

VILLAGE OF HINSDALE

Public Services Department Consumer Confidence Report 2021

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VILLAGE OF HINSDALE
19 E. Chicago Avenue, Hinsdale, IL 60521

YOUR 2021 WATER QUALITY REPORT



Once again, we are presenting you with your annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) for the Village of Hinsdale Public Water Supply. The CCR is a report card on your water utility for the previous calendar year containing specific content

and language. Inside you will find information on the source of your water, tables summarizing water quality analyses USEPA specified terms regarding water quality, important contacts, and other information regarding your water supply.

As in the past, we are pleased to report that your water supply meets or exceeds all state and federal standards. We hope you find this information educational and it helps make you more knowledgeable about your water supply. You can be assured that this water utility and our source water utilities constantly strive to provide you with quality drinking water that meets or exceeds all standards and especially those of our customers.

Please take a few moments to examine this report concerning your water system and your water quality. If you have any questions about this report or other water quality concerns please feel free to contact the Water Department or myself personally at 630-789-7051. We will do our best address your questions or concerns.

Respectfully,
Mark Pelkowski
Water/Sewer Superintendent

WATER UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS IN 2021

Every year major capital improvements are made to the water utility. Water main replacement projects are scheduled to coincide with roadway projects that are part of our Capital Improvement Plan. These water main replacement projects are determined by main size and frequency of repair. Mains are upgraded to provide a volume of water to meet all domestic needs, heavy demand periods, and fire protection. A computer model of our distribution system is used to aid in design.

Water main replacement in 2021 included:

- Chicago Ave from Washington St. to Stough St.
4,365 ft. of 12in water main.
- Eighth St. from Oak St. to County Line Road
670 ft. of 8in water main.

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IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Question About:

Water Quality, Water Pressure,
and other General Information
630-789-7051

Billing, Account Information, and
Final Readings
630-789-7020

After Hours &
Weekend Emergencies
630-789-7070

J.U.L.I.E. Utility Locations
Prior to Excavation
1-800-892-0123

THE SOURCE OF YOUR WATER

The City of Chicago utilizes Lake Michigan as its source water via two water treatment plants. The Jardine Water Purification Plant serves the northern areas of the City and Suburbs, while the South Water Purification Plant serves the southern areas of the City and Suburbs. Lake Michigan is the only Great Lake that is entirely contained within the United States. It borders Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin, and is the second largest Great Lake by volume with 1,180 cubic miles of water and third largest by area.

Lake Michigan water is purchased by the DuPage Water Commission (DWC) from the City of Chicago via the Lexington St. Pumping Station for distribution to the DWC 28 member communities and private utilities covering DuPage County. Each member purchases its water from the DWC for distribution to their customers.



SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT

A SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT SUMMARY IS INCLUDED BELOW FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE.

The Illinois EPA considers all surface water sources of community water supply to be susceptible to potential pollution problems. The very nature of surface water allows contaminants to migrate into the intake with no protection only dilution. This is the reason for mandatory treatment for all surface water supplies in Illinois. Chicago's offshore intakes are located at a distance where shoreline impacts are not usually considered a factor on water quality. At certain times of the year, however, the potential for contamination exists due to wet-weather flows and river reversals. In addition, the placement of the crib structures may serve to attract waterfowl, gulls, and terns that frequent the Great Lakes area, thereby concentrating fecal deposits at the intake and thus compromising the source water quality. Conversely, the shore intakes are highly susceptible to storm water runoff, marinas and shoreline point sources due to the influx of groundwater to the lake.

The Illinois EPA completed the Source Water Assessment Program for our supply. The Illinois EPA implemented a Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP) to assist with watershed protection of public drinking water supplies. The SWAP performs an inventory of potential sources of contamination and determines the susceptibility of the source water to contamination.

Further information on our community water supply's SWAP is available by calling the City of Chicago, Department of Water Management at 312-744-6635.

SPECIAL HEALTH INFORMATION

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 may be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. USEPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants are available from the USEPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).

LEAD IN DRINKING WATER

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Village of Hinsdale is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in private plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is also available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

WATER SAMPLING TO ENSURE YOUR SAFETY

The water that flows from your tap is some of the most extensively tested water in the country. Not only are a myriad of analyses performed by the City of Chicago in their laboratory, your water is also tested as it arrives at the DuPage Water Commission, and then again as it arrives at the Village of Hinsdale Water Utility.

