

Water Quality



Factors Affecting Water Quality:

- **Naturally Occurring Chemicals and Minerals**

Examples include arsenic, nitrate, copper, radon, uranium, and lead.

- **Agricultural Operations**

Agricultural runoff, caused by fertilizers, pesticides, livestock, and concentrated animal feeding operations, can contaminate waterways.

- **Sewer System Overflow**

Untreated sewage from urban runoff and industrial waste and other stormwater pollutants enter into nearby water sources.

- **Industrial Processes**

Hazardous sources including cleaning fluids, paints, and pesticides.

- **Storm Water**

Storm water pollution happens when materials and chemicals are collected into the storm drain and into waterways

- **Wildlife**

- **Distribution System Issues**

Particles can accumulate in pipes and tanks, leading to the deterioration of water pipes over time.

Water quality is the measure of the condition of the water by examining the presence of certain contaminants (e.g., physical, chemical, biological, radiological).

Examining bodies of water will aid with determining where the water can be used, such as in the protection and reproduction of fish, shellfish, and wildlife, recreational, public drinking water supply, as well as agricultural and industrial purposes.

Measuring Water Quality

A series of assessments are conducted to determine an area's water quality. Assessments used to measure water quality include:

- Temperature
- Acidity (pH)
- Dissolved solids
- Turbidity (cloudiness of the water)
- Dissolved oxygen
- Hardness and suspended sediments of the water
- Monitoring for contaminants
- Physical characteristics of the water (water level, water absence/presence, and discharge)

Public water systems that fail to meet water quality standards must alert the public of potential health risks. Information about water quality can also be found through the annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). The report shares information on the local regions' drinking water quality.

For more information and data go to www.SDHealthStatistics.com
Community Health Statistics Unit:
619-692-6667

Facts

- 9 out of 10 people receive their water supply from one of the 148,000 public water systems in the United States.
- In 2021, Legionella pneumophila was the leading cause of waterborne illness outbreaks from drinking water contamination in the United States.

Protection of Our Waterways

- **Conserving Water**

To reduce water shortages and the need to treat contaminated water, turn off the tap when running water is not actively being used.

- **Preventing Waste**

Dispose of waste properly. Litter can travel long distances in water and may cause harmful conditions for human health and aquatic life.

- **Preventing Runoff**

Avoid overusing pesticides, fertilizers, and other materials that could lead to harmful runoff, especially during expected rainfall.



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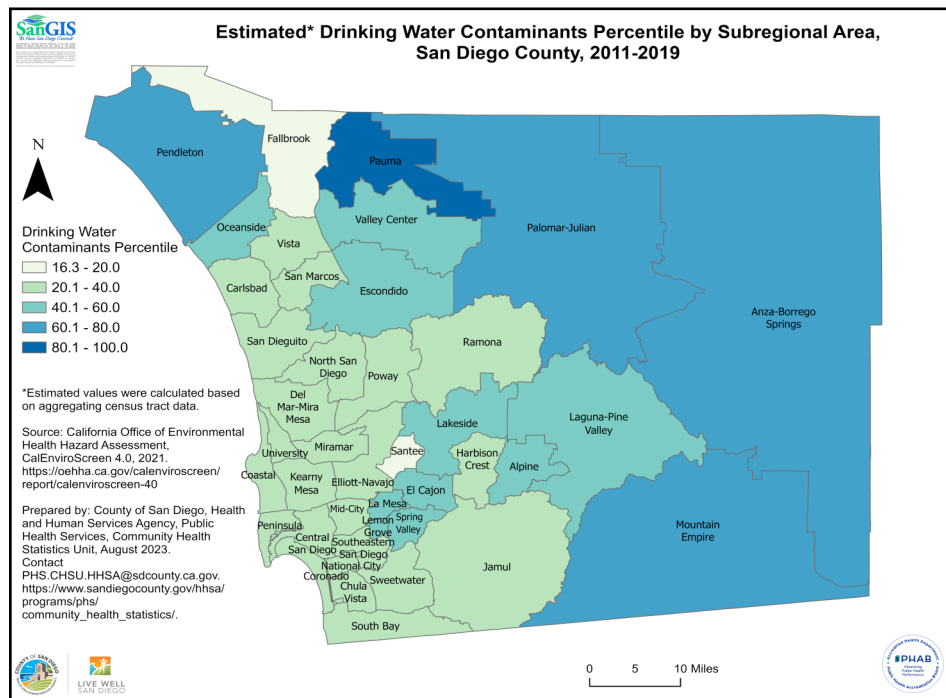


Subregional Areas with the Highest Estimated* Average Drinking Water Contaminants Percentile, San Diego County, 2011-2019

- 1. Pauma**
(North Inland)
 - Percentile: 94.83
- 2. Mountain Empire**
(East)
 - Percentile: 78.58
- 3. Anza—Borrego Springs**
(North Inland)
 - Percentile: 62.25
- 4. Palomar—Julian**
(North Inland)
 - Percentile: 61.83
- 5. Pendleton**
(North Coastal)
 - Percentile: 60.06
- 6. Lakeside**
(East)
 - Percentile: 59.30
- 7. Oceanside**
(North Coastal)
 - Percentile: 57.09
- 8. Laguna—Pine Valley**
(East)
 - Percentile: 51.49
- 9. Lemon Grove**
(East)
 - Percentile: 46.39
- 10. La Mesa**
(East)
 - Percentile: 45.25

San Diego County Water Quality Data

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There has been much progression in keeping water safe and clean throughout San Diego county. Despite efforts to maintain water quality, numerous challenges still threaten it. Long-term exposure to drinking water contaminants, even at low levels, can have an impact on human health.

The average drinking water contaminants in **Pauma SRA** (North Inland Region) was higher than **94.83%** of the census tracts in California between 2011 and 2019.

Between 2011 and 2019, **North Inland and East Regions** were impacted with the highest percentile for average drinking water contaminants in San Diego County.

*Estimated values were calculated based on aggregating census tract data.

