



Sunnyslope water quality testing

2025 by the numbers

15,170

**total tests
performed**



*throughout our water
treatment, transmission,
and distribution system*



105

**substances tested;
all health-related
contaminants detected were
at trace levels, well below
legal safety limits**



114

**locations tested
(homes, schools,
treatment plants,
fire hydrants, water
lines, wells, pump
stations, tanks, etc.)**

0

**Water quality
violations in 2025
—and for the last 29 years for
both health-related and
non-health-related contaminants**



Where does my water come from?

Sunnyslope water comes from two sources:

1. Imported surface water

All our surface water originates as snow or rain in the Sierra Nevada range. Runoff enters rivers that flow into the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta (the largest estuary on the West Coast), and into 20 reservoirs that are part of the massive Central Valley Project (CVP). The CVP is a complex network of infrastructure that supplies water to Californians as far south as Bakersfield, as well as millions of acres of farmland. The Delta is a crucial ecological and water resource, but its health and sustainability has degraded steadily during 175 years of nonstop human usage. State agencies, environmental groups, and researchers are seeking strategies to restore the overtaxed Delta ecosystem.

From the Delta, water runs through a canal to the CVP's San Luis Reservoir, located near Los Banos on Highway 152. Then the water travels via the Pacheco Tunnel and Hollister Conduit to our local Lessalt and West Hills Water Treatment Plants. During normal, non-drought years, approximately 80 percent of water supplied by Sunnyslope is from the San Luis Reservoir. We depend upon this imported water to meet water quality goals and protect the Hollister groundwater supply. Imported surface water reduces demand on our North San Benito Groundwater Basin, and blending it with our local well water greatly reduces water hardness and improves the water quality of our drinking water supply.

Each year, water agencies like the San Benito County Water District (SBCWD) are allocated a percentage of their federally contracted surface water allotment, dependent on rain and snowfall, reservoir levels, and other factors. During wet years, the SBCWD stores excess surface water in our groundwater basin and at the local San Justo Reservoir for future use. In addition, a new Accelerated Drought Response Project (ADRoP) is currently being constructed by SBCWD to store up to 2,700 more acre-feet of water during wet years. The project includes expansion of the West Hills Water Treatment Plant (currently underway), and construction of five aquifer storage and recovery wells with new pipelines to the plant. During wet years, when we have bigger surface water allocations, we will now be able to treat and store that water for immediate use during drought, greatly increasing local water reliability.

2. Local groundwater

Sunnyslope Water District owns and operates five wells which supply approximately 20 percent of our potable water during normal, non-drought years when we receive an adequate allocation of surface water from the CVP. Groundwater is critical to get us through periods of drought, and for economic and environmental sustainability. Imported surface water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta has allowed our local groundwater basin to stabilize from historically low levels in the 1970s, putting us in a much better position than many municipalities that depend solely on surface water. However, it is important that we conserve as much water as possible to maintain our underground aquifer.



**Surface water that
originates as snow
and rain in the Sierra
Nevada range is
treated at our local
Lessalt and West Hills
Water Treatment
Plants, then blended
with local well water.
Shown here are
Lessalt's activated
carbon filters, which
remove microscopic
organic contaminants.**

21%
Local groundwater

79%
Imported
surface water



**Sunnyslope
water sources**

2025 percentages



Blending makes water softeners unnecessary

Sunnyslope once again satisfied our target, system-wide blend ratio average of 80 to 20 surface water to well water, providing high-quality drinking water to customers. An 80/20 blend ensures that Sunnyslope water hardness ranges between 150 to 180 parts per million (ppm), or 8.7 to 10.4 grains per gallon—about the same hardness delivered by most water suppliers across California. This ratio prevents hard water issues such as scale inside pipes and household appliances, while still providing natural minerals from well water for a desirable taste and mouthfeel.

Hard water used to be an issue in the Hollister area when our water came solely from local wells, but that changed in 2014 when the local Lessalt Water Treatment Plant began delivering mostly surface water imported from the San Luis Reservoir. While a small number of households located near well heads still intermittently experience hard water, by January 2027 a new pipeline project will eliminate this problem.

