

2025

The Pines Annual Water Quality Report



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Figure 1 Cherry Hill Water Treatment Facility.

This report is designed to inform you about the quality of the water and services delivered to you in 2025 by Polk County Utilities, Board of County Commissioners. Included are details about where your drinking water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (E P A) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Agency (F D E P).

If you have any questions about this report, your water utility, or would like to obtain a copy of this report, please contact Craig Kristof (863) 298-4281.

Visit <https://www.polkfl.gov/services/utilities/>

2025 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report The Pines Public Water System (6531796)

The Pines Public Water System (P W S) is in the Northwest Regional Utility Service Area of Polk County and receives all their water from the City of Lakeland P W S. Nineteen wells (13 wells at the T.B. Williams WTP and 6 wells at the C.W. Combee WTP), drilled into the Upper Floridan aquifer, provide raw water to the City's two lime-softening plants. Utilizing a variety of treatment processes the operators control the blending of raw water with lime-softened water to produce water with stability slightly on the scale forming side (utilizing Langlier's Saturation Index as the primary parameter). After blending the water, it is then filtered utilizing dual media filters consisting of anthracite and sand. Chemical addition includes calcium hydroxide (lime) and polymer in the lime softening process, starch for sludge conditioning, fluoride for dental health, phosphate for calcium sequestration prior to filtration and chlorination to 2.8 p m free chlorine residual for disinfection.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (F D E P) performed Source Water Assessments on the T.B. Williams and C.W. Combee Treatment Plants in 2025. The assessments were conducted to provide information about any potential sources of contamination in the vicinity of the City's wells. There are 11 Unique Potential Contaminant Sources identified for this system. Ten wells have been identified with a "moderate" concern level and six wells have been identified with a "low" concern level. The assessment results are available on the F D E P Source Water Assessment and Protection Program website at <https://prodapps.dep.state.fl.us/swapp>.

Delivering Safe Drinking Water: The primary law governing drinking water in the United States is the Safe Drinking Water Act (S D W A). The S D W A, originally passed in 1974 and updated several times since, authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency (E P A) to establish comprehensive national standards for protection against both naturally occurring and man-made contaminants that may be found in drinking water. These standards, adopted by the F D E P, govern the quality of the water supplied, requirements for physical and chemical treatment, source water protection, operator training, funding for water system improvements, and public water information. Some of the standards adopted by the F D E P are more stringent than those established by the E P A.

Polk County Utilities (P C U) works closely with the E P A, F D E P, and the Polk County Health Department to ensure that the water delivered to our customers complies with the applicable standards. In accordance with the S D W A, P C U is required to treat the water, test the water on a regulated schedule for specified contaminants, and report the results to the appropriate regulatory agency. If a problem is detected, P C U immediately retests and informs its customers about the problems until the system can reliably demonstrate that the situation has been resolved.

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. P C U 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 two 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 <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

The sources of drinking water (both tap 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:

- Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment facilities, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, or wildlife.
- Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can 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, or residential uses.
- 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 storm water runoff, or septic systems.
- Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the E P A prescribes regulations which limit the number of certain contaminants in the water provided by public water systems. The Food and Drug Administration 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 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 (800) 426-4791.

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 H I V / 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. E P A or Center of Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-4791.

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. Please DO NOT wash cooking oils, fats, or grease down sink drains and DO NOT FLUSH your unused or unwanted medications down toilets or sink drains. More

information is available at <https://floridadep.gov/waste/waste/documents/how-dispose-unused-medicines>.

As authorized and approved by E P A, the State has reduced monitoring requirements for certain contaminants to less often than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year. Some of our data (e.g., for organic contaminants), though representative, is more than one-year-old.

P C U routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to Federal and State laws, rules, and regulations. Except where indicated otherwise, this report is based on the results of our monitoring for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2025. Data obtained before January 1, 2025, and presented in this report are from the most recent testing done in accordance with the applicable laws, rules, and regulations. The E P A requires monitoring of over 80 drinking water contaminants. Those contaminants listed in the following tables are the only contaminants detected in your drinking water.

Unregulated Contaminants (U C): The City of Lakeland has been monitoring for U C as part of a study to help the E P A determine the occurrence in drinking water of U C and whether these contaminants need to be regulated. At present, no health standards (for example, maximum contaminant levels) have been established for these U C. However, we are required to publish the analytical results for the U C monitoring in our annual water quality report. If you would like more information on the E P A's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule, please call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline, (800) 426-4791.

The following are definitions of some of the terms you may find in our report.

- Action Level (A L): The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (H I V / AIDS)
- Locational Running Annual Average (L R A A): the average of sample analytical results for samples taken at a particular monitoring location during the previous four calendar quarters.
- Maximum Contaminant Level (M C L): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. M C Ls are set as close to the M C L Gs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (M C L G): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. M C L Gs allow for a margin of safety.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (M R D L): 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 (M R D L G): The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. M R D L Gs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
- Not Applicable (N / A): Does not apply

- Not Detected (N D): Indicates that the substance was not found by laboratory analysis.
- Parts per billion (p p b) or Micrograms per liter ($\mu\text{g} / \text{L}$): One part by weight of analyte to 1 billion parts by weight of the water sample.
- Parts per million (p p m) or Milligrams per liter ($\text{m g} / \text{L}$): One part by weight of analyte to 1 million parts by weight of the water sample.
- Picocuries per liter (p C i / L): Measure of radioactivity in water.

