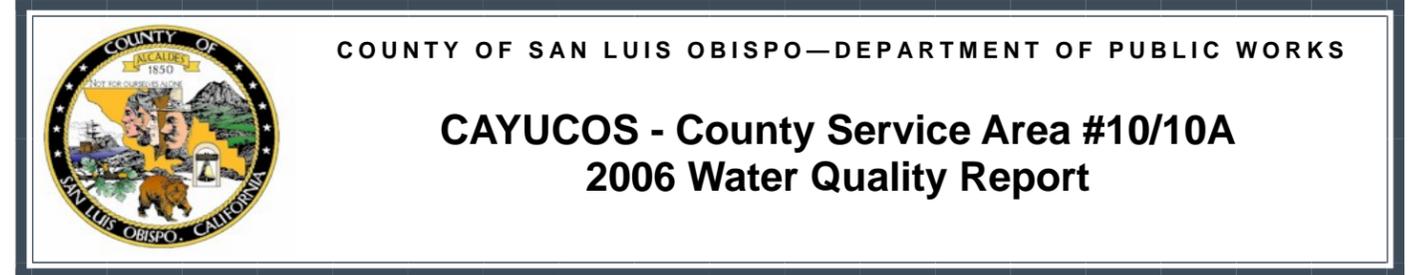




County of San Luis Obispo  
Department of Public Works  
County Government Center, Room 207  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

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**TO OUR CUSTOMERS:** The County of San Luis Obispo is pleased to present this annual report describing the quality of your drinking water. We sincerely hope this report gives you the information you seek and have a right to know.  
Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua de beber.  
Tradúzcalo ó hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.

## YOUR WATER SUPPLY



### Whale Rock Reservoir

The primary source of water for Cayucos is surface water from the Whale Rock Reservoir. Whale Rock Reservoir has a total capacity of 40,660 acre-feet. The reservoir is managed by the Whale Rock Commission comprised of the City of San Luis Obispo, the California Men's Colony, and Cal Poly. No swimming or other body contact sports are allowed on the reservoir in order to minimize viral contamination from human contact. Water from the reservoir is piped downstream to the Cayucos Water Treatment Plant (WTP) where it is treated by a filtration system followed by chlorination. Prior to chlorination, a percentage of the water is passed through two granular activated carbon filters. In addition, Cayucos has a groundwater well, the Whale Rock Well (CAWO Well). In 2006, the CAWO Well provided 6% of the total delivered water. Treated water from the Cayucos WTP is distributed to the Cayucos Area Water Organization (CAWO) which consists of three water agencies: San Luis Obispo County Service Area 10A, Paso Robles Beach Water Association, and Morro Rock Mutual Water Company. These three agencies have a combined entitlement of 190 million gallons of water per year that can be drawn from the Whale Rock Reservoir or the CAWO Well. In 2006, the Cayucos WTP provided 133 million gallons of water to the CAWO agencies.

## SOURCES OF DRINKING WATER

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 stormwater 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 stormwater runoff, and residential uses.
- *Organic chemical contaminants*, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater 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 tap water is safe to drink, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the California Department of Health Services (CDHS) prescribe regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. CDHS regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water which must provide the same protection for public health.

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## GENERAL DRINKING WATER INFORMATION

All 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 the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the USEPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

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 transplants, 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 their health care providers. The USEPA and Centers for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Additionally, the EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water maintains a website with useful information on drinking water. The address is [www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater). Information can also be obtained by accessing the American Water Works Association's website at [www.awwa.org](http://www.awwa.org), the California Department of Health Services website at [www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ddwem/default.htm](http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/ddwem/default.htm), or by calling John Beaton, Water Quality Manager, at (805) 781-5111.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you have questions regarding this report, please contact John Beaton, Water Quality Manager, at (805) 781-5111 or  
Email: [Jbeaton@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:Jbeaton@co.slo.ca.us)

### WE'RE ON THE WEB!!

Go to [www.slocountywater.org](http://www.slocountywater.org) and click on "Water Quality Lab" at the top of the page or go directly to [www.slocounty.ca.gov/PW/WaterResources/WQL.htm](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/PW/WaterResources/WQL.htm)

## KEY TERMS and ABBREVIATIONS

**AL (Action Level, Regulatory):** The concentration of a contaminant that, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirement which a water system must follow.

**CDHS:** California Department of Health Services

**CFU/mL:** Colony Forming Units per milliliter

**MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level):** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. Primary MCLs are set as close to the PHGs (or MCLGs) as is economically and technologically feasible.

**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 are set by the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

**Micromhos/cm (Micromhos per centimeter):** A measure of electrical conductance.

**MRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level):** The level of a disinfectant added for water treatment that may not be exceeded at the consumer's tap.

**MRDLG (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal):** The level of a disinfectant added for water treatment below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**NA:** Not Applicable

**ND (Not Detected):** Contaminant is not detectable at testing limit.

**NS:** No Standard

**NTU:** Nephelometric Turbidity Unit

**PDWS (Primary Drinking Water Standard):** MCLs and MRDLs for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements, and water treatment requirements.

**PHG (Public Health Goal):** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHGs are set by the California Environmental Protection Agency.