Salt water softeners that empty into the sewer system pollute local groundwater and cause recycled wastewater to exceed salt regulatory limits, increasing costs to taxpayers. New installations of these softeners have been banned in the Hollister area since 2014. If you still have a salt water softener connected to the system it's likely that you don't need it. The Water Resources Association for San Benito County offers rebates to demolish salt water softeners or replace them with a non-harmful method. Please visit wrasbc.org for details.

How is my water treated?

Highly qualified Sunnyslope Water staff continually test water throughout our entire purification and distribution system to ensure water quality and safety. We also regularly send water samples to independent offsite labs to verify our treatment processes. Certified operators at our two water treatment plants closely monitor every stage of treatment, and document findings over time. Sensors and instruments constantly measure water properties such as pH, oxidation, total organic carbon, and many more parameters. Our SCADA electronic operating system allow operators to continuously control every aspect of the plant 24 hours a day.

At the **Lessalt Water Treatment Plant**, untreated surface water first passes through special sand filters that remove iron and manganese. Water then flows through activated carbon filters to remove microscopic organic contaminants. After that, microfilters remove remaining microscopic particles, and pH is adjusted to improve taste and prevent pipeline corrosion. As a final safety measure, we slightly chlorinate the water to eliminate any remaining bacteria and viruses.

At the **West Hills Water Treatment Plant**, activated carbon removes microscopic organic materials in our imported surface water, which is then chemically treated to separate out particles in a settling tank. Water subsequently enters a sand filter which captures bacteria and microscopic particles. Technicians then adjust pH levels and chlorinate the water as a final safeguard.

Unlike surface water from rivers, lakes, and reservoirs, **groundwater** from Sunnyslope's five wells is naturally clean, and requires no treatment except for slight chlorination. Soil filters out pollutants as water percolates down to the aquifer. To ensure water quality, every day we perform chlorine residual tests at every well, and at 15 different sampling stations throughout the distribution system. Naturally hard groundwater is blended with softer surface water to improve taste and aesthetics.

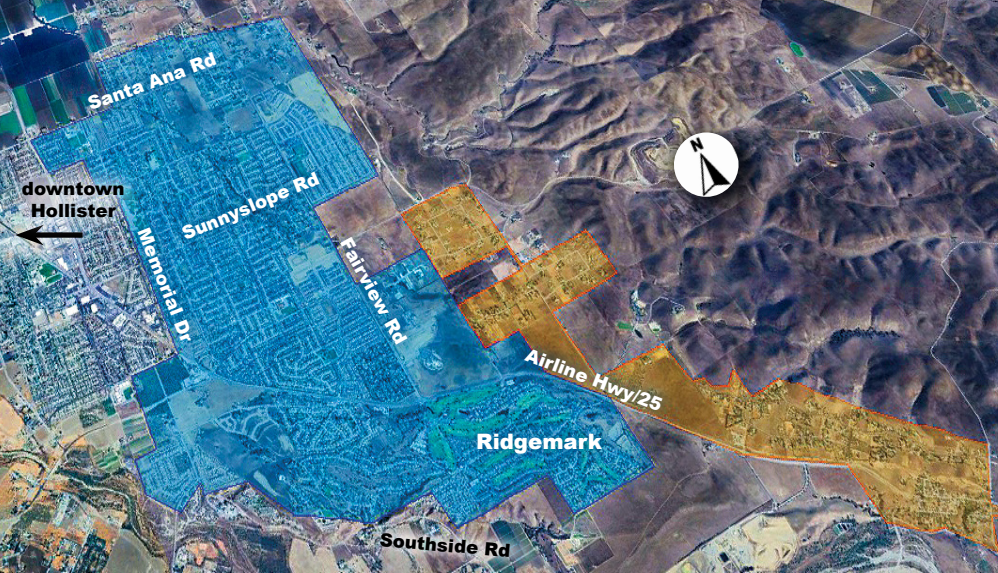
In compliance with new Chromium-6 limits

Hexavalent chromium, also known as Chromium-6 (Cr-6), is a toxic form of chromium, which is an abundant, naturally occurring element found in almost all rocks, plants, and soil on earth. Trace amounts of Cr-6 are natural in the geology of the Gilroy-Hollister Valley Groundwater Basin. The substance is widely found in groundwater due to leaching from rocks and minerals. Chromium-6 is mainly a problem when industries such as steel mills, tanneries, and other manufacturers release byproduct with high Cr-6 concentrations into the environment. Hollister has never had Cr-6 contamination from unnatural outside sources.

