



TULE BASIN

MANAGEMENT ZONE

**PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS & NITRATE
IMPACTED DRINKING WATER**

MODULE 5

Is My Drinking Water from a Public Water System Safe To Drink?

- Your tap water probably comes from a Public Water System (PWS) if you live within city limits and you or your landlord pay a water bill
 - To find the name of your PWS
 - look on the bill or ask landlord
- PWS are legally required to **test** their water for contaminants and **treat** drinking water to meet required MCL standards
- PWS must notify users of MCL exceedances
 - The notice is mailed to the homeowner
 - If you rent, the notice may go to your landlord
- PWS publish water quality results annually in a consumer confidence report
 - To find this, search online for
“[name of your PWS] consumer confidence report”

How to Read a Consumer Confidence Report

Inorganic	Year Tested	Unit	MCL	PHG (MCLG)	In Compliance	Groundwater	
						Range	Average
Nitrate as N ⁴	2017–2019	ppm	10	10 (10)	Yes	0.40–6.5	2.5

Type and Name of Chemical	Concentration Unit	Public Health Goal	Smallest and largest amount of chemical measured that year
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Maximum Contaminant Level	Is the water safe to drink?	Average concentration measured
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Nitrate in Groundwater

- The safe drinking water level for Nitrate is less than 10 mg/L (measure of concentration)
- Some local wells have Nitrate concentrations above 10 mg/L



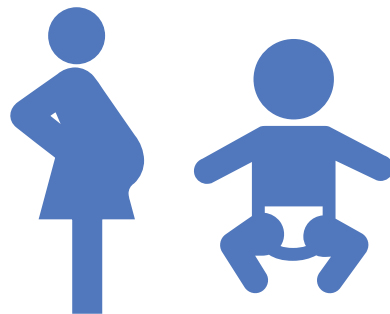
Nitrate in Groundwater

- Water that is above 10 mg/L of Nitrate should not be used for drinking, making formula, or cooking
- Water high in Nitrate can be safely used to bathe, clean, do laundry, wash dishes and grow crops



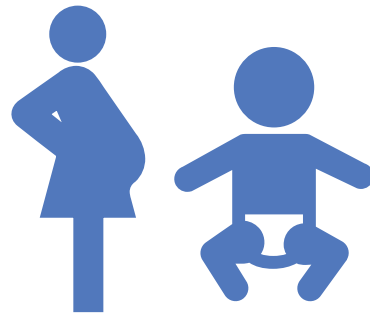
Possible Health Impacts of Nitrate

- Nitrate interferes with the blood's ability to carry oxygen and can cause nitrate poisoning called “methemoglobinemia” or “blue baby syndrome”
- Symptoms can develop quickly in infants and include shortness of breath and blueness of the skin and if untreated may be fatal.



Possible Health Impacts of Nitrate

- Medical attention should be sought immediately if these symptoms occur.
- **Children under 6 months old and pregnant women are the most at risk**

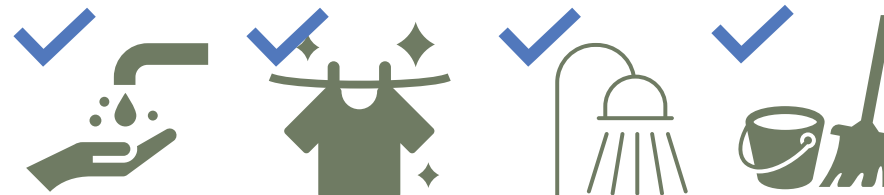
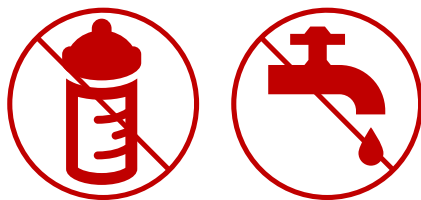


My Water is High in Nitrate, What Now?

- **Do not** drink or cook with your water - unsafe
- **Do not** use water to make baby formula - unsafe
- **Do not** boil your water - does not remove Nitrate
- **Do not** use store bought pitcher filters – does not remove Nitrate

You Can Safely:

- Bathe, do laundry, wash hands, clean, and wash dishes with water high in Nitrate



Short-Term Drinking Water Solutions for Nitrate

- Use bottled water
- Depending on lab results, install a reverse osmosis system
- Visit a **free** drinking water kiosk to fill your own water bottle with safe drinking water

