

<b>Important Drinking Water Definitions</b>	
<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
MCLG	MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level Goal: The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
MCL	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.
TT	TT: Treatment Technique: A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
AL	AL: Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
Variances and Exemptions	Variances and Exemptions: State or EPA permission not to meet an MCL or a treatment technique under certain conditions.
MRDLG	MRDLG: Maximum residual disinfection 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 contaminants.
MRDL	MRDL: Maximum residual disinfectant level. The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
MNR	MNR: Monitored Not Regulated
MPL	MPL: State Assigned Maximum Permissible Level

### **Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) Overview:**

The SDWA was enacted in 1974 to formulate standards and guidelines for organic and inorganic compounds found in drinking water. The SDWA gave the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the authority to set maximum acceptable levels of contaminants in drinking water and to establish guidelines for public water systems to aid in cleansing and treating water for distribution. Over the years amendments to the SDWA have set maximum contaminant levels (MCLs), maximum contaminant level goals (MCLGs), and have provided for the establishment of programs ranging from the overseeing the protection of watersheds to the study of alternative treatment technology. All public water systems are regulated by the standards set by the federal SDWA, and are required to test water samples as set forth by the state regulating agency. In New Hampshire, that regulating agency is the Department of Environmental Services.

The NH DES provides a yearly sampling schedule to every public water system (PWS) in the state. Water samples are taken to determine the levels of various organic and inorganic materials. The laboratories testing the samples are certified by the state, and are required to report all results to the DES as well as the PWS. Sampling results are posted on the DES website for public viewing. A link to this site is provided on the VDE website under the WATER QUALITY/SAMPLING tab.