of the laboratory test results for the constituents we regularly monitor in your water supply. Responsibility for maintaining your water quality resides with our staff of certified water treatment plant operators, licensed by the State of Maine Department of Human Services.

The Safe Drinking Water Act directs the state, along with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to establish and enforce minimum drinking water standards. These standards set limits on certain biological, radioactive, organic and inorganic substances sometimes found in drinking water. Two types of standards have been established. Primary drinking water standards set achievable levels of drinking water quality to protect your health. Secondary drinking water standards provide guidelines regarding the taste, odor, color, and other aesthetic aspects of drinking water which do not present a health risk.

## Source Water Assessment Information

In 2003, the Maine Drinking Water Program completed an evaluation of all public water supplies statewide as part of the Source Water Assessment Program. The evaluation considered geology and hydrology, land uses, water testing information, and the extent of land ownership or protection by local ordinance to determine how likely our drinking water source is to being contaminated in the future. Based on the largely undeveloped nature of the watershed (97% is forest growth), existing ownership and zoning, Water Departments monitoring and alliance with landowners, the overall susceptibility of the Hatcase Pond water supply is considered to be low. For more information you may contact the Drinking Water Program at 287-2070. You may also obtain a copy of the Source Water Assessment from our office.

**Detected Regulated Parameters**  
**Primary Drinking Water Standards: Levels established to prevent known health risks**

<u>Physical Parameters</u>	<u>MCLG</u>	<u>MCL</u>	<u>RESULTS</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Turbidity (NTU)	N/A	5	2.04	NTU - Nephelometric Turbidity Unit, defines the level of cloudiness of a water sample NTU - Turbidity is the measurement of cloudiness or suspended colloidal matter (silt). Excessive turbidity levels can cause problems with water disinfection. 2.04 NTU was the highest measurement of turbidity for the year, this measurement was taken in January of 2013.
Total Hardness (mg/L)	N/A	N/A	6.85	Sample taken 3/05/13
<b>Microbiological</b>				
Total Coliform	0	1 Pos	0 Pos	Naturally present in the environment. Samples taken monthly throughout the system
<b>Inorganic Chemicals</b>				
Arsenic (ug/L)	10	10	0.62	Sample taken 3/05/13
Barium (mg/L)	2	2	0.0017	Sample taken on 3/05/13. Erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride (mg/L)	4	4	0.8	Sample taken on 3/05/13. Water additive which promotes strong teeth.
Nitrite-Nitrogen (mg/L)	1	1	<0.05	Sample taken on 3/05/13. Erosion of natural deposits.
Bromate (ug/L)	0	10	ND	Samples taken Quarterly . Byproduct of Ozonation.
Lead (ug/L) (90th percentile)	0	AL=15 ug/L	13 ug/L	June 2011 sample - Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
Copper (mg/L) (90th percentile)	1.3	AL=1.3mg/L	0.20 mg/L	June 2011 sample - Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
<b>Disinfectants and Disinfection Byproducts</b>				
Trihalomethanes (TTHM) (ug/L)	0	80 ug/L	0.93 ug/L	By product of drinking water chlorination. (RAA)
Haloacetic Acid (HAA5) (ug/L)	0	60 ug/L	8.15 ug/L	By product of drinking water chlorination. (RAA)
mg/L (milligrams per liter) or ppm (parts per million) ug/L (micrograms per liter) or ppb (parts per billion) RAA = Running Annual Average				

## Definitions

**Maximum contaminant level goal (MCLG):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLG's allow for a margin of safety,

**Maximum contaminant level (MCL):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the MCLG's as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

**Variance or exemption:** State or U.S. EPA permission not to meet an MCL or treatment technique under certain conditions.

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

**AL- Action Level:** The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers a treatment or other requirement which a water system must follow.

**RAA:** Running Annual Average of all quarterly samples taken.

### **HEALTH INFORMATION**

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 (1-800-426-4791).

However, some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immune-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, people who have undergone organ transplants, people with AIDS/HIV 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.

## EPA mandatory language for all systems

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Brewer Water Department are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Although most homes and buildings have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some (homes in this community, or taps in their building) have lead levels above the EPA action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb), or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water (mg/l). Under Federal law we were required to have a program in place to minimize lead in your drinking water by December 31, 1997. This program includes corrosion control treatment, source water treatment, and public education. We are also required to replace each lead service line that we control if the line contributes lead concentrations of more than 15 ppb after we have completed the comprehensive treatment program. If you have any questions about how we are carrying out the requirements of the lead regulation, please contact the above water system at either 843-7182 or 989-4214. This material explains the simple steps you can take to protect you and your family by reducing your exposure to lead in drinking water.

