

# Utilities, Inc. of Georgia Big Canoe Water System

PWS ID: GA2270004

## Annual Water Quality Report 2022

### Message from Tiffany Van Horn, President

Dear Utilities, Inc. of Georgia Customers,

I am pleased to present your Annual Water Quality Report for 2022. Transparency, health, and safety are key priorities in our company's efforts to provide a high-quality, reliable water supply. Included in this report are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to regulatory standards.

**We are proud to share this report which is based on water quality testing through December 2022. We continually strive to supply water that meets and/or exceeds all federal and state water quality regulations at your tap.**

Treating and maintaining a safe and reliable water supply is not only hard work, but it is rewarding. Our team of local water experts are proudly dedicated to providing safe, reliable, and cost-effective service every day. This commitment includes acting with integrity, protecting the environment, and enhancing the local community.

Best regards,



### COVID-19 Response

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the virus that causes COVID-19 has not been detected in drinking water. Conventional water treatment methods that use disinfection, such as those provided by Utilities, Inc. of Georgia, should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19 as they do for other pathogens.

**Based on current evidence, the risk to water supplies remains low. Customers can continue using and drinking tap water as usual.**

The EPA also encourages the public to help keep household plumbing and our nation's water infrastructure operating properly by only flushing toilet paper. **Disinfecting or other sanitary wipes, including those labeled as "flushable" and other non-toilet paper items, should NOT be flushed in toilets.**

For more information, visit the CDC at <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/85879> and EPA at <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-drinking-water-and-wastewater>.

### Source of Drinking Water

Our water source comes from two locations. The primary location is from Blackwell Creek off Cove Road where water is pumped to the reservoir located across from the new Membrane Water Treatment Plant on Cove Road. The reservoir holds approximately 28 million gallons of water which gives us about 30 days of storage. The current capacity of the new plant is 1.0 million gallons per day and expandable to 2 million gallons per day. The secondary location is from the Pickens County Water System and is available in emergency situations.

### Source Water Assessment

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA EPD) has completed the Source Water Assessment Plan (SWAP) for Big Canoe Water System.

The Big Canoe watershed is an example of a self contained small system watershed managed effectively to minimize potential source contamination. The most vulnerable portion of the system is the intake on Lake Petit because of the proximity of the bridges and potential for contamination from runoff. The existing non-point source nutrient loading to the lake may cause periodic algal blooms. This could eventually lead to accelerated eutrophication of the lake if it is not kept in balance. Because of the potential vulnerability of the watershed to nutrient and/or fecal coliform releases, a system of inspection is recommended in addition to regularly pumping septic systems.

The relative susceptibility rating of the source at Big Canoe was ranked as high susceptibility. The rating is determined by identifying potential pollution sources near each well. It is important to understand that a susceptibility rate of "high" does not imply poor water quality, only the systems' potential to become contaminated by potential pollution sources in the assessment area. The water system's susceptibility assessment is available by contacting our customer service office at (706) 268-3400.

Visit us online at [www.myutility.us/UIGeorgia](http://www.myutility.us/UIGeorgia) to view the Water Quality Reports. Also visit our website for water conservation tips and other educational material.

*Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua beber. Tradúzcalo ó hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.*

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## EPA Wants You To Know

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:**

- A. **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- B. **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.
- C. **Pesticides and herbicides**, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.
- D. **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.
- E. **Radioactive contaminants**, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

### **What measures are in place to ensure water is safe to drink?**

In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the EPA prescribes regulations, which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water, which must provide the same protection for public 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 the water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

### **Special notice from EPA for the elderly, infants, cancer patients and people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system problems**

**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. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791).**

### **Information Concerning Lead in 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. Utilities, Inc. of Georgia is responsible for providing high

quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in 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 available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

Water that remains stationary within your home plumbing for extended periods of time can leach lead out of pipes joined with lead-containing solder as well as brass fixtures or galvanized pipes. Flushing fixtures has been found to be an effective means of reducing lead levels. The flushing process could take from 30 seconds to 2 minutes or longer until it becomes cold or reaches a steady temperature. Faucets, fittings, and valves, including those advertised as "lead-free," may contribute lead to drinking water. Consumers should be aware of this when choosing fixtures and take appropriate precautions. Visit the NSF Web site at [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) to learn more about lead-containing plumbing fixtures.

### **Drain Disposal Information**

Sewer overflows and backups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors, and threaten the environment. A common cause is sewer pipes blocked by grease, which gets into the sewer from household drains. Grease sticks to the insides of pipes. Over time, the grease can build up and block the entire pipe. Help solve the grease problem by keeping this material out of the sewer system in the first place:

- Never pour grease down sink drains or into toilets. Scrape grease into a can or trash.
- Put strainers in sink drains to catch food scraps / solids for disposal.

### **Prescription Medication and Hazardous Waste**

Household products such as paints, cleaners, oils, and pesticides, are considered to be household hazardous waste. Prescription and over-the-counter drugs poured down the sink or flushed down the toilet can pass through the wastewater treatment system and enter rivers and lakes (or leach into the ground and seep into groundwater in a septic system). Follow the directions for proper disposal procedures. **Do not flush hazardous waste or prescription and over-the-counter drugs down the toilet or drain.** They may flow downstream to serve as sources for community drinking water supplies. Many communities offer a variety of options for conveniently and safely managing these items. For more information, visit the EPA website at: [www.epa.gov/hw/household-hazardous-waste-hhw](http://www.epa.gov/hw/household-hazardous-waste-hhw).

### **If You Have Questions Or Want To Get Involved**

Utilities, Inc. of Georgia does not have regularly scheduled public meetings. Please contact Ron Medders at (706) 268-3400 should you have any questions.