Village of Hinsdale staff tests daily for chlorine residual, the water's ability to disinfect, fluoride, which prevents dental caries, and turbidity, a measure of the water's clarity. Every month a minimum of twenty-one samples are collected throughout the distribution system at predetermined sites approved by the IEPA, to test for the presence of coliform bacteria. Coliform bacteria is common in the environment and serves as an indicator organism of possible contamination. At the same time samples are collected from these sites and analyzed for chlorine residual and turbidity to determine water quality in the distribution system. Data collected can assist staff in determining needed maintenance or pipeline replacement. The Village of Hinsdale also samples three Emergency back-up wells throughout the year; data is available upon request by contacting the Water Department at 630-789-7052.

VOLUNTARY TESTING

The Chicago Department of Water Management monitors for contaminants which are proposed to be regulated or for where no standards currently exist but which could provide useful information in assessing the quality of the source water or the drinking water. Examples are Cryptosporidium, endospores, and anthrax organisms.



Cryptosporidium analyses have been conducted monthly on the source water since April 1993. Cryptosporidium has not been detected in these samples. Treatment processes have been optimized to ensure that if there are cryptosporidium oocysts in the source water, they will be removed during the treatment process. By maintaining low turbidity and thereby removing the particles from the water, the possibility of cryptosporidium organisms getting into the drinking water system is greatly reduced.

Taste and odor compounds, MIB and geosmin, are monitored both in the source water and finished water. The treatment process is adjusted to reduce these compounds and provide a drinking water without detectable tastes and odors.

The Department of Water Management has added testing methods to those already performed to assess water quality. The objective of the additional testing is to detect changes in water quality in a timely manner. Protocol for screening water samples for chemical toxicity and also for screening water samples for the presence of endospores has been developed.

Acute toxicity screening detects the presence of toxic chemicals and although the test does not identify individual compounds, it can be used as an early warning tool. The acute toxicity graph would clearly indicate toxicity in the sample and further investigation would be needed. Results thus far have not shown any positive results.

VILLAGE OF HINSDALE

2021 Regulated Contaminants Detected

Lead and Copper
Date Sampled: 2020

Definitions:

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

Action Level Goal (ALG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. ALG's allow for a margin of safety.

| Lead MCLG | Lead Action Level (AL) | Lead 90th Percentile | # Sites Over Lead AL | Copper MCLG | Copper Action Level (AL) | Copper 90th Percentile | # Sites Over Copper AL | Likely Source of Contamination |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 0 | 15 ppb | 3.57 ppb | 1 | 1.3 ppm | 1.3 ppm | 0.133 ppm | 0 | Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits |

Water Quality Test Results

Definitions: The following tables contain scientific terms and measures, some of which may require explanation. Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the Maximum Contaminant Level Goal as feasible using the best available treatment technology. Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLG's allow for a margin of safety. mg/l: milligrams per litre or ppm: parts per million - or one ounce in 7,350 gallons of water. ug/l: micrograms per litre or ppb: parts per billion - or one ounce in 7,350,000 gallons of water. na: not applicable. Avg: Regulatory compliance with some MCLs are based on running annual average of monthly samples. Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): The highest level of disinfectant allowed in drinking water. Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): The level of disinfectant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLG's allow for a margin of safety. Level 1 Assessment: A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system. Level 2 Assessment: A Level 2 assessment is a very detailed study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why an E. coli MCL violation has occurred and/or why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system on multiple occasions.

Regulated Contaminants

| Disinfectants & Disinfection By-Products | Collection Date | Highest Level Detected | Range of Levels Detected | MCLG | MCL | Units | Violation | Likely Source Of Contaminant |
|--|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------|--------|-------|-----------|---|
| Chlorine | 2021 | 1 | 1 - 1 | MRDLG=4 | MRDL=4 | ppm | No | Water additive used to control microbes |
| Total Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) | 2021 | 21 | 11.5 - 19.5 | N/A | 60 | ppb | No | By-product of drinking water chlorination |
| TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] | 2021 | 52 | 17.23 - 66.2 | N/A | 80 | ppb | No | By-product of drinking water chlorination |

Note: The state requires monitoring of certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Therefore, some of this data may be more than one year old.

