

OurwaterQuality

The most troublesome contaminants

Technically speaking, “constituents” in water really don’t qualify as “contaminants” unless their measured levels exceed regulatory guidelines or they are troublesome to the user. We’ll work with the latter and more common term. The good news for subscribers of the city of Santa Fe’s Sangre De Cristo Water Division is that their water is EPA-compliant on an annualized basis. In fact, in the most recent (2008) Water Quality Report, there were no violations of EPA and state drinking water quality limits.

It is relatively easy to list the contaminants that generate the most inquiries. Let’s start with municipal water. Without question, at the top of the complaint list is chlorine, both for odor and taste. Next in line would be hardness staining, which is highly variable around the city and seems dependent on the blend of well water and reservoir water. Residents of Santa Fe’s Eastside are currently enjoying particularly low-hardness water because their water is

predominantly surface water (snow melt and rainwater) from the McClure and Nichols Reservoirs and treated at the Canyon Road Water Treatment Plant. In other parts of the city, such as the northwest corridor and in Las Campanas, the supply is dominated by groundwater from the Buckman Well Field and hardness levels are consistently higher.

People have asked why the city does not remove hardness. First, it is not regulated by the EPA and, second, it would be a monumental engineering task and neither the city nor most subscribers could afford the treatment process. Chlorine is easily removed and there are anti-scalant technologies to reduce hardness scaling; but “salt-free softening” is an oxymoron.

We also receive a lot of complaints about copper staining, mostly from city addresses. Although there are some valid mechanical reasons why copper staining occurs, we have recently found that the most common cause of copper corrosion results from improper electrical

grounding. The solution to copper corrosion is a joint venture between an experienced electrician and a water specialist.

And now for the much more complicated story: complaints about issues with water from unregulated domestic wells, where EPA standards serve only as guidelines. The list is long but it includes hardness scaling (with levels ranging up to several multiples of what is measured in city water), health-risk contaminants (radionuclides, arsenic, fluoride and nitrate, in order of concern), odor (hydrogen sulfide and iron and/or manganese bacteria), staining (iron and/or manganese), microbiologicals (particularly coliform bacteria, *E. coli*, and concern about parasites), pH extremes, metals, and organic compounds.

Virtually any contaminant in water can be removed or significantly reduced, but treatment can be costly. Disinfectants are used in municipal supplies for the purpose of delivering safe water to the



STEPHEN WIMAN

point of connection by the subscriber, but eliminating chlorine within your household is the single most cost-effective water improvement you can make. For well water, and especially if you have not done so recently, consider commissioning a comprehensive lab test so that you know what you are drinking.

Stephen Wiman has a background in earth science (Ph.D. in geology) and is the owner of Good Water Company in Santa Fe. He may be reached at 505-471-9036 and skwiman@goodwatercompany.com.

RANCH AND RESIDENTIAL LISTINGS:

4 County Road B-50 – Rowe, New Mexico – Here is a 1600 sf home w/3 bedrooms, 2 baths on an acre for **\$215,000**.

What, No way you say... WAY... Come see it now! MLS# 905884

48 Sunlight View in Cuyamungue is 1100 square foot adobe home on .60 acre. Its fenced, has wood floors, a wood stove, an efficiency guest unit and a 1 car garage. **List price is \$155,000. MLS#201000644**

Rancho 84 – This 8 horse property is ready to use. Your new home is a 2,800 sf HQ Home, 1,600 sf Guest Home, 2 Stall Horse Barn, & outstanding mountain views on 2 legal lots fenced & only 25 minutes from the Plaza! **Price is now \$1,275,000. MLS#900454**

262 Ifield Frontage Road Take a look at this a Rastra constructed home in Rowe, NM. Energy efficient & allergy free home has 1850+ sf, 3 bedrooms & 2 baths on one acre. Tile floors thru-out, granite counter tops, top line appliances & insulated garage AND a hot tub in the back yard. New security system too! Home is like new! **Priced drastically reduced to \$319,900. MLS#901803**

1121 Calle Largo – Don’t miss this north side home less than a million dollars? 4,100 square foot home has 3 bedrooms, 3 baths, hardwood decks, custom hardwood floors & landscaping everywhere. A Guest unit is attached 1 bedroom & 1 bath all on a 1+ acre lot. “Make an offer!” **Price Reduced: \$564,900. MLS#901291**

4107 Agua Fria – Check out this 900 square foot frame/stucco on .20 acres with a guest unit in back. The home needs a sewer tap, updating, paint and carpet. EZ to show! Make an offer! **Priced at \$149,900. MLS#905628**

1033 Old Pecos Trail – Only 2 families have owned this home and it has been recently updated. New windows, appliances, finishes, all on a big lot. You must see this great location before you buy anything else. It’s easy to show, call Ralph Jaramillo at 490-7720 to set your appointment. **List Price is quite reasonable: \$698,500.**

VACANT LAND LISTINGS:

Black Canyon Road – City Light Views are the best on this easy building site, good access & quiet country living are yours. Electric Transformer is in place, water well ready to hook up, phone lines ready to tap and its only 20 minutes from downtown. Adobe homes allowed too! **MLS# 905355 is Priced at: \$234,900.**

Two Hwy 63 Parcels in Rowe, NM – 8.58 acre lot is fenced all around, has electric and phone on the Hwy and is located across Hwy 63 from the fire station. 2nd lot is just down the road a piece and is 11.67 acres. Terrain is level and easy to build on & both parcels can be subdivided. Owner will finance. **Priced at \$135,000 and \$150,000 respectively!**

Three Viejo Rastro Building Sites – You can’t help but find Excellent Santa Fe City & Sunset Views from any lot on this cul-de-sac location. 3 Lots available, lots are 1+ acre with All City Utilities on site. Sensible CC&R’s **Prices reduced NOW \$325,000 & \$350,000 Call Ken 490-0220 MLS #806029 & 806043.**

Camino Los Abuelos boasts a 15+ acre building site. Where can you find a building site that has plenty of room for all your building plans, a water system in place, electric transformer ready to hook up, sensible deed restrictions, outstanding Ortiz mountain views & be only 20 minutes from town? Horses allowed! **Priced Reduced \$219,900 MLS#900425**

Garita, New Mexico – Near the old ghost town of Variadero is Garita, NM Post Office. This Historic site has many tales to tell. Fenced 11 acres has big mesa views, 4 wells on site along with electricity & telephone. Ruins and artifacts go with sale. **List Price is \$68,000 OBO MLS# 806946**

1,120 Acres for sale off the White Lakes Road in south Santa Fe County. Electric and phone are at the lot line, views are good, access is maintained county road. Parcel is partially fenced. Good water in the area... Call for more info...

John Provost - 455-1201 • Ralph Jaramillo - 490-7720

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I work as Buyers Agent
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