



# COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION 2017 TINIAN WATER QUALITY REPORT

July 1, 2018

*Call Your CNMI Water Regulators and Operators*

*BECQ Safe Drinking Water Branch Manager, Joe Kaipat • (670) 664-8500*

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**To Report a Leak or Water Theft,  
Call the 24-Hour CUC Call Center at  
(670) 664-4282**

Repair Crew Leader Glenn Dikito oversees pumping of water out of a trench opened to repair a leak.

# 2017 CUC TINIAN WATER QUALITY REPORT

This report is designed to inform you about the water CUC delivers to you, our customer. Our goal is to provide you and your family a safe and dependable supply of drinking water. Today, 100% of Tinian water customers enjoy 24-hour water service. Our CUC water employees continue to strive to deliver a quality product to all of our customers and to protect the CNMI's water resources.

To ensure the safety of your water, CUC routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) laws, rules, and regulations.

Each year, trained laboratory and water treatment specialists conduct or supervise more than 1,000 tests on Tinian water samples. Water quality samples are collected throughout the CUC Tinian water systems and tested regularly. Samples include untreated and treated water taken from our facilities, sample sites throughout the service areas, and at customers' homes.

Except where indicated otherwise, this water quality report is based on the results of CUC's monitoring for the period of January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017. Any results reported before January 1, 2017, and presented here, are from the most recent monitoring period.

## *A Message from the CUC Executive Management Team*


The CUC is pleased to provide this Water Quality Report to our customers. CUC continues to improve its operations, response time, efficiency and strategic planning. Capital reinvestment has been CUC's number one effort for the past six years. These have included four water storage tank replacements (between 250,000 and 1 million gallons), eight miles of water mains replaced, targeted upgrades to many of the well facilities, replacement of one mile of sewer mains, rehabilitation of eight sewer pumping stations and a comprehensive replacement of water meters for all residential, commercial and government accounts.

On Tinian, CUC is working with the local Tinian municipal delegation to develop a strategy to provide sewer treatment and collection to the West San Jose area that is fully built and currently relies on septic systems for handling wastewater. Nitrate levels are a concern and planning efforts are expected to provide the funding to install the sewer infrastructure to this location.

CUC management continues to focus on reducing non-revenue water loss on all three islands with plans to achieve 24-hour water island-wide on Saipan by the end of 2018. The challenge is fixing transmission mains as they fail with the increased pressures of a fully pressurized system. CUC is adjusting and moving deliberately to fix years of problems that have hurt water system delivery efforts to all customers. As transmission and distribution mains are replaced and water loss recedes, more effort will be made to plan for a feasibility study for alternative water supplies that includes desalination as one option. CUC is working to have the infrastructure systems in place when the current pending demand comes on line in 2019 and 2020. CUC's best long-term strategy to meet increased demand is to be cost competitive and minimize the impact on rates by considering the possibility that developers pay for development, not existing ratepayers.

CUC management encourages customers to read and learn more about the water utility, how it operates and to understand the water quality guidelines that CUC needs to meet. We continue to encourage everyone to report illegal connections, report leaks, and minimize consumption to use only what you need. Only CUC and fire personnel are authorized to use fire hydrants. Please report any problems to the **CUC Call Center at (670) 664-4282**. If you have any comments or questions about this report, please don't hesitate to call the Call Center, visit our [website](#) or check out our [Facebook](#) page.

*Gary P. Camacho, Executive Director  
William Gilmore, Deputy Executive Director*



**Service Installation Crew Leader Victor Jude (VJ) Concepcion prepares to tap into a main water line to install a water connection to a customer.**

## The Sources of CUC Tinian Water

The primary source of water for the island of Tinian is one Maui-type well. To control bacterial contamination in our water, CUC water operators add trace amounts of chlorine to the water before it is distributed into the pipelines to you, our customer.



House of Taga, Tinian

© Junji Takasago

Photo Courtesy of MVA

## How Drinking Water Becomes Contaminated

The sources of drinking water both tap water and bottled water, include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals, and in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

- ▶ Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- ▶ Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban storm-water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- ▶ Pesticides and herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm-water runoff, and residential uses.

- ▶ Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm-water runoff, and septic systems.
- ▶ Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that your tap water is safe to drink, the US EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

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 **EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline** at (800) 426-4791 or on the internet at [www.epa.gov/safewater/](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/).

## For People with Sensitive Immune Systems

**Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population.**

Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplant, people with HIV/AIDS 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 health care providers. The US EPA and the Centers for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available at the **EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline** at (800) 426-4791 or via the internet at [www.epa.gov/safewater/](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/).