UCMR4 Compliance Reporting:

In compliance with the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 4 (UCMR4) as required by the EPA, the Village of Hinsdale has monitored for 30 contaminants suspected to be present in drinking water, but that do not have health-based standards set under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The monitoring results were reported to the EPA. The contaminants that were detected in this monitoring program are listed below.

| Contaminant | MCLG | MCL | Highest Detected Levels | Rnge of Detection | Units | Likely Source Of Contaminant |
|-------------|------|-----|-------------------------|-------------------|-------|---|
| HAA6BR | NA | NA | 14.8 | 7.73 - 14.8 | ppb | By-product of drinking water chlorination |
| HAA9 | NA | Na | 33.4 | 17.5 - 33.4 | ppb | By-product of drinking water chlorination |
| Germanium | NA | Na | .444 | ND - .444 | ppb | Naturally-occurring element; commercially available in combination with other elements and minerals; a byproduct of zinc ore processing; used in infrared optics, fiber-optic systems, electronics and solar applications |
| Manganese | NA | NA | .475 | ND - .475 | ppb | Naturally-occurring element; commercially available in combination with other elements and minerals; a byproduct of zinc ore processing; used in infrared optics, fiber-optic systems, electronics and solar applications |

Unregulated Contaminants: A maximum contaminant level (MCL) for this contaminant has not been established by either state or federal regulations, nor has mandatory health effects language. The purpose for monitoring this contaminant is to assist USEPA in determining the occurrence of unregulated contaminants in drinking water, and whether future regulation is warranted.

CITY OF CHICAGO
2021 Regulated Contaminants Detected

Coliform Bacteria

| Maximum Contaminant Level Goal | Total Coliform Maximum Contaminant Level | Highest No. of Positive | Fecal Coliform or E. Coli Maximum Contaminant Level | Total No. of Positive E. Coli or Fecal Coliform Samples | Violation | Likely Source Of Contamination |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------|---|---|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| 0 | 5% of monthly samples are positive | .6 | Fecal Coliform or E. Coli MCL: A routine sample and a repeat sample are total coliform positive, and one is also fecal coliform or E. coli positive | 3 | No | Naturally present in the environment |

Lead and Copper

Date Sampled: 2021

Definitions:

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

Action Level Goal (ALG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. ALG's allow for a margin of safety.

| Lead MCLG | Lead Action Level (AL) | Lead 90th Percentile | # Sites Over Lead AL | Copper MCLG | Copper Action Level (AL) | Copper 90th Percentile | # Sites Over Copper AL | Likely Source of Contamination |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--|
| 0 | 15 ppb | 5.6 ppb | 1 | 1.3 ppm | 1.3 ppm | .013 ppm | 0 | Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits |

Water Quality Test Results

Definitions: The following tables contain scientific terms and measures, some of which may require explanation. Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the Maximum Contaminant Level Goal as feasible using the best available treatment technology. Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLG's allow for a margin of safety. mg/l: milligrams per litre or parts per million - or one ounce in 7,350 gallons of water. ug/l: micrograms per litre or parts per billion - or one ounce in 7,350,000 gallons of water. na: not applicable. Avg: Regulatory compliance with some MCLs are based on running annual average of monthly samples. Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): The highest level of disinfectant allowed in drinking water. Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): The level of disinfectant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLG's allow for a margin of safety. NTU-Nephelometric Turbidity Unit, used to measure cloudiness in drinking water. pCi/L-Picocuries per liter, used to measure radioactivity. Level 1 Assessment: A Level 1 assessment is a study of the water system to identify potential problems and determine (if possible) why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system. Level 2 Assessment: A Level 2 assessment is a very detailed study of the water system to identify potential and determine (if possible) why E. coli MCL violation has occurred and/or why total coliform bacteria have been found in our water system on multiple occasions.

Regulated Contaminants

| Disinfectants & Disinfection By-Products | Collection Date | Highest Level Detected | Range of Levels Detected | MCLG | MCL | Units | Violation | Likely Source Of Contaminant |
|--|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------|--------|-------|-----------|--|
| Chlorine | 12/31/2021 | 1 | 1-1 | MRDLG=4 | MRDL=4 | ppm | No | Water additive used to control microbes |
| Total Haloacetic Acids (HAA5) | 2021 | 13 | 7.2-19 | N/A | 60 | ppb | No | By-product of drinking water chlorination |
| TTHMs [Total Trihalomethanes] | 2021 | 30 | 13.6-39 | N/A | 80 | ppb | No | By-product of drinking water chlorination |
| Inorganic Contaminants | Collection Date | Highest Level Detected | Range of Levels Detected | MCLG | MCL | Units | Violation | Likely Source Of Contaminant |
| Barium | 2021 | 0.0203 | .02-.0203 | 2 | 2 | ppm | No | Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits |

Regulated Contaminants (cont.)

| Fluoride | 2021 | 0.6 | 0.62-0.63 | 4 | 4 | ppm | No | Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Fertilizer discharge |
|--|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------|-----|-------|-----------|---|
| Nitrate (As Nitrogen) | 2021 | 0.28 | 0.28-0.28 | 10 | 10 | ppm | No | Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits |
| State Regulated Contaminants | Collection Date | Highest Level Detected | Range of Levels Detected | MCLG | MCL | Units | Violation | Likely Source Of Contaminant |
| Sodium There is not a state or federal MCL for sodium. Monitoring is required to provide information to consumers and health officials that are concerned about sodium intake due to dietary precautions. If you are on a sodium-restricted diet, you should consult a physician about this level of sodium in the water. | 2021 | 10 | 9.79-9.99 | N/A | N/A | ppm | No | Erosion of naturally occurring deposits; used in water softener regeneration |

Note: The state requires monitoring of certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently. Therefore, some of this data may be more than one year old.

Information Statement: Fluoride is added to the water supply to help promote strong teeth. The Illinois Department of Public Health recommends an optimal fluoride level of 0.7 mg/L with a range of 0.6 mg/L to 0.8 mg/L.

Turbidity

| Limit (Treatment Technique) | Lowest Monthly % meeting limit | Violation | Source |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Lowest Monthly % <0.3 NTU | 100% | No | Soil Runoff |
| Limit (Treatment Technique) | Highest Single Measurement | Violation | Source |
| 1 NTU | 0.2 NTU | No | Soil Runoff |

Information Statement: Turbidity is a measurement of the cloudiness of the water caused by suspended particles. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of water quality and the effectiveness of our filtration system and disinfectants.

Total Organic Carbon

The percentage of Total Organic Carbon (TOC) removal was measured each month and the system met all TOC removal requirements set by IEPA, unless a TOC violation is noted in the violations section.

| Radioactive Contaminants | Collection Date | Highest Level Detected | Range of Levels Detected | MCGL | MCL | Units | Violation | Likely Source of Contaminant |
|---|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------|-----|-------|-----------|------------------------------|
| Combined Radium 226/228 | 2020 | 0.95 | 0.83-0.95 | 0 | 5 | pCi/L | No | Erosion of natural deposits |
| Gross Alpha excluding radon and uranium | 2020 | 3.1 | 2.8-3.1 | 0 | 15 | pCi/L | No | Erosion of natural deposits |

The Fourth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR 4)

In compliance with the UCMR 4, samples were collected at Chicago Water System's entry points to the Distribution system (EPTDS), also known as finished water, and analyzed for all contaminant groups except for Haloacetic Acids (HAAs), which were sampled from the distribution system. All the contaminant groups tested in the finished water were below the minimum reporting levels specified in the test method under UCMR 4. Samples for HAA indicators (Total Organic Carbon and Bromide) were collected at two source water influent points for the system. For Bromide, test results ranged from 28.2 to 35.3 ppb, and for TOC, test results ranged from 1.79 to 1.80 ppm.

Illinois EPA's Sampling of PER-and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

The Illinois EPA collected finished water samples from Chicago's Water System on 10/29/2020 and analyzed the samples for a total of 18 PFAS contaminants. In its notification to Chicago, the Illinois EPA stated that these contaminants were not present in Chicago's drinking water at the concentrations greater than or equal to the minimum reporting levels.

WATER AND YOUR HEALTH

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 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 (1-800-426-4791).

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 can dissolve naturally occurring minerals and radioactive materials, and pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or human activity.

Possible contaminants consist of:

- 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 may be naturally occurring or result from urban storm water 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 storm water runoff and residential uses;
- Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and may also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff and septic systems;
- Radioactive contaminants, which may 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, USEPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public health.

SPRINKLING RESTRICTIONS GO INTO EFFECT

The Hinsdale Water Department is reminding all residents and customers outside the Village limits that beginning May 15th and continuing through September 15th, lawn sprinkling restrictions go into effect. Lawn sprinkling will be permitted only between the hours of 6:00 AM and 10:00 AM and the hours of 6:00 PM and 10:00 PM and only on the following days: even numbered street addresses on even numbered calendar days: odd numbered addresses on odd numbered calendar days. No sprinkling shall be permitted on May 31, July 31, and August 31.