**LEAD HEALTH EFFECTS**

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 Brewer Water Department 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 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 (1-800-426-4791) or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead/>

**STEPS YOU CAN TAKE IN THE HOME OR WORK FACILITY TO REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN DRINKING WATER**

i. Despite our best efforts mentioned earlier to control water corrosivity and remove lead from the water supply, lead levels in some taps could be high.

ii. If a water test indicates that the drinking water drawn from a tap in your home contains lead above 15 ppb, or 0.015 mg/L, then you should take the following precautions:

(A) Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in a faucet has gone unused for more than six hours. The longer water resides in the plumbing the more lead it may contain. Before drinking or cooking, flush the tap by running the cold water faucet until the water gets noticeable colder, usually about 30 seconds to two minutes. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of the plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your health. It usually uses less than one or two gallons of water and costs very little. If you wish to conserve water, fill a couple of bottles for drinking water after flushing the tap, and whenever

possible use the first flush water to wash the dishes or water the plants. If you live in a high-rise building, letting the water flow before using it may not lessen your risk from lead. This is because high rise plumbing systems have more, and sometimes larger, pipes than smaller buildings. Ask your landlord for help in locating the source of the lead and for advice on reducing the lead level.

(B) Use cold water for cooking and preparing baby formula. Lead dissolves more easily in hot water. Boiling the water does not remove the lead.

(C) Remove loose lead solder and debris from the plumbing materials by removing the faucet strainers from all taps and run the water from 3 to 5 minutes. Thereafter, periodically remove the strainers and flush out any debris that has accumulated over time.

(D) If your copper pipes are joined with lead solder (appears dull gray and when scratched with a key becomes shiny), you should contact a licensed plumber.

(E) Determine whether or not the service line that connects your home, apartment or building to the water main is made of lead. To do this, either hire a licensed plumber to inspect the line or contact the plumbing contractor who installed the line. You can identify the plumbing contractor by checking the building permits recorded in your city or town. A licensed plumber can at the same time check to see if the plumbing in your home or building contains lead solder, lead pipes, or pipe fittings that contain lead. If the service line connecting your dwelling or building to the water supply contributes more than 15 ppb to drinking water, after a comprehensive treatment program is in place, then replacement of that line is required with appropriate follow-up tap water sampling. Acceptable replacement alternatives include copper, steel, iron, and plastic pipe.

(F) Have an electrician check your wiring. If grounding wires from the electrical system are attached to your pipes, corrosion may be greater. Check with a licensed electrician or your local electrical code to determine if your wiring can be grounded elsewhere. DO NOT attempt to change the wiring yourself because improper grounding can cause electrical shock and fire hazards.

iii. The steps described above will reduce the lead concentrations in your drinking water. However, if a water test indicates that the drinking water coming from your tap contains lead concentrations in excess of 15 ppb after flushing, or after we have completed our actions to minimize lead levels, then you may want to take the following additional measures:

(A) Purchase or lease a transaction device. Home treatment devices are limited in that each unit treats only the water that flows from the faucet to which it is connected, and all of the devices require periodic maintenance and replacement. Devices such as reverse osmosis systems or distillers can effectively remove lead from your drinking water. Some activated carbon filters may reduce lead levels at the tap, however all lead reduction claims should be investigated. Be sure to check the actual performance of a specific home treatment device before and after installing the unit.

(B) Purchase bottled water for drinking and cooking.

iv. You can consult a variety of sources for additional information:

(A) Your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health affects of lead.

(B) The Division of Health Engineering within the Maine Department of Human Services at (207) 287-2070 can provide you with information about your community's water supply, and a list of local laboratories that have been certified by the Health Department for testing water quality.

(C) Your local town office can provide you with information about building permit records that should contain the names of plumbing contractors that plumbed your home.

The following is intended to provide you with additional information on:

**LEAD IN DRINKING WATER**

i. Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, can significantly increase a person's total lead

exposure, particularly the exposure of infants who drink baby formulas and concentrated juices that are mixed with water. The EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20 percent or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

ii. Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass and chrome plated brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of lead that connect your house to the water main (service lines). In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead, and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes and other plumbing materials to 8.0%.

**TESTING NOTIFICATION**

Brewer Water Department has been selected to participate in the Assessment Monitoring for List 1 contaminants under the UCMR3.

Under UCMR3 randomly selected systems serving less than 10,001 persons are chosen to monitor for List 1 unregulated contaminants.

What does this mean for our system? Basically we have been selected to test for unregulated contaminants the EPA is currently monitoring and reviewing to evaluate their presence and levels in water systems nation wide. Many of the contaminants are man made compounds which have been found in the environment. This emphasizes the importance of proper disposal and use of paints, varnishes, medications, petroleum products, pesticides, etc. The EPA will send the Brewer Water Department sample kits and we will return these samples to a lab of their choice for testing. This will happen for a 12 month period between 2013 and 2015.

When completed, the test results will be given to the Brewer Water Department and they will be made available to our customers.