## Information About Nitrates

Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant, you should ask for advice from your health care provider. CUC tests the water in Tinian at least once per year. The amount of nitrates in all CUC water is below the health effect level.

For more information about your water quality, please call our  
Water Laboratory at (670) 322-5140.

## Bacterial Contaminants

**Total Coliforms** are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. While not disease-causing organisms themselves, total coliforms are often found in association with other microbes that are capable of causing disease. Coliform bacteria are more persistent than many disease-causing organisms; therefore, their absence from water is a good indication that the water is free from microbial contaminants and safe for human consumption.

To control the presence of microbial contaminants in our water systems, the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation operates one chlorine treatment station on Tinian. Bacteria may occur in the CUC water when the treatment equipment fails, or when leaks occur in the CUC pipelines allowing ground contaminants to enter the pipes. When problems were detected in 2017, the CUC water operators repaired leaks, flushed the water lines or when needed, added extra chlorine to the reservoirs and pumping stations, and therefore, the public did not have to use alternate water.

### Level 1 Assessment Conducted December 20, 2017

In December 2017, two samples contained total coliform that required us to conduct a Level 1 assessment. A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found our water system. The Level 1 assessment was completed and the problems that contributed to the total coliform samples have been corrected.

## Information About Lead

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 Commonwealth Utilities Corporation 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 two minutes before using the 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** at **(800) 426-4791** or at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

EPA requires testing for lead and copper at customers' taps that are most likely to contain lead and copper.

**We thank our customers for their help in collecting these samples!**

**None of the sites tested exceeded the action level for lead or copper.**

## Secondary Water Constituents

### ***NOT ASSOCIATED WITH ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS***

Many constituents, such as calcium or chlorides, which are often found in drinking water, can cause taste, color, and odor problems. The taste and odor constituents are called secondary constituents and are not regulated by the US EPA or the CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ). **These constituents are not causes for health concern.** While secondary constituents are not required to be reported in this document, they may greatly affect the appearance and taste of your water.

Hardness is a measure of the amount of calcium and magnesium compounds in the water. Chlorides measure the amount of salts in the water. The amount of chlorides in the CUC Tinian water is within the EPA recommended level.



# Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

## SUMMARY OF PRIMARY DRINKING WATER QUALITY RESULTS FOR 2017



### TINIAN

| Microbiological Contaminant   | TT             | TT Goal           | Year Tested | Number of Positive Samples in Month |                 | Violation? | Major Source of Contaminant   |
|---|----------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|---|
| Coliform bacteria   | No more than 1 | Zero              | December-17 | 2                                   |                 | NO         | Naturally present in the environment; Level 1 Assessment triggered. See section "Bacterial Contaminant" |
| Disinfection Residual   | MRDL           | MRDLG             | Year Tested | Highest Running Annual Average      | Range           | Violation? | Major Source of Contaminant   |
| Chlorine (ppm)  | 4              | 4                 | 2017        | 0.7                                 | 0.2 - 1.6       | NO         | Disinfection additive used to control microbes  |
| Disinfection By-Products  | MCL            | MCLG              | Year Tested | Highest Running Annual Average      | Range           | Violation? | Major Source of Contaminant   |
| Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)<br>Locational Running Annual Average (ppb)      | 60             | NA                | 2017        | 3.3                                 | 3.3             | NO         | By-product of drinking water disinfection   |
| Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)<br>Locational Running Annual Average (ppb) | 80             | NA                | 2017        | 14                                  | 14              | NO         | By-product of drinking water disinfection   |
| Inorganic and Radiological Contaminants                                 | MCL            | MCLG              | Year Tested | Highest Result                      | Range           | Violation? | Major Source of Contaminant   |
| <b>Inorganics</b>   |                |                   |             |                                     |                 |            |   |
| Barium (ppb)  | 2,000          | 2,000             | 2016        | 3.1                                 | 3.1             | NO         | Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits              |
| Chromium, Total (ppb)   | 100            | 100               | 2016        | 1.6                                 | 1.6             | NO         | Discharge from steel and pulp mills; erosion of natural deposits  |
| Fluoride (ppb)  | 4,000          | 4,000             | 2016        | 110                                 | 110             | NO         | Erosion of natural deposits   |
| Nitrates + Nitrites as Nitrogen (ppm)                                   | 10             | 10                | 2017        | 4                                   | 4               | NO         | Runoff from fertilizer; leaking septic tanks; sewage; erosion from natural deposits                     |
| Sodium (ppm)  | NE             | NE                | 2016        | 94                                  | 94              | NA         | Erosion from natural deposits; sea water  |
| <b>Radiological</b>   |                |                   |             |                                     |                 |            |   |
| Combined Radium (pCi/L)   | 5              | Zero              | 2016        | 1.1                                 | 1.1             | NO         | Erosion of natural deposits   |
| Gross alpha particle (pCi/L)  | 15             | Zero              | 2016        | 4.3                                 | 4.3             | NO         | Erosion of natural deposits   |
| Lead and Copper at Customer Taps  | Action Level   | Action Level Goal | Year Tested | Sites Exceeding AL/ Number of Sites | 90th Percentile | Violation? | Major Source of Contaminant   |
| Lead (ppb)  | 15             | Zero              | 2016        | 0 / 20                              | 1.6             | NO         | Corrosion of household plumbing systems and erosion of natural deposits                                 |
| Copper (ppb)  | 1,300          | 1,300             | 2016        | 0 / 20                              | 34              | NO         |   |