**The Safe Drinking Water Act** was passed in 1974 due to congressional concerns about organic chemical contaminants in drinking water and the inefficient manner by which states supervised and monitored drinking water supplies. Congress' aim was to assure that all citizens served by public water systems would be provided high quality water. As a result, the EPA set enforceable standards for health-related drinking water contaminants. The Act also established programs to protect underground sources of drinking water from contamination.

**Understanding This Report** In order to help you understand this report, we want you to understand a few terms and abbreviations that are contained in it.

Action level (AL)	The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency.
Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)	The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCL's are set as close to the MCLG's as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG)	The "goal" is 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.
Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL)	The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG)	The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
Not applicable (N/A)	Not applicable.
Not Detected (ND)	Analysis or test results indicate the constituent is not detectable at minimum reporting limit.
Parts per million (ppm) or Milligrams per liter (mg/l)	One part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.
Parts per billion (ppb) or Micrograms per liter (ug/l)	One part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years or a single penny in \$10,000,000.
Picocuries per liter (pCi/L)	A measure of radioactivity in the water.
Running Annual Average (RAA)	Calculated running annual average of all contaminant levels detected.
Treatment Technique (TT)	A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

### Help Protect our Resources

Help put a stop to the more than **1 trillion gallons of water lost annually** nationwide due to household leaks. These easy to fix leaks waste the average family the amount of water used to fill a backyard swimming pool each year. Plumbing leaks can run up your family's water bill an extra 10 percent or more, but chasing down these water and money wasting culprits is as easy as 1—2—3. Simply check, twist, and replace your way to fewer leaks and more water savings:

- ⇒ **Check** for silent leaks in the toilet with a few drops of food coloring in the tank, and check your sprinkler system for winter damage.
- ⇒ **Twist** faucet valves; tighten pipe connections; and secure your hose to the spigot. For additional savings, twist a WaterSense labeled aerator onto each bathroom faucet to save water without noticing a difference in flow. They can save a household more than 500 gallons each year—equivalent to the amount water used to shower 180 times!
- ⇒ **Replace** old plumbing fixtures and irrigation controllers that are wasting water with WaterSense labeled models that are independently certified to use 20 percent less water and perform well.

For more information visit [www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense).

**We ask that all our customers help us protect our water sources which are the heart of our community, our way of life and our children's future.**

### Monitoring Your Water

We routinely monitor for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws. The tables below lists all the drinking water contaminants that were **detected** in the last round of sampling for each particular contaminant group. The presence of contaminants does **not** necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. **Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in the table is from testing done January 1 through December 31, 2022.** The EPA or the State requires us to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of the data, though representative of the water quality, maybe more than one year old.

### Violations

In 2022, Utilities, Inc. of Georgia performed all required monitoring for contaminants and did not exceed any allowable levels of these contaminants. In addition, we received **no violations** from GA Environmental Protection Division and was in compliance with applicable testing and reporting requirements.

**To access your utility account anytime, anywhere, please register for our customer portal & download My Utility Account at <https://account.myutility.us>**



## Big Canoe Water Quality Test Results

### 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	1 positive monthly sample.	1	1 positive monthly sample.	0	N	Naturally present in the environment.

*Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful, waterborne pathogens may be present or that a potential pathway exists through which contamination may enter the drinking water distribution system. If a system collecting fewer than 40 samples per month has two or more positive samples in one month, an assessment is required. All requirements for the EPA groundwater rule regarding follow up sampling were met. Repeat samples were all absent for coliform and no additional deficiencies or action was necessary.*

### Lead & Copper

Contaminant	Date Sampled	MCLG	Action Level	90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	# of Sites over AL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Copper	2020	1.3	1.3	0.82	0	ppm	No	Erosion of natural deposits; leaching from wood preservatives; Corrosion of household plumbing systems.
Lead	2020	0	15	2.3	0	ppb	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits.

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

There were no violations noted during 2022.

### Disinfection By-products

Contaminant	Collected Date	Highest Level Detected	Range of Levels	MCLG	MCL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Chlorine	2022	1.10	0.51-1.68	MRDLG=4	MRDL=4	ppm	No	Water additive used to control microbes.
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)	2022	25	12.2-42.5	No goal for the total	80	ppb	No	By-product of drinking water disinfectant.
Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	2022	12	4.8 –16.4	No goal for the total	60	ppb	No	By-product of drinking water disinfectant.

### Inorganic Contaminants

Contaminant	Collected Date	Highest Level Detected	Range of Levels	MCLG	MCL	Units	Violation	Likely Source of Contamination
Fluoride	2022	0.7	0.67-0.67	4	4.0	ppm	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories.

### PFAS Testing

Utilities, Inc. of Georgia continues efforts to conduct statewide drinking water testing for Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS). These man-made compounds are used in the manufacturing of products resistant to water, grease or stains including firefighting foams, cleaners, cosmetics, paints, adhesives and insecticides. PFAS can migrate into the soil, water, and air and is likely present in the blood of humans and animals all over the world. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has established health advisory levels for GenX, PFBS, PFOA, and PFOS, and has proposed enforceable limits. We are reviewing the proposed MCLs to evaluate the impact on our operations and on the communities we serve. **Our focus will remain, as always, on supplying our customers with safe and reliable water.**

For the latest PFAS results, visit our website at [www.UIGeorgia.com](http://www.UIGeorgia.com) and click Water Quality Reports under Water Safety. For more information visit <https://www.epa.gov/pfas>.

Utilities, Inc. of Georgia is committed to providing safe, reliable, and cost-effective drinking water services to all our customers.