A lifetime of exposure (70 years) to Cr-6 levels at 10ug/L may increase likelihood of cancer by 0.05 percent, according to the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water. In October 2024, the state regulatory limit for Chromium-6 was changed from 50 ug/L to 10ug/L (ug/L is equivalent to parts per

Sunnyslope drinking water is independently tested by BSK Associates laboratory, certified for analysis by the strict standards of the California State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water, and the U.S. EPA.





Sunnyslope Water service area enlarges

Sunnyslope provides potable water to the eastern half of Hollister, including Ridgemark and some urban parts of San Benito County—about half the local population. By early 2027, construction will be complete to bring three local water providers—Tres Pinos Water District, Stonegate water system, and Best Road Mutual Water Company—into the Sunnyslope system. The consolidations (shown in gold) ensure safe, reliable drinking water for local residents who live in areas with failing wells. With these 300 new water connections, Sunnyslope will be serving approximately 8,000 households.

billion, or ppb) with compliance required by October 1, 2027. One of Sunnyslope's five wells had routinely tested at 11 ppb, which is one part per billion over the new regulatory target. In response, we have adjusted our surface water to well water blending ratio to ensure that the water you drink is below the new regulatory limit. We will continue to monitor all wells and make adjustments as needed. In anticipation of changing compliance standards for Cr-6 and other contaminants, we are evaluating treatment strategies for all Sunnyslope wells and treatment plants, as well as the impact these capital projects will have on water rates. Future projects on Sunnyslope wells are estimated to cost \$3 to 5 million.

Tracking “forever chemicals”

The Safe Drinking Water Act requires that once every five years the EPA issue a list of unregulated contaminants for monitoring by public water systems. Sunnyslope Water has been participating in the current Environmental Protection Agency Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule, which requires water providers to sample for 29 perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS, or “forever chemicals”) and lithium in drinking water. The ongoing sampling aims to evaluate the prevalence of PFAS nationwide to help determine possible future regulatory limits. PFAS are a large group of man-made contaminants which resist degradation and accumulate in the environment, animals, and plants worldwide, even in remote habitats. The most widely detected types of PFAS come from stain-resistant and waterproof fabrics, nonstick cookware, and plastic packaging, many with likely links to cancer and other health risks.

The EPA estimates that only 20 percent of human exposure to PFAS comes from drinking water. PFAS accumulate in groundwater from sources such as fire-suppressing foam, industrial sites, landfills, and wastewater treatment plants. During 2025 sampling, a trace amount of PFAS was found at one Sunnyslope well site at a minute concentration of 0.0058 micrograms per liter (ug/L), slightly over the 0.0040 EPA reporting level for data collection. PFAS is not currently regulated and there is no state or federal reporting limits, but Sunnyslope is taking necessary steps to prepare for future regulation and the costs that may incur.

We will continue to work cooperatively with regulatory agencies and regional water providers to monitor local groundwater, and evaluate potential treatment technologies to mitigate PFAS. Sunnyslope maintains best practices to ensure that local drinking water exceeds all standards, and we will continue to provide timely and transparent communication as the understanding of PFAS and their impact on health and the environment evolves. For more information on PFAS, please visit epa.gov/pfas.



Sunnyslope Water
2025

By the numbers

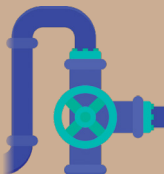


25 employees...

