

## QUALITY WATER MATTERS: KEEPING OUR CUSTOMERS INFORMED ABOUT 1,4-DIOXANE



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**First, we want our customers to be assured Ann Arbor's drinking water remains safe to drink and no action on their part is necessary.** We also want you to know that we remain dedicated to monitoring for emerging contaminants, such as 1,4-dioxane, to help stay ahead of any potential threats to the safety of our drinking water. In February 2019, we detected 1,4-dioxane in the city's surface water supply (Huron River) and in the finished drinking water. Even though the amount of 1,4-dioxane didn't even come close to any Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) risk levels, we strongly believed it was important to let our customers know of this first time detection.

In March 2019, the city tested for 1,4-dioxane using an independent water-quality lab to determine if any 1,4-dioxane was detectable. No 1,4-dioxane was detected in samples collected in March from the Huron River at Barton Pond or in the city's drinking water. The number one focus of the city's drinking water staff is to protect public health; and we take this responsibility very seriously. Our water quality team will continue to send water samples to an independent lab each month to test for 1,4-dioxane. Analytical testing results will be promptly posted on the city's website at [www.A2gov.org/A2H2O](http://www.A2gov.org/A2H2O).

The City's Water Treatment team's No. 1 focus is quality drinking water and with that goal in mind they collect more than 58,000 water samples and conduct more than 177,000 tests each year. With advances in testing techniques, labs are able to detect very low levels of contaminants in water samples. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk.

Please read the 1,4-dioxane frequently asked questions on the back of this fact sheet. To learn more about your drinking water and the City of Ann Arbor's efforts to protect its safety, contact us via email ([water@a2gov.org](mailto:water@a2gov.org)), telephone (734.794.6426) or visit our website ([www.A2gov.org/A2H2O](http://www.A2gov.org/A2H2O)). Please know that however you choose to engage with us, your questions are always welcome and any concerns you have will be taken seriously.

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**Frequently Asked Questions**

**How did 1,4-dioxane enter our waterways?** Gelman Sciences (now Pall Corp., a division of Danaher Corp.) polluted groundwater in parts of Washtenaw County, including parts of the city as well as Ann Arbor and Scio Townships, when it improperly disposed of industrial solvents containing 1,4-dioxane between 1966 and 1986. That pollution has since spread through the aquifer. The city is engaged with neighboring communities and the state to, among other things, push Gelman to delineate, contain and clean up its pollution. To that end, the city has, for example, intervened in litigation in Washtenaw County Circuit Court brought by the state against Gelman.

**What is the source of the 1,4-dioxane detected in the Huron River?**

We are working with other governmental entities and stakeholders to confirm any sources and prevent it from entering local waterways. At this time, we cannot ascertain if the detection was a laboratory anomaly or due to some other source.

**How often does the city test the raw and finished water for the emerging contaminant known as 1,4-dioxane?** The city sends water samples to an independent lab monthly to test for the contaminant.

**What is the source of the 1,4-dioxane detected in the Huron River?** We are working with other governmental entities and stakeholders to confirm any sources and prevent it from entering the local waterways.

**Can the City's water treatment plant remove 1,4-dioxane?** The city's water treatment plant can remove some 1,4-dioxane. Pilot testing in 2006 indicated it could remove up to 70 percent of the contaminant.

**What action is the City taking to address the recent detection of 1,4-dioxane in the Huron River and drinking water?** The city will continue to sample monthly and monitor the source water and drinking water. As part of future capital improvements to the water treatment plant, additional treatment for 1,4-dioxane will be considered and incorporated if necessary.

**If the level of 1,4-dioxane indicated is not a health concern, will you inform the residents should the levels go higher?** Yes, which is why we issued this update and are dedicated to keeping our customers informed about the safety of their drinking water. We will continue to monitor 1,4-dioxane, and our customers can review any test results on our website at [www.a2gov.org/A2H2O](http://www.a2gov.org/A2H2O).

**What are the health criteria for 1,4-dioxane in drinking water?**

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) risk assessments indicate that the drinking water concentration above which represents a 1 in 1,000,000 risk of cancer based on a lifetime of consumption, is 0.35 parts per billion. Current detectable levels in the city's drinking water is not considered to be a health risk.

**Is 1,4-dioxane regulated in drinking water?** Currently the contaminant is not regulated in drinking water at the federal level or in Michigan. Several states have implemented regulations for this chemical at levels between 0.3 parts per billion and 77 parts per billion. The city's drinking water levels remain 10 times lower than the most stringent regulation that exists in the United States.

**What are the health risks associated with exposure to 1,4-dioxane?**

According to the EPA, 1,4-dioxane is a likely carcinogen. For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, you can call the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1.800.426.4791 or can download this EPA fact sheet:

[https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-03/documents/ffrro\\_factsheet\\_contaminant\\_14-dioxane\\_january2014\\_final.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-03/documents/ffrro_factsheet_contaminant_14-dioxane_january2014_final.pdf)