The Pines Public Water System Water Quality Test Results

Radioactive Contaminants

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of Sampling (m o / y r)	M C L Violation Y / N	Level Detected	Range of Results	M C L G	M C L	Likely Source of Contamination
Alpha emitters (p C i / L)	01/23-12/23	N	2.92	N D-2.92	0	15	Erosion of Natural Deposits
Radium 226 + Radium 228 or Combined Radium (p C i / L)	01/23-12/23	N	1.41	1.39-1.41	0	5	Erosion of Natural Deposits
Uranium ($\mu\text{g} / \text{L}$)	01/23-12/23	N	0.19	N D-0.19	0	30	Erosion of Natural Deposits

Inorganic Contaminants

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of Sampling (m o / y r)	M C L Violation Y / N	Level Detected	Range of Results	M C L G	M C L	Likely Source of Contamination
Barium (p p m)	01/23-12/23	N	0.005	0.0038-0.0050	2	2	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (p p m)	01/23-12/23	N	0.66	0.62-0.66	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits; discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories. Water additive which promotes strong teeth when at the optimum level of 0.7 ppm.
Sodium (p p m)	01/23-12/23	N	9.87	5.22-9.87	N / A	160	Saltwater intrusion; leaching from soil

Radioactive and inorganic contaminant results in the Level Detected column are the highest detected level at any sampling point. Range of Results is the range of individual sample results (lowest to highest) for all monitoring locations.

Stage 2 Disinfectant/Disinfection By-Products

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of Sampling (m o / y r)	M C L Violation Y / N	Level Detected	Range of Results	M C L G or M R D L G	M C L or M R D L	Likely Source of Contamination
Chlorine (p p m)	01/25-12/25	N	1.9	1.3-2.5	M R D L G = 4.0	M R D L = 4.0	Water additive used to control microbes
Haloacetic Acids (five) (H A A 5) (p p b)	08/25	N	16.99	1 sample taken	N / A	M C L = 60	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Trihalomethanes (T T H M) (p p b)	08/25	N	38.30	1 sample taken	N / A	M C L = 80	By-product of drinking water disinfection

For Chlorine, the Level Detected is the highest running annual average (R A A), computed quarterly, of monthly averages of all samples collected. The range of results is the range of all the individual samples collected during the past year. For H A A 5 or T T H M, the level detected is the highest L R A A, computed quarterly, of quarterly averages of all samples collected. Range of results is the range of individual sample results (lowest to highest) for all monitoring locations.

Lead and Copper (Tap Water)

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of Sampling (m o / y r)	A L Violation Y / N	90th Percentile Result	Number of sampling sites exceeding the A L	M C L G	A L (Action Level)	Likely Source of Contamination
Copper (p p m) (tap water)	08/24	N	0.24	0	1.3	1.3	Corrosion of household plumbing systems
Lead (p p b) (tap water)	08/24	N	1	0	0	15	Corrosion of household plumbing systems

Lead and copper tap water results are based on samples collected at selected consumer home taps located throughout the distribution system. The 90th percentile lead and copper results show that 90% of the home tap water samples collected were equal to or less than the value indicated.

LCRR				
COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE LINE INVENTORY				
Submitted by 10/16/2024 (Yes/No) (Y/N)	Submission Date	Violation (Yes/No) (Y/N)	If NOT submitted, WHY? (e.g., ongoing data collection, resource constraints)	If NOT submitted, Provide Completion Timeline

Y	October 16, 2024	N	N/A	N/A
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Lead can cause serious health effects, especially in pregnant individuals, infants, and young children. It enters drinking water primarily from service lines and home plumbing.

Unregulated Contaminants (UCMR5) PFAS Compounds

Contaminant and Unit of Measurement	Dates of sampling (mo./yr.)	Level Detected (Average)	Range of Detection	Likely Source of Contamination
PFBA (p p b)	01/23, 07/23	0.0021	N D-0.0021	PFAS are a group of synthetic chemicals used in a wide range of consumer products and industrial applications including: non-stick cookware, water-repellent clothing, stain resistant fabrics and carpets, cosmetics, firefighting foams, electroplating, and products that resist grease, water, and oil. PFAS are found in the blood of people and animals and in water, air, fish, and soil at locations across the United States and the world
PFPeA (p p b)	01/23, 7/23	0.0024	N D-0.0024	

Thank you for being a valued customer. We at P C U would like you to understand the efforts we make to continually improve the water treatment process and protect our water resources. We are committed to ensuring the quality of your water. If you have any questions or concerns about the information provided, please feel free to call Craig Kristof (863) 298-4281.