

UNIT WELL #18

Drilled in 1968, Unit Well 18 has a pumping capacity of 2,000-gallons per minute. It operates year-round and serves Madison's South side neighborhoods in the Park Street–Fish Hatchery Road corridor. Well 18 also supplies some drinking water to the Greenbush, Bay Creek, Burr Oaks, and Bram's Addition neighborhoods. In 2025, Well 18 pumped 639 million gallons of water compared to its 5-year average of 502 million gallons annually.

Unless otherwise noted, data contained in this report, which is updated annually, are from 2025.

Bacteria

In 2025, four quarterly samples were collected from Well 18 and tested for coliform bacteria, an indicator group of bacteria used to determine drinking water safety. Each sample was collected and tested prior to any disinfection. None of the samples had coliform bacteria present. The Water Utility chlorinates tap water to protect against bacteria and viruses that may be present in groundwater and to provide protection as water travels through water mains and premise plumbing.

Hardness and Other Minerals

Like all groundwater, water from Well 18 contains calcium and magnesium that contributes to its hardness (320 mg/L [ppm] or 19 grains per gallon). Other naturally occurring substances that are present in water from Well 18 can be found in the [Inorganics Table](#).

Iron and Manganese

Water from Well 18 contains low levels of iron and intermediate levels of manganese. Both are below the EPA [secondary standards](#), which are 0.3 mg/L for iron and 50 µg/L for manganese.

Radionuclides

In 2023, water from Well 18 was tested for radium-226, radium-228, and other gross measures of radiation in water. Neither form of radium was detected at the well.

Naturally occurring, radioactive elements are found in rock, soil, water, and air. They derive from the creation of our planet and enter our bodies when we drink water, breathe air, and eat foods that contain them. Everyone is exposed to some level of radiation in everyday life. For example, uranium and thorium are found in rock and soil. In time, they decay to other elements including radium, which later decays to radon gas. Radon is the largest contributor to our daily exposure of radiation from the natural world. More information is available from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry ([ATSDR](#)).

See [ATSDR](#) for more information on radon.

Chromium

Low levels of naturally occurring chromium, including hexavalent chromium, have been found at Well 18. The level is well below the drinking water standard of 100 µg/L for total chromium. More information can be found on the [chromium](#) page.

Lead

Madison's groundwater supply does not contain significant amounts of naturally occurring lead.

Human-made Contaminants

Madison Water Utility annually tests all of its municipal wells for human-made contaminants that may be present in groundwater. Quarterly samples are collected at Well 18 due to the presence of [tetrachloroethylene](#), which has been detected at Well 18 since the early 1990's. [Trichloroethylene](#), 1,1-dichloroethylene, trichlorofluoromethane and [1,4-dioxane](#) are found inconsistently at Well 18.

In 2025, low levels of two disinfection by-products (DBP) were detected at Well 18. DBPs form when chlorine reacts with impurities in groundwater. Chlorine is added to disinfect water and to guard against bacterial growth in water mains.

The [Volatile Organic Compounds](#) table lists the substances that were tested, the results, and how detected levels compare with the maximum contaminant levels (MCL) established by the EPA.

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

No [PFAS](#) were found at Well 18 in 2025. In April 2024, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published final MCLs for six PFAS. Our website, [madisonwater.org](#), has more detailed information on PFAS in drinking water and previous PFAS tests results for this well.

Additional Information

Information on routine [water quality monitoring](#) activities, including current test results and links to additional resources, is available at [madisonwater.org](#). In addition, you can sign-up to receive periodic updates on Madison drinking water quality or the water main flushing program through the [City of Madison](#) website.

If you have questions about the information in this report or on our website, our staff would be happy to answer them. Please call the Water Quality line at 266-4654 weekdays from 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Click [here](#) to view water quality reports for other Madison municipal wells.