

## WATER QUALITY

We ensure that your water is safe through regular monitoring and testing of water quality. Testing is conducted by independent, state certified testing laboratories. This report shows a summary of the laboratory test results for the constituents we regularly monitor in your water supply. Responsibility for maintaining your water quality resides with our staff of certified water treatment plant operators, licensed by the Maine Department of Human Services.

The Safe Drinking Water Act directs the State, along with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to establish and enforce minimum drinking water standards.

These standards set limits on certain biological, radioactive, organic and inorganic substances sometimes found in drinking water. Two types of standards have been established. Primary drinking water standards set achievable levels of drinking water quality to protect your health. Secondary drinking water standards provide guidelines regarding the taste, odor, color, hardness, and other aspects of drinking water, which are not health risks. The 2009 test results indicate that your water meets all state and federal requirements. Detected contaminants are shown in the attached table.

## WATER SUPPLY / SOURCE INFORMATION

The Caribou Utilities District procures its water from two gravel wells on the River Road in Caribou. Chemicals used in the treatment process include Sodium Hypochlorite for disinfection, Fluoride for dental health, and Ortho-phosphate for corrosion control. Although water quality is very high, the water is somewhat harder. Customers are urged to regularly flush water heaters and water boilers to reduce mineral deposits from the harder water. Also, customers should try different detergents for clothes washing and dishwashing to determine which are best for hard water. Small amounts of white vinegar may reduce mineral deposits in dishwashers and other heating appliances such as coffee makers.

Sources of drinking water include rivers, lakes, ponds, and wells. As water flows either on the surface or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and radioactive material and can also accumulate substances resulting from human and animal activity. The Maine Drinking Water Program (DWP) has evaluated all public water supplies as part of the Source Water Protection Program (SWAP). The Assessments included geology, hydrology, land uses, water testing information, and local ordinances to see how likely our drinking water source is to being contaminated by human activities in the future. Assessment results are available at public water suppliers, town offices, and the DWP. For more information on the SWAP, contact the DWP at telephone (207) 287-2070.

All sources of drinking water are subject to potential contamination by constituents that are naturally occurring or are man made. Those constituents can be microbes, organic or inorganic chemicals, or radioactive materials. All 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. Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised 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 microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791. 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.

In 2009, we applied for and were granted a partial waiver for water testing for certain synthetic organic compounds (SOC) (Phase II/V). This is an exemption from doing tests for insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, and certain other industrial chemicals that are regulated in drinking water. The State of Maine Drinking Water Program grants a waiver only upon determining, on a case by case basis, that 'it will not result in an unreasonable health risk.' For any water tests that are not waived, we are required to report contaminants that were detected in our water supply in this report.

## WATER SYSTEM DATA

Your water supply and distribution system includes over 30 miles of water main, serves over 1700 customers and provides fire protection service through 154 hydrants.

In the last twelve months, we have produced and delivered over 194 million gallons of water. That is about 530,000 gallons each day. The system also maintains over 1.5 million gallons in 4 storage tanks. This storage allows us to meet peak system demand periods and maintain an adequate supply during fire fighting activities.

## 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 Caribou Utilities District is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but it 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 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>. Test results for the latest lead tests are shown in the attached table. The CUD tested below the action level for lead. CUD now qualifies for reduced monitoring every three years.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

This report is only a summary of our activities during the past year. If you have any questions about your water quality, the information contained in this report, or your water service in general, please call us at 496-0911 during normal business hours (Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.). You may also direct questions to the Maine Department of Human Services Drinking Water Program at 207-287-2070, State Toxicologist at 866-292-3474, or the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

## **Caribou Utilities District**

PO Box 10, 176 Limestone St.  
Caribou, Maine 04736  
Public Water Supply ID #90320

## **2009 Water Quality Report**



This is the annual Water Quality Report of the Caribou Utilities District serving the City of Caribou, Maine. This report is intended to provide you with important information about your drinking water. We know that you count on us for a safe and reliable supply of water every day and we are dedicated to providing the highest quality of service. The Caribou Utilities District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

If at any time you have questions concerning your water or wastewater services, please do not hesitate to contact us at 176 Limestone Street, call us at 207-496-0911, or visit our website at

[http:// www.cariboumaine.org/utilities](http://www.cariboumaine.org/utilities)

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR

In 2009, the CUD contracted with CES, Inc. to investigate stormwater connections to the sewer system. Smoke testing, TV work, and visual inspection resulted in a final report to CUD and DEP. The CUD cooperated with the City in repaving projects and with Maine DEP in replacing oil tanks in the Watershed Protection Area around the District's wells. Two new water services and three sewer service were added in 2009.

Caribou Utilities District  
176 Limestone St.  
PO Box 10  
Caribou, Maine 04736

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Office telephone:	207-496-0911
Emergency/after hours:	207-493-3301
Website:	<a href="http://www.cariboumaine.org/utilities">http://www.cariboumaine.org/utilities</a>
Email:	<a href="mailto:cud@cariboumaine.org">cud@cariboumaine.org</a>

The Caribou Utilities District Board of Trustees consists of a five person Board appointed by the City Council for a term of three years. The Board holds regular meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at its office building at 176 Limestone Street. Board Meetings are open to the public and your participation is encouraged.

The Caribou Waterworks was first established in 1889 as The Caribou Water Company, and in 1903 reformed as the Caribou, Water, Light and Power Company. In 1943 the power generation assets were sold to Maine Public Service Company and the Waterworks was acquired by General Waterworks Corporation of Philadelphia, Pa. In 1989 the Caribou Utilities District (CUD) purchased the Caribou Waterworks Corporation, adding a water treatment and distribution system to the District. A new groundwater source and treatment plant were completed in 2006 to replace the old filter plant built in 1941. The new facility provides higher quality water that complies with more stringent water quality standards.

The Caribou Utilities District (CUD) was organized in 1945 to take over the assets of the Caribou Sewer Company (1905) and to manage wastewater functions for the City of Caribou. In 1960, a primary treatment plant was constructed at 176 Limestone Street to treat wastewater prior to discharge to the Aroostook River. Significant industrial loadings were added to the CUD facilities from local potato processing plants. In order to provide an improved effluent quality, The Charles D. Hatch Treatment Facility was constructed in 1983 near Grimes Mills on the Aroostook River, some 2.5 miles down river from the primary plant. Three aerated lagoons totaling 36 million gallons were constructed along with disinfection facilities. Periodic improvements have been added to improve treatment and effluent water quality.