



# COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

## 2019 ROTA WATER QUALITY REPORT

June 1, 2020

*Call Your CNMI Water Regulators  
and Operators*

*BECQ-DEQ Director*

*Jonathan Arriola • (670) 664-8500*

*CUC Water Division Manager*

*Randy Blackcloud • (670) 322-5030*

*CUC Water Laboratory Manager*

*Heidi Yelin • (670) 322-5140*

Jason Diaz, Glenn Villagomez, Gabriel Dela Cruz, and Anthony Barcinas repair a booster pump that is used to pressurize the water lines in the Sinapalo village.

**TO REPORT A LEAK OR WATER THEFT, CALL THE 24-HOUR CUC CALL CENTER  
AT (670) 664-4282**

# 2019 CUC ROTA WATER QUALITY REPORT

This report is designed to inform you about the water CUC delivers to you, our customer. Our goal is to provide you and your family a safe and dependable supply of drinking water.

Today, 100% of all Rota water customers enjoy 24-hour water service. Our CUC water employees continue to strive to deliver a quality product to all of our customers and to protect the CNMI's water resources.

To ensure the safety of your water, CUC routinely monitors for contaminants in your drinking water according to CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) laws, rules, and regulations.

Each year, trained laboratory and water treatment specialists conduct or supervise more than 1,000 tests on Rota water samples. Water quality samples are collected throughout the CUC Rota water system and tested regularly. Samples include untreated and treated water taken from our facilities, sample sites throughout the service areas, and at customers' homes.

Except where indicated otherwise, this water quality report is based on the results of CUC's monitoring for the period of January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019. Any results reported before January 1, 2019, and presented here, are from the most recent monitoring period.

## *A Message from the CUC Executive Director*

Welcome to Commonwealth Utilities Corporation's (CUC's) Annual Water Quality Report. This year is an unusual year for all of the CNMI and CUC is doing everything it can to follow the CDC and other expert sources to manage and provide safe, quality drinking water services during this pandemic. Always be at a safe distance, wear a mask, and wash your hands frequently.

Each year we produce this report to update our customers and the community on the quality of the drinking water we supply throughout our service areas. Due to the low levels of some chemical elements, CUC is allowed to monitor for these compounds on a less frequent basis; for example, we test for lead and copper once every three years.

Our corporate strategy is to be an exceptional service provider offering 24-hour water that puts customers first and benefits the community. Safe, high quality drinking water is a life-giving resource; its provision contributes to community health and hygiene. We strive to deliver our services in a reliable and affordable way that is accessible to everyone in our community. Our service area is growing and encompasses Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

We supply water to our customers via an extensive, largely underground network of over 400 miles of water mains, as well as associated valves, holding tanks, pumping stations, and secondary disinfection plants. Our priority as an exceptional service provider is to manage and operate this network so that our customers continue to reliably receive the quality, safe drinking water they expect.

The information presented in this report explains the sources of our drinking water, how it is treated so that it is safe to consume without further treatment, and demonstrates in detail how the quality consistently meets primary drinking water quality standards such as bacterial contaminants. We verify the quality of the drinking water supply via a comprehensive monitoring program that also allows us to identify potential improvements to benefit our customers and community.

I am pleased to report that this independent chemical and microbial testing continues to demonstrate that the quality of our drinking water supply meets EPA standards as established by the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) of 1974 and associated regulations that are periodically revised. Details of the testing and the results form a major part of this report.

Further to monitoring the supplied water quality, we also rely upon feedback from customers to advise us of local issues that may arise. Such feedback is recorded as water quality related customer complaints.

Our drinking water quality management processes are endorsed through an uninterrupted history of successfully retaining drinking water certification and compliance as required by the SDWA.

CUC is committed to continue to providing high quality, safe drinking water to all our customers and community. I am confident that you will find the information contained in this report helpful to better understanding the quality of our drinking water supply.

*Gary P. Camacho, Executive Director*

## The Sources of CUC Rota Water

The primary source of water for the island of Rota comes from the one surface water source that is rarely supplemented with groundwater from three deep groundwater wells.

To control bacterial contamination in our water, CUC water operators add trace amounts of chlorine added to the water before it goes into the water lines to you, our customer.



As Matmos, Rota

## How Drinking Water Becomes Contaminated

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:

- ▶ 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, 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, and residential uses.

- ▶ Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm-water runoff, and septic systems.
- ▶ Radioactive contaminants, which can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

In order to ensure that your tap water is safe to drink, the US EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. 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 **EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791** or on the internet at [www.epa.gov/safewater/](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/).

## For People with Sensitive Immune Systems

**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 transplant, 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 health care providers. The US EPA and the Centers for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available at the **EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791** or via the internet at [www.epa.gov/safewater/](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/).

## Information About Nitrates

Nitrate in drinking water at levels above 10 ppm is a health risk for infants of less than six months of age. High nitrate levels in drinking water can cause blue baby syndrome. Nitrate levels may rise quickly for short periods of time because of rainfall or agricultural activity. If you are caring for an infant, you should ask for advice from your health care provider. CUC tests the water in Rota at least once per year. The amount of nitrates in all CUC water is below the health effect level.

For more information about your water quality, please call our Water Laboratory at (670) 322-5140.

## Is CUC Rota water safe to drink? YES!

Every month, CUC Rota tests our water for the microbiological contaminants, total coliform and *E.coli*. All samples tested during 2019 were free of these bacteria.



Peter Taitano measures the amount of chlorine in a CUC Rota water sample. Every day, water operators check several sites throughout the CUC Rota water system to ensure that all areas have the proper amount of chlorine.



# Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

## SUMMARY OF PRIMARY DRINKING WATER QUALITY RESULTS FOR 2019



ROTA							
Disinfection Residual	MRDL	MRDLG	Year Tested	Highest Running Annual Average	Range	Violation?	Major Source of Contaminant
Chlorine (ppm)	4	4	2019	1.2	0.4 - 1.7	NO	Disinfection additive used to control microbes
Disinfection By-Products	MCL	MCLG	Year Tested	Highest Running Annual Average	Range	Violation?	Major Source of Contaminant
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM) Locational Running Annual Average (ppb)	80	NA	2019	1.9	ND - 2.8	NO	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Inorganic Contaminants	MCL	MCLG	Year Tested	Highest Result	Range	Violation?	Major Source of Contaminant
Nitrates + Nitrites as Nitrogen (ppm)	10	10	2019	0.71	NA	NO	Runoff from fertilizer; leaking septic tanks; sewage; erosion from natural deposits
Lead and Copper at Customer Taps	Action Level	Action Level Goal	Year Tested	Sites Exceeding AL/ Number of Sites	90th Percentile	Violation?	Major Source of Contaminant
Lead (ppb)	15	0	2019	0 / 10	1.7	NO	Corrosion of household plumbing systems and erosion of natural deposits
Copper (ppm)	1.3	1.3	2019	0 / 10	0.033	NO	

### UNREGULATED COMPOUNDS DETECTED IN 2019

Compound	Recommended Level	Year Tested	Result	Range	Violation?	What This Compound Measures
Calcium, Total (ppm)	NE	2019	53	NA	NA	Measures calcium in water from natural deposits or erosion
Chloride (ppm)	250	2019	15	NA	NA	Measures several naturally occurring salts in water
Magnesium, Total (ppm)	NE	2019	2.2	NA	NA	Measures magnesium in water from natural deposits or erosion
pH	6.5 to 8.5	2018	7.5	NA	NA	Measures the acidity or alkalinity of water
Sodium (ppm)	NE	2019	6.5	NA	NA	Measures sodium in water from natural