



City Council

Public Hearing: 2025 Report on Water Quality Relative to Public Health Goals

John Ramirez, Director, Water and Sewer Utilities
Agenda Item # 7, (25-910)
October 21, 2025

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Agenda

- Public Health Regulations
- Public Health Goal
- Background
- Monitoring and Testing Program
- Findings
- Report Conclusions
- Recommendation

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Public Health Goal Regulations

- The City is mandated by the Safe Drinking Water Act to hold a Public Hearing every 3 years to present information on:
 - Public Health Goals (PHGs)
 - Background on water quality
 - Findings from ongoing testing
 - Monitoring and testing programs
 - PHG report conclusion
 - Recommendations, if any, for additional treatment

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Public Health Goals

- What is a PHG:
 - Level of a contaminant in water that does not pose any significant risk to health
 - Are not regulatory standards and are non-enforceable
 - Serve as a guideline for evaluating water quality
 - Protect public health by reporting detected contaminants

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Background

- California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) establishes PHGs for contaminants, based on:
 - Scientific data from laboratory studies
 - Results which provide a contaminant's adverse health effects
 - Levels that do not cause significant health effects
 - OEHHA established 102 PHGs for containments in water

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Monitoring and Testing Program

- The Water Utility's State Approved Water Quality Monitoring Plan
 - 5-year state approved water quality monitoring plan
 - 34 approved sample stations located throughout the City
 - 160 constituents tested weekly, monthly, quarterly, and annually

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Findings

- Contaminants that exceeded their PHG levels in Santa Clara
 - Arsenic: naturally occurring in groundwater as a result of decay and erosion of natural deposits
 - Hexavalent Chromium: introduced through the leaching of natural deposits
 - Perchlorate: introduced through industrial processes or from natural sources

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Arsenic

Arsenic is naturally occurring in most rocks and ends up in groundwater because of decay and erosion of natural deposits

Public Health Goal	0.004 parts per billion
Detection Level for Reporting	2 parts per billion
Maximum Contaminant Level	10 parts per billion
Range of Results in Santa Clara	ND – 2.2 parts per billion

ND = Non-detect

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Hexavalent Chromium

Hexavalent Chromium can be introduced into water sources through the leaching of natural deposits

Public Health Goal	0.02 parts per billion
Detection Level for Reporting	0.1 parts per billion
Maximum Contaminant Level	10 parts per billion
Range of Results in Santa Clara	ND – 4.3 parts per billion

ND = Non-detect

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Perchlorate

Perchlorate can be introduced into a water source through industrial processes or from natural sources

Public Health Goal	1 parts per billion
Detection Level for Reporting	1 parts per billion*
Maximum Contaminant Level	6 parts per billion
Range of Results in Santa Clara	ND – 1.3 parts per billion

ND = Non-detect

*Perchlorate detection level for reporting was changed from 2 ppb to 1ppb in 2024

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Report Conclusions

- The Water Utility continues to regularly monitor drinking water quality and is not proposing to change its current operations based on the information provided
 - The City's drinking water meets all state and federal regulatory requirements per the Safe Drinking Water Act
 - Concentrations were very low; well below the enforceable Maximum Contaminant Levels

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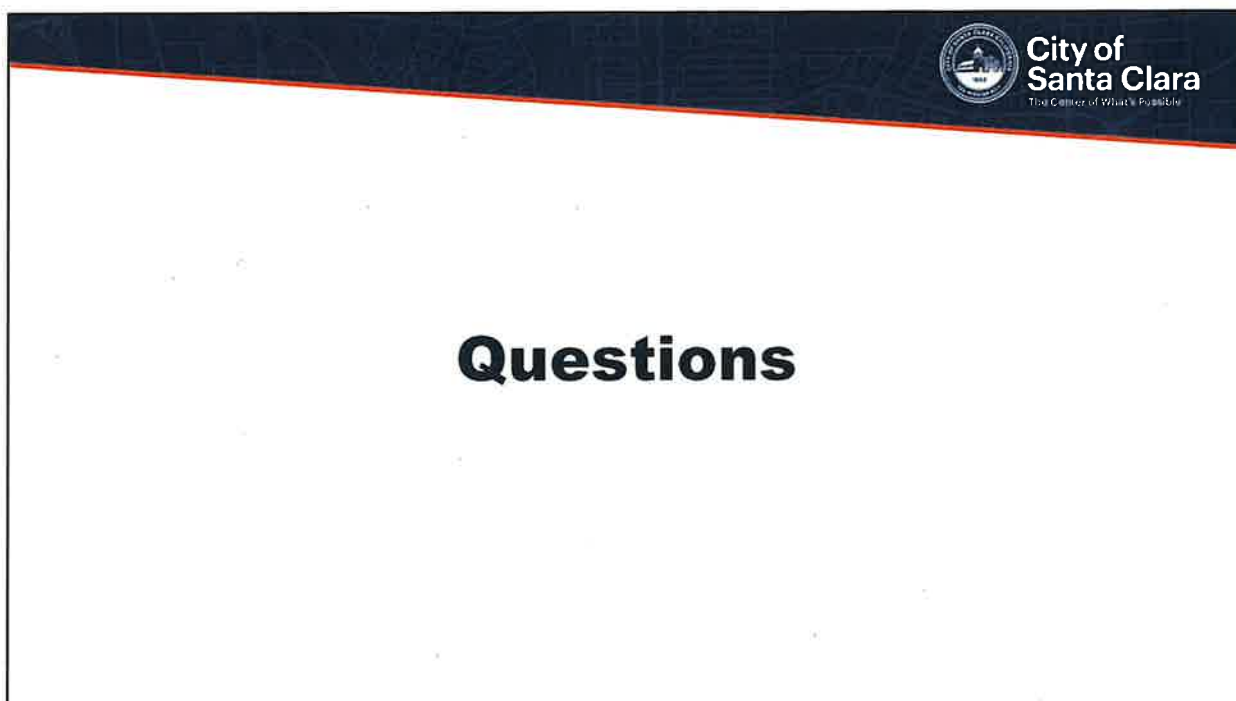
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Recommendation

- That Council accept the 2025 PHG Report on the City's Water Quality Relative to Public Health Goals



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