



On the Water Front

June 2017 | **A Message from John Balliew, P.E., President/CEO**

We take water quality seriously

What's in your tap water? Where does it come from? Is your water safe to drink? The answers to these questions are in [El Paso Water's 2016 Drinking Water Report](#).

You probably take water for granted as long as it's available when you need it, but it takes hundreds of employees to maintain and operate facilities, monitor water quality and ensure the reliability of systems that deliver safe water to your home.

You can't tell what's in your water by looking at it, but our laboratory staff knows. Our centralized water quality laboratory is staffed by 32 highly trained specialists, including agronomists, biologists, chemists and microbiologists. These dedicated employees collect 45,000 samples annually and perform 250,000 tests that detect harmful substances and qualities that affect water's taste, odor or appearance.



Highly trained laboratory specialists monitor water for harmful substances.

El Paso's water is safe to drink

The high lead levels reported last year in a few of the nation's cities underscored the importance of safe drinking water. In 2016, regulatory agencies developed more robust sampling and reporting protocols that improve the detection of lead in drinking water to better protect public health.

Lead is not an issue in El Paso. Our lead levels in 2016 are far below maximum levels set by the Environmental Protection Agency. El Paso had been on a reduced monitoring schedule because of consistently low lead levels. We sampled water from 50 customer faucets every three years. Now, we're in compliance with the new monitoring protocol that requires 100 samples from faucets every six months and samples of the water that enters our distribution system.

If elevated lead levels are detected at the tap, they could be the result of home plumbing systems that were built before 1988.

Current regulations don't require public water suppliers to test school drinking water. But children are especially vulnerable to the effects of lead exposure, so we voluntarily expanded our testing to include area schools. None of the schools had elevated lead levels; the water is safe to drink.

Thanks to our dedicated employees and your ongoing investments in our systems and resources, we will continue to surpass your water supply and water quality expectations. You can count on safe water all day, every day, 365 days a year.

For more information about drinking water, visit the American Water Works Association's [DrinkTap!](#) website or read the [2016 Drinking Water Report](#). Call our International Water Quality Laboratory at (915) 594-5733 for a printed copy of the report, or if you have questions about your water quality.



On the Water Front is a publication of El Paso Water.
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