...provided water service to
27,000 customers



...maintained and operated
2 treatment plants,
5 wells, and
110 miles of
buried water mains



...exercised
679 of total
3,160 water valves

...replaced **1,132**
of total **7,750**
water meters



...flushed **680**
of total **1,029**
fire hydrants

...responded to
274 water
emergency calls



*Typical sources key

- 1. Decay of natural and man-made deposits
- 2. Erosion of natural deposits
- 3. Runoff and leaching from fertilizers and septic tanks
- 4. Naturally occurring organic materials
- 5. Soil runoff
- 6. Substances that form ions when in water
- 7. Naturally present in the environment
- 8. Human and animal fecal waste
- 9. Byproduct of drinking water disinfection
- 10 Internal corrosion of household plumbing
- 11. Drinking water disinfectant added for treatment

Definitions

CU – Colorimetric units are used to measure the concentration of colored compounds in solutions

Haloacetic Acids/ Trihalomethanes Chemical byproducts of chlorination as chlorine breaks down organic substances.

MCL – Maximum Contaminant Level The highest amount of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water: Primary MCLs are set as close to the MCL Goal or Public Health Goal as is economically and technologically feasible. Secondary MCLs are set to protect water appearance, taste, and odor.

MCLG – Maximum Contaminant Level Goal The amount of a contaminant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety and are set by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

mg/L – milligrams per liter Equivalent to parts per million, a measurement of concentration on a weight or volume basis. One part per million is equal to four drops of ink in a 55-gallon drum.

Micromho Unit of electrical conductance.

NA – Non-Applicable Category is not applicable in this situation.

ND – Non-Detects Laboratory analysis did not detect a contaminant at the reporting limit.

90th percentile In 90 percent of sites tested, results were less than or equal to the level listed.

NL – Notification Level The amount of a contaminant which triggers treatment or other requirements.

NTU – Nephelometric Turbidity Unit A measure of the cloudiness of water: Water in excess of 5 NTU has cloudiness just noticeable to the average person.

pCi/L – Picocuries per liter A measure of the radioactivity in water.

PHG – Public Health Goal The amount of a contaminant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. The California Environmental Protection Agency sets PHGs rather than the US EPA.

Trihalomethanes/ Haloacetic Acids Chemical by-products of chlorination as chlorine breaks down organic substances.

ug/L – Micrograms per liter Equivalent to parts per billion, a measurement of concentration on a weight or volume basis. One part per billion concentration is equivalent to one drop of ink in a 14,000-gallon swimming pool.

2025 Sunnyslope Water testing results

Sunnyslope Water tests water samples regularly for over 105 contaminants and substances. For brevity, the tables below summarize key test results only. To view comprehensive testing data, including undetected substances and those found in trace amounts, please visit sunnyslopedwater.org/water-sample-test-results.

Sunnyslope continually tests for primary regulated contaminants which affect health, as well as secondary substances that affect aesthetics but do not impact safety. To read the table, start with “Substance tested” on the left and read across. “MCL” is the highest level allowed for the substance, and “PHG/MCLG” is the goal level. The range for groundwater and surface water shows the lowest and highest amounts measured. “Typical sources” tells where substances originate. The “Violations” column shows that Sunnyslope has no water quality violations; in fact, we greatly exceed government requirements for all substances.

Substance Tested	Units of Measure	MCL (maximum allowed)	PHG or MCLG	Groundwater			Surface Water			Violations	Typical Sources*
				Average	Range	Sample Date	Average	Range	Sample Date		
Primary Regulated Substances: May cause health impacts with long-term exposure (year to decades) above MCL											
Arsenic	ug/L	10	0.004	2.43	ND-2.6	2/14/2023	ND	ND	3/5/2025	None	2
Fluoride	mg/L	2	1	0.28	0.22-0.37	2/14/2023	0.1	ND-0.1	3/5/2025	None	2
Nitrate	mg/L	10	10	2.4	1.3-3.3	2/14/2023	0.2	ND-0.4	3/5/2025	1 **	2,3
Chromium VI	ug/L	10	0.02	7.16	2.3-10.2	Quarterly	ND	ND	2/12/2025	None	2
Gross Alpha	pCi/L	15	0	2.58	2.58-2.58	1/27/2022	1.85	1.67-2.03	1/30/2020	None	1
Uranium	pCi/L	20	0.43	3.1	3.1-3.1	6/15/2023	NA	NA	NA	None	1
Secondary Water Standards: May cause aesthetic impacts like taste or appearance, but DO NOT cause health impacts											
Color	CU	15	NA	< 5	ND-5	9/19/2024	< 5	ND-5	Monthly	None	4
Manganese	mg/L	50	NA	ND	ND	9/19/2024	< 10	ND-15	Monthly	None	2
Turbidity	NTU	5	NA	0.1	0.10-.15	9/19/2024	0.02	0.016-0.044	Daily	None	5
Total Dissolved Solids	mg/L	1000	NA	760	710-810	4/24/2025	255	230-280	4/30/2025	None	2
Specific Conductance	micromh	1600	NA	1380	1310-1440	9/17/2024	470	405-590	2025	None	6
Chloride	mg/L	500	NA	109	88-130	4/24/2025	67	60-73	4/30/2025	None	2
Sulfate	mg/L	500	NA	195	190-200	4/24/2025	36	32-39	4/30/2025	None	2
Boron	ug/L	1000	NA	975	950-1000	4/24/2025	NA	NA	NA	None	2
Additional Water Quality Information: Non-regulated measurements that DO NOT cause health impacts											
Hardness	mg/L	NA	NA	430	428-432	9/19/2024	101	72-120	Weekly	None	2
Calcium	mg/L	NA	NA	70	70	2/19/2025	20.5	15-24	Monthly	None	2
Magnesium	mg/L	NA	NA	52.5	50-55	4/24/2025	12	8.4-16	Monthly	None	2
Sodium	mg/L	NA	NA	115	110-115	4/24/2025	49	45-53	4/30/2025	None	2
Silica	mg/L	NA	NA	28.6	25-31	4/6/2011	NA	NA	NA	None	2
Potassium	mg/L	NA	NA	2.7	2.6-2.8	4/24/2025	3.1	3.0-3.3	4/30/2025	None	2
Alkalinity	mg/L	NA	NA	320	310-330	4/24/2025	88.25	76-100	Monthly	None	2
pH		NA	NA	7.9	7.7-8.1	2/14/2023	7.92	7.5-8.2	Monthly	None	2

Substance Tested	Units of Measure	MCL (maximum allowed)	PHG or MCLG	Number of Detections	Sample Frequency	Violations	Typical Sources*
Microbiological Contaminants in Distribution System: May cause immediate health impacts with even minor limited exposure							
Total Coliform	Present/Absent	2 present per month	0	0	Weekly	None	7
E. Coli	Present/Absent	1 present	0	0	Weekly	None	8

Substance Tested	Units of Measure	MCL (maximum allowed)	PHG or MCLG	Average at Site with Highest Readings	Range Across All Sites	Sample Frequency	Violations	Typical Sources*
Disinfection By-Products and Residuals in Distribution System: May cause health impacts with long-term exposure (years to decades)								
Trihalomethanes	ug/L	80	NA	25	1.1 - 77.0	Quarterly	None	9
Haloacetic Acids	ug/L	60	NA	10	ND - 44	Quarterly	None	9
Chlorine	mg/L	4	4	1.21 across all sites	0.786 - 2.198	Daily	None	11

Substance Tested	Units of Measure	Notification Level	No. of Sample Sites	No. of Sites Over Notification Level	Level at 90th Percentile Site	Sample Date	Violations	Typical Sources*
Customer Tap Sampling: May cause significant health impacts with long-term exposure above notification level								
Lead	ug/L	15	40	2	0	8/10/2023	None	10
Copper	mg/L	1.3	40	0	0.082	8/10/2023	None	10

* See list of typical sources at the top of the sidebar. ** This non-health-related, single violation was issued because an outside laboratory reported one test result after the regulatory deadline. The test result itself was not a violation. The test was conducted correctly and met MCL requirements.

Drinking source water assessment

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) requires Drinking Water Source Assessment Programs to evaluate the vulnerability of water sources to potential contamination. All water sources on the planet are vulnerable to contamination, largely due to human development. Assessments are required any time a new water source or treatment process is brought online.

Groundwater Assessments for Sunnyslope Wells 2, 5, 7, 8, and 11 were updated in March 2009. These sources are considered most vulnerable to contamination from agricultural drainage, septic systems, sewer collection systems, and agricultural wells.

Surface Water An assessment for Lessalt and West Hills Water Treatment Plants was updated in 2017. This source is considered most vulnerable to contamination from recreational activities, government agency equipment storage, roads/streets, septic systems, sewer collection systems, grazing animals, farm machinery, orchards, row crops, grass lands, hay, pasture, wells, irrigation, housing greater than one house per half-acre, streams, rivers, and fault lines.

A copy of the summaries of these completed assessments may be viewed at the Sunnyslope Water district office.

Some people may be more sensitive to contaminants

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immunocompromised 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 individuals should seek advice from their health care providers.

US EPA/Centers for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection from cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the US EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

Lead and copper testing

To further safeguard our community, Sunnyslope Water also performs lead and copper testing outside the treatment and distribution system at high-risk schools and homes in our district. These heavy metals can leach into water when service lines or home plumbing contain lead pipes, or copper pipes with lead solder. As defined by federal and state laws, high-risk is defined as schools constructed before January 1, 2010, and homes with plumbing installed between January 1983 and June 1986.

Results of lead and copper testing in the Hollister area have always been below the notification level set by the State Water Resources Control Board. If lead concentrations exceed an action level of 15 parts per billion, or copper concentrations exceed an action level of 1.3 parts per million in more than 10 percent of customer taps sampled, actions must be taken to control corrosion or replace the system.

If your home falls into the high-risk category and you'd like your water tested free of charge, please call us at (831) 637-4670.



Sunnyslope Operators test residual chlorine levels at all five Sunnyslope wells every day to ensure that drinking water is safely disinfected without creating unpleasant odor or taste.

Drinking water regulations

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the US EPA and the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) prescribe limits for the amount of certain contaminants in drinking water. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) establishes limits for contaminants in bottled water.

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. For more information about contaminants and potential health effects, please see the contacts below.

The sources of 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 are:

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, that can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.

Pesticides and herbicides that may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.

Organic chemical contaminants including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, that are byproducts of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, agricultural application, and septic systems.

Radioactive contaminants that can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production, and mining activities.

For more information on...

... water contaminants and regulations, please visit the **US Environmental Protection Agency** at water.epa.gov/drink.

Note: The longstanding Safe Drinking Water Hotline has been replaced with email only. Visit epa.gov/safewaterhotline to find the correct email address for your inquiry.

... California's water infrastructure, competing water demands, and environmental issues, please visit the **Water Education Foundation** at watereducation.org.

Sunnyslope Water District
3570 Airline Hwy.
Hollister, CA 95023

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
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ALL AMERICAN MAILING



Here is your Sunnyslope Water District

2025 Annual Water Quality Report

As part of our regulatory requirements, Sunnyslope Water District produces this consumer confidence report to summarize the results of the more than 15,000 water quality tests we conduct annually. We continually test your drinking water to not only meet, but exceed all state and federal standards for quality and safety.

Sunnyslope had no water quality violations in 2025—or at any time in the last 29 years for either primary (health-related) or secondary (aesthetic taste/smell) contaminants. Any health-related contaminants detected were at trace levels, well below the concentrations allowed by the US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) for health and safety.

At Sunnyslope, we are wholeheartedly committed to providing you with safe, reliable, high-quality drinking water. We value our customers and want you to be informed. If you have any questions about this report or your water service, please call us at (831) 637-4670. To view comprehensive water testing results, please visit sunnyslopewater.org. You may also contact the US EPA for information about contaminants, health effects, and the Safe Drinking Water Act at water.epa.gov/drink, or visit epa.gov/safewaterhotline to email specific questions.

Drew Lander, P.E.
General Manager, Sunnyslope Water District



Drew Lander, P.E., General Manager, Sunnyslope Water



Sunnyslope Water District

Providing reliable, high-quality, cost-effective water and sanitary services to our community, to protect human health and the environment

3570 Airline Hwy, Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 637-4670 | sunnyslopewater.org
Open Monday-Friday, 8 am to 5 pm

Free 24-hour emergency service

If you think your water meter is leaking, or you see water gushing in the street, it is an emergency. Do not hesitate to contact us at (831) 637-4670, day or night! Our on-call staff will return your call immediately.

The public is welcome to attend Sunnyslope Water District board meetings, held every fourth Tuesday of the month at 5:15 pm. To attend remotely via Zoom, please click the board meeting link at sunnyslopewater.org.

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