The Village of Hinsdale as well as all the other communities who receive Lake Michigan water are required by the Illinois Department of Transportation, Division of Water Resources to restrict nonessential outside water use. These restrictions are required regardless of water availability or weather conditions. Also, as a reminder, backflow prevention devices are to be inspected annually per the Illinois EPA Regulation: 35 Illinois Administrative code 653 and Village of Hinsdale Ordinance 7-46-6. Backflow Solutions, Inc (BSI) and the Village of Hinsdale will continue to work together to ensure proper implementation and enforcement of our current backflow program.

LAWN SPRINKLING TIPS

Morning is the best time to water most lawn areas...and the earlier the better.

Don't drizzle.

Watering during the heat of the day can actually damage your lawn.

Water only when your lawn needs it.

WATER FACTS

ARE YOU DRINKING ENOUGH WATER?

Which essential nutrient performs the following tasks in our bodies?

- ✓ Actively participates in chemical reactions
- ✓ Lubricates and cushions joints, eyes, spinal cord
- ✓ Aids in body-temperature maintenance
- ✓ Serves as the solvent for many small molecules

If you guessed water, you're 100 percent correct. Many of us think water is just to quench thirst, but in reality it is the most important nutrient in our diet.

You know those summer days when the sweat just pours off, even when you're only lounging in the shade – not to speak of mowing the lawn, playing tennis or chasing after the kids. In summer, when our bodies lose additional fluid due to increased sweat, it becomes more important than ever to make sure to drink the right type and amount of fluid to stay healthy.

AMOUNT OF FLUID NEEDED EACH DAY

If you are one of the many people who find it hard to drink the recommended six to eight glasses of water a day, don't lose hope. Most fruits and vegetables contain up to 95 percent water, and many meats and cheeses contain at least 50 percent. A key point is NOT to wait until you're thirsty. If you're thirsty, it means your body has already lost more water than it should have, and it's urging you to fill up the tank.

TYPE OF FLUID NEEDED

First and foremost, our bodies need water. Juice and milk have a high percentage of water, but they also contain calories. If you're watching your weight, drink water. Avoid caffeinated beverages such as most sodas and regular coffee, as caffeine actually causes the body to lose water. The same goes for alcohol.

If you exercise during hot weather, you may prefer a sports drink. Sports drinks contain electrolytes such as sodium and potassium, which are lost in sweat. Sodium also makes us thirsty, causing us to drink even more. Juice and soda aren't absorbed as easily during exercise, so save them for before or after your activity.

NOTE FOR CHILDREN

Kids dehydrate more readily than adults. They don't often notice that they are thirsty, and they are usually very active. Encourage them to drink water at least every hour while they are outside. Drinking plain water to quench thirst is an excellent habit for our children to learn. Active children can also choose sports drinks, juice or milk. The key is to keep them drinking.

10 TRICKS FOR GETTING ENOUGH WATER

Our bodies are nearly 70 percent water. We use this water for virtually every bodily function. Water aids digestion and transports nutrients. Water is important to circulation and cleanses wastes and toxins. Water helps to regulate our body temperature and lubricates soft tissues. It is thought that water even helps to provide energy for the brain.

And yet, we don't drink enough water. Sources say that 75 percent of us are chronically dehydrated. More than 1 in 3 people has a thirst mechanism that is so weak it is often mistaken for hunger.

You need at least 48 ounces of fluid to maintain optimum health, more if you exercise. Here are 10 tricks for fitting it all in:

- ✓ Take a water bottle to work.
- ✓ Take a water bottle for each person whenever you go anywhere in the car.
- ✓ Drink a glass of water before each meal.
- ✓ Keep a bottle of cold water in the refrigerator.
- ✓ Use a larger glass at meals. If you normally use an eight-ounce glass, try a ten ounce.
- ✓ Take a full water bottle on all bike rides.
- ✓ Buy a waist pack that holds a water bottle, and take it with you on walks.
- ✓ Use sports drinks before, during and after any summer time activity.
- ✓ Have at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
- ✓ Make a fruit smoothie for breakfast. Blend fresh fruit, seltzer water and vanilla yogurt for an easy pick-me-up that's also a good source of fluid.