### SUMMARY OF SECONDARY DRINKING WATER QUALITY RESULTS FOR 2017

| Compound                                     | Secondary Standard | Year Tested | Average Result | Range         | Violation? | What This Compound Measures  |
|--|--------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|------------|--|
| Chloride (ppm)                               | 250                | 2017        | 184            | 184           | NA         | Measure of several naturally occurring salts in water  |
| Hardness, Total as Calcium & Magnesium (ppm) | NA                 | 2017        | 304            | 304           | NA         | Hardness is the sum of the many forms of naturally occurring calcium and magnesium compounds |
| pH   | 6.5 to 8.5         | 2017        | 7.3            | 6.9 - 7.8     | NA         | Measure of acidity or alkalinity of water  |
| Specific Conductance (µS/cm)                 | NA                 | 2017        | 1128           | 1,089 - 1,167 | NA         | Measures how well water conducts electricity depending on amount of dissolved ions           |
| Total Dissolved Solids (ppm)                 | 500                | 2017        | 583            | 583           | NA         | Measure of naturally occurring salts and minerals dissolved in water                         |

NA: Not Applicable    NE: None Established

## MEASUREMENTS

### Contaminants are measured in:

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>ppm:</b>                         | Parts Per Million or milligrams per Liter (mg/L)  |
| <b>ppb:</b>                         | Parts Per Billion or micrograms per Liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ )                               |
| <b>pCi/L:</b>                       | Pico Curie Per Liter - a measurement of radioactivity in water                              |
| <b><math>\mu\text{S/cm}</math>:</b> | Micro Siemens Per Centimeter - a measurement of a solution's ability to conduct electricity |

## HOW MUCH IS ONE PART PER MILLION?

### ONE PART PER MILLION IS THE SAME AS:

- 1 second in 12 days
- 1 penny in \$10,000
- 7 drops of water in a bathtub



## HOW MUCH IS ONE PART PER BILLION?



### ONE PART PER BILLION IS THE SAME AS:

- 1 second in 32 years
- 1 penny in \$10 Million
- 1 drop of water in a swimming pool

## DEFINITIONS

### **MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level**

The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

### **MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level Goal**

The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risks to your health. The MCLG amount allows for a margin of safety.

### **MRDL: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level**

The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

### **MRDLG: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal**

The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contamination.

### **TT: Treatment Technique**

A required process or method intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

### **AL: Action Level**

The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that the utility must follow.

### **Level 1 Assessment:**

A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found our water system.

## PAY YOUR CUC BILL ONLINE OR BY PHONE

Save time and money by paying your CUC bill online or by phone! You can pay with your Visa or MasterCard debit or credit card.

Register your account for online payments at [www.cucgov.org](http://www.cucgov.org)  
For payment by phone, please call  
(855) 729-2282.

## DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION? Call CUC at (670) 664-4282

For information about your water quality or to find out about opportunities to participate in public meetings, please contact our 24-hour Call Center at (670) 664-4282.

Visit CUC online at  
[www.cucgov.org](http://www.cucgov.org) or  
email us at [cucadmin@cucgov.org](mailto:cucadmin@cucgov.org)



Leak Detection Specialist Chris Deleon Guererro troubleshoots and then rebuilds a water meter to reduce non-revenue water.

## *Water Hours to Repair Lines*

Unscheduled service interruptions occur when operators need to make adjustments or repairs to the water system.

For an update about when your water service will be restored, please call the **CUC Call Center at (670) 664-4282** or visit our [website](#) for the most recent information.

## CUC is on Facebook!



Follow us to  
get the latest  
news about  
CUC.



# What is a Water Quality Report?

Here is your annual Water Quality Report. It is about the water supplied by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation. In 1996, the U.S. Congress amended the Safe Drinking Water Act and now requires that the CUC, your “Community Water System,” publish this report each July. **This report contains important**

**information about your drinking water. Speak with someone who understands it or who can translate it.**

We hope you read about the source of your water, the levels of detected contaminants, why our water is so different from village to village, and what is being done to correct or improve water services in the CNMI.