**pCi/L:** (picoCuries per liter) a measure of radioactivity.

**ppm:** parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/L)

**ppb:** parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (µg/L)

**RAA (Running Annual Average):** Average data for last four quarters.

**SDWS (Secondary Drinking Water Standard):** MCLs for contaminants that affect taste, odor, or appearance of the drinking water. Contaminants with SDWSs do not affect health at the MCL levels.

**TON:** Threshold Odor Number

**TT (Treatment Technique):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**USEPA:** United States Environmental Protection Agency

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors meets every Tuesday (except the 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday in a month) in the board chambers located in the new Government Center, 1055 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo. The Board holds budget hearings during the month of June. Interested persons should check the Board's agendas for specific dates. Agendas for all Board of Supervisors meetings are posted in some County libraries, the County Government Center, and on the Board of Supervisors internet web site at [www.slocounty.ca.gov](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov).

The Cayucos Citizens Advisory Committee meets the first Wednesday of each month at the Cayucos Veterans Hall at 7:00 pm. The Cayucos Area Water Organization meets the first Monday of each month at the Cayucos Fire Station at 1:30 pm.

Much emphasis is being placed on future water needs for Cayucos, especially customers in CSA 10A. Look for discussion of supplemental water options at both town hall meetings and Board of Supervisors meetings. Contact the Public Works Department at 781-5252 for details.

## OPERATIONS

All operators who work for the County are certified by the CDHS. They are knowledgeable professionals dedicated to maintaining the Cayucos water system in an excellent condition in order to provide you with the best quality water possible. Operators are continually inspecting the water treatment plant, Whale Rock Reservoir, wells, tanks, and distribution system in order to ensure safe and reliable water. In addition, the CDHS routinely inspects the facilities, operating procedures, and water quality monitoring records to verify compliance with state and federal regulatory requirements.

## WATER TESTING

Water analyses are performed by the San Luis Obispo County Water Quality Laboratory (SLOCWQL) or contracted to another certified laboratory. The SLOCWQL is certified by the CDHS as an environmental testing laboratory for bacteriological and chemical analyses. Federal and State requirements dictate that all regulatory analyses be performed by certified labs following approved procedures.

## SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENTS

A Source Water Assessment of the watersheds above and below Whale Rock Reservoir, the CAWO well, and the standby wells was updated in 2005. The assessments were conducted to locate potential sources of contamination and to evaluate the ability of the water treatment plant and wells to handle the contamination. The updated studies included a review of water system information, meetings with water system staff, and field surveys. No significant changes were noted in the watersheds. The source assessments continue to conclude that the wells are most vulnerable to the following activities for which no associated contaminants have been detected in the water supply: Sewer collection system, low-density septic systems, agricultural drainage and an agricultural well.

A copy of the complete assessment is available at:  
California Department of Health Services, 1180 Eugenia Place, Suite 200, Carpinteria, California 93013  
or  
County of San Luis Obispo, Department of Public Works, County Government Center, Room 207, San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION



Pictured from left to right are Larry Moore, Water Systems Operator, and Eric Laurie, Project Engineer, along side the new Granular Activated Carbon filters.

## GRANULAR ACTIVATED CARBON FILTERS

We are pleased with the performance of our new granular activated carbon (GAC) filters. The GAC filters were installed in June of 2006 in order to help reduce trihalomethanes (THMs) and minimize taste and odor complaints in the distribution system. Through efficient plant optimization by our treatment plant operators, we have been successful in the reduction of THMs while obtaining the maximum benefits and longevity from the GAC. The THM levels detected have been well below the state's Primary Drinking Water Standard MCL. In addition, we hope you have noticed an improvement in the taste and odor of your water.

## WHICH IS BETTER - TAP WATER OR BOTTLED WATER

Many people buy bottled water to drink because they believe it is better than tap water, however, often this is not actually the case. Let's look at a few of the issues in the tap vs. bottled water debate.

**Purity** Tap water is regulated by the USEPA and must meet very strict standards to protect your health. Bottled water is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, and does not have to meet the same strict standards as tap water. Several studies of bottled water have found contaminants including bacteria, arsenic, and toluene. Also, there is concern that chemicals from plastic bottles may leach into the water that they contain.

**Environmental impacts** The plastic manufacturing process uses petroleum and pollutes the air. Transporting bottled water from the bottling plant to stores also uses petroleum and contributes to air pollution. Unfortunately, very few plastic bottles are recycled; most of them (around 85%) end up in landfills. That translates to literally

## 2006 Water Statistics

CSA 10A Delivered: 44 million gallons

Average Daily Demand: 121,000 gallons

Morro Rock Mutual Water Company Delivered: 38 million gallons

Average Daily Demand: 104,000 gallons

Paso Robles Beach Water Association Delivered: 51 million gallons

Average Daily Demand: 140,000 gallons

Total Water Delivered: 133 million gallons

Average Daily Demand: 365,000 gallons

tons of plastic in our environment. And when plastic is recycled, the recycling process also uses petroleum. From the standpoint of using then disposing of limited resources, and polluting the air, tap water production has far lower environmental impacts than bottled water.

**Cost** Tap water costs less than 1 cent per gallon, while bottled water can cost well over \$1 per gallon.

**Source** Bottled water labels often imply that the water comes from a spring, but in fact at least 25% of bottled water comes from a municipal tap. When the water does come directly from a spring or underground aquifer, bottling it for sale in another location often depletes the water supply for the community where the bottling plant is located.

So which do you think is better—  
tap water or bottled water?