

Media Release

Portland Water Bureau

For Immediate Release
Sept. 27, 2024

For more information, contact Public Information at 503-823-8064.

Bull Run Drinking Water Supply Not Treated for *Cryptosporidium*

Since 2017, the Portland Water Bureau has detected low levels of *Cryptosporidium* from routine monitoring from the Bull Run watershed, Portland's primary source of drinking water. *Cryptosporidium*, a potentially disease-causing microorganism, has not been detected in Portland's drinking water since May 8, 2024. The Portland Water Bureau does not currently treat for *Cryptosporidium* but is required to do so under drinking water regulations.

Over the next three years, the Portland Water Bureau will be constructing a new treatment plant to remove *Cryptosporidium* from Bull Run drinking water. Until the filtration plant is online, the Portland Water Bureau will continue monitoring the Bull Run drinking water source and a range of actions to maintain public health protections. This includes informing the public of both the potential risks of *Cryptosporidium* in drinking water and Portland's plan for filtration by sharing the following information with the public on a quarterly basis.

Portland is working to install filtration by September 30, 2027 under a compliance schedule with the Oregon Health Authority. In the meantime, Portland Water Bureau is implementing interim measures such as watershed protection and additional monitoring to protect public health. Consultation with public health officials has concluded that at this time, customers do not need to take any additional precautions.

Exposure to *Cryptosporidium* can cause cryptosporidiosis, a serious illness. Symptoms can include diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and stomach pain. People with healthy immune systems recover without medical treatment. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people with severely weakened immune systems are at risk for more serious disease. Symptoms may be more severe and could lead to serious life-threatening illness. Examples of people with weakened immune systems include those with AIDS, those with inherited diseases that affect the immune system, and cancer and transplant patients who are taking certain immunosuppressive drugs.

The Environmental Protection Agency advises that customers who are immunocompromised and receive their drinking water from the Bull Run Watershed consult with their health care professional about the safety of drinking the tap water. The Portland Water Bureau and Burlington, City of Gresham, City of Sandy, City of Tualatin, Green Valley, GNR, Hideaway Hills,

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Lake Grove, Lorna Domestic Water, Lusted, Palatine Hill, Pleasant Home, Raleigh, Rockwood, Skyview Acres, Tualatin Valley, Two Rivers, Valley View and West Slope Water Districts receive all or part of their drinking water supply from the Bull Run. To learn if your drinking water comes from Bull Run, please contact your local water provider.

The public and the media are encouraged to view all sampling results posted to the City's website at portland.gov/water/cryptoresults. The bureau will notify the media and public immediately should further test results indicate a risk to public health and if precautions are necessary.

Customers with questions regarding water quality can call the Water Quality Line at 503-823-7525.

About the Portland Water Bureau

The Portland Water Bureau serves water to almost a million people in the Portland area. Portland's water system includes two great water sources, 54 tanks and reservoirs, and 2,250 miles of pipes. With 600 employees working on everything from water treatment to customer service, the Water Bureau is committed to serving excellent water every minute of every day.