

The Bull Run Watershed



The Bull Run Watershed is a highly protected unfiltered drinking water source. It is the largest drinking water source in the state of Oregon and provides drinking water to all of Portland and many surrounding communities. *Cryptosporidium*, a potentially disease-causing microorganism, is occasionally found in the Bull Run drinking water supply. Exposure to *Cryptosporidium* in drinking water, especially for those with a condition that severely weakens their immune system, can lead to potentially serious illness.

The Portland Water Bureau and Burlington, City of Gresham, City of Sandy, City of Tualatin, Green Valley, GNR, Hideaway Hills, Lake Grove, Lorna Portland Water, Lusted, Palatine Hill, Pleasant Home, Raleigh, Rockwood, Skyview Acres, Tualatin Valley, Two Rivers, Valley View and West Slope Water Districts receive all or part of their drinking water supply from the Bull Run. Contact your drinking water provider to find out if your drinking water comes from the Bull Run. To find your drinking water provider, visit www.regionalh2o.org.

www.portlandoregon.gov/water/crypto



Portland Water Bureau

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Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
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Water Quality Line

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday
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Please contact us for translation or interpretation, or for accommodations for people with disabilities.

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www.portlandoregon.gov/water/access
503-823-7432 (TTY: 503-823-6868, Relay Service: 711)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT

Cryptosporidium in Drinking Water for Immunocompromised Individuals



Protecting Yourself from *Cryptosporidium* in Drinking Water



The Bull Run drinking water supply is not currently treated for *Cryptosporidium*. If you get your drinking water from Portland, or Portland provides drinking water to your provider, you cannot be sure that your drinking water does not contain *Cryptosporidium*. As a result, if you have a condition that compromises your immune system you may wish to avoid drinking tap water. This includes water and ice from a refrigerator and drinks made at a soda fountain, which are usually made with tap water.

Protective Measures to Consider



Safe commercially bottled water

Water labeled with any of the following messages has been processed by a method effective against *Cryptosporidium*: reverse osmosis, distilled, filtered through an absolute 1 micron or smaller filter, or “One micron absolute”.



Boiling water before consuming

Boiling is the best extra measure to ensure that your water is free of *Cryptosporidium* and other microbes. Heating water at a rolling boil for 1-minute kills *Cryptosporidium* and other microbes. After the boiled water cools, put it in a clean bottle or pitcher with a lid and store it in the refrigerator. Use the water for drinking, cooking, or making ice.



Filtering your tap water

Many, but not all, available home water filters remove *Cryptosporidium*. Filters that have the words “reverse osmosis” on the label protect against *Cryptosporidium*, as do filters with “absolute 1 micron.” Also look for the words “cyst reduction” or “cyst removal” for a tested filter that works against *Cryptosporidium*. The wording should indicate that the filter is listed and labeled to NSF/ANSI standard 53 or 58 by an ANSI accredited certification organization.

Filters collect microorganisms from your water, so someone who is not immunocompromised should change the filter cartridges for you; if you do it yourself, wear gloves and wash your hands well with soap and water afterwards. Filters may not remove *Cryptosporidium* as well as boiling does because filters may sometimes have manufacturing flaws that allow small numbers of *Cryptosporidium* parasites to get past the filter. Poor filter maintenance or failure to replace filter cartridges as recommended by the manufacturer can also cause your filter to fail.



Using a home distiller

You can remove *Cryptosporidium* and other microorganisms from your water with a home distiller. If you use one, you need to carefully store your water. After purification, put the water in a clean bottle or pitcher with a lid and store it in the refrigerator.

Water bottles and ice trays should be cleaned with soap and water before use when being used to store boiled, filtered or distilled water.

How the Portland Water Bureau is Protecting Public Health

After a series of low level detections of *Cryptosporidium* in the Bull Run drinking water supply during January – March of 2017, the Portland Water Bureau began work to construct a drinking water filtration plant for the Bull Run supply. The new treatment plant is estimated to be operational by September 2027. The new Bull Run filtration plant will remove *Cryptosporidium*, make the water system more reliable, and provide consistent, excellent water to customers.

While the filtration plant is being constructed, the Portland Water Bureau will continue to take efforts to ensure public health protection. These efforts include:

- Maintain the existing protections for the Bull Run Watershed to minimize sources of *Cryptosporidium*.
- Continued monitoring of the Bull Run supply for *Cryptosporidium*.
- Work with public health officials to monitor for potential cases of cryptosporidiosis from drinking water.
- Notify the public to take extra precautions if *Cryptosporidium* in drinking water poses a risk to public health.

Additional Information

General Information on *Cryptosporidium* and preventive measures:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

www.cdc.gov/parasites/crypto/gen_info/preventic.html

Information on drinking water safety and quality:

Portland Water Bureau Water Quality Line:

503-823-7525

[wbwaterline@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:wewaterline@portlandoregon.gov)

www.portlandoregon.gov/water/cryptop

To receive updates on *Cryptosporidium* detections from the Bull Run, register at

www.portlandoregon.gov/water/cryptoupdate