As consumers become better informed, they become involved and make better decisions about our environment, how money is spent, and our options in water utility management.

**If you need the report translated, wish to speak with someone about the report, or would like a paper copy delivered or emailed to you, please call CUC at (670) 664-4282.**

Estagui iyon-miyu ripot gi sákkán nu i Kuálidát i Hånum. Put atyu i hånúm ni ginin i Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ni mu nåná’i hamyu, iyon-mámi customer. Gi 1996 (mit nuebi sientu nubentái sais) na sákkán, i U.S. Congress ha amenda i Áktun Sináfu Magimin Hånúm ya pá’gu manisisita atyu i CUC, iyon-miyu “Sisteman Hånúm Kumunidát” para u pupblika esti na ripot ántis di Hului 1. **Esti na ripot ha sasaguan siha manimpottánti na infotmasion put i un gigimin na hånúm. Kuentus yan otrú na taotao ni mu kumprendi pat háyi siña mu transláda para hágu.**

In espiránsa na un taitai put source i hånúm-mu, i levels ni masodda’ i binenu siha, háfa na i hånúm-ta na ti pumarehu gi kada songsong esta otrú songsong, ya háfa machochó’gui para u manadinanchi pat manake’maolik i setbision hånúm siha gi hálum i CNMI.

Kumu consumers manma’infotma máolik, mañáonão yan manma’tinas la’máolik na disision siha put i uriyáta, taimanu magásta i saláppi’, yan inayek-ta siha gi minanehan water utility.

**Kumu un nisisita i ripot matransláda, ya malagu’ háo kumentusi háyi put i ripot pat malagu’ háo kopian páppit u ma’entrega pat mana’hánão guatu para hágu, put fabot hágan i CUC gi (670) 664-4282.**

Iyeel yóómw arongorong reel Water Quality ghal ráágh. Mileel nge reel schaal iye Commonwealth Utilities Corporation re ayoorai ngálúgh, lemám customer. Llól 1996, U. S. Congress re liiweli mille Safe Drinking Water Act nge ighila re tipáli bwe CUC, yóómw “Community Water System,” bwe ebwe ghommwal akkatééwow arongoorng yeel mmwalil Ullyo 1. **Eyoor impotantil arongorong yeel reel schaal iye si ghal úlúmi. Kkapas ngáli iyo mwu e metaff me ebwe bwal affata ngálúgh reel mileel.**

Ai ghal tettengágh ngáli ghámi bwe ów bwe árághi milikka e toowow bwe arongorong reel schaal iye yáami, level reel milikka re schúngi bwe mil nngaw, meta bwulul bwe schaal ese weewe me schaalil sóóbw ikka akkáv, me meta iye emmwel sibwe fééru ngáre siiweli bwe ebwe ghatchúló aar alilis reel schaal llól CNMI.

Ngáre re aronga ghatchúr consumers, emmwel rebwe schuu bwe rebwe ppwol fengál reel mwóghutughut ikka e lo weleórosch, efaisúl re yáali selaapi, me sibwe áfilihatch reel mwóghutughutúl mille water utility management.

**Ngare eyoor arongorong iye u mwuschel rebwe seleti, ngare u mwuschel kkapas ngáli escháy reel arongorong yeel, me ngare u mwuschel rebwe afanga ngare email ngalúgh pappid yeel, fafailó CUC reel (670) 664-4282.**

Naglalaman ang report na ito ng importanteng impormasyon tungkol sa iyong iniinom na tubig. Magkaroon ng isang tao na isasalin ito sa iyong wika para sa iyo, o makipag-usap sa isang tao na nakakaintindí dito.

このレポートには飲料水に関する重要な情報が記載されています。この英文を訳してもらるか、またはどなたか英語が分かる方にたずねてください。

此报告包含有关您的饮用水的重要信息。请人帮您翻译出来，或请看懂此报告的人将内容说给您听。

이 보고서에는 귀하의 식수에 대한 중요한 내용이 실려있습니다. 그러므로 이 보고서를 이해할 수 있는 사람한테 번역해 달라고 부탁드립니다.





Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

P.O. Box 431

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Fax (670) 433-9262

E-mail [cucadmin@cucgov.org](mailto:cucadmin@cucgov.org)

24-Hour  
Call Center  
(670) 664-4282



Water Operator John Sablan measures chlorine at a sample tap. Every day, water operators check several sites throughout the CUC Tinian water system to ensure that all areas have the proper amount of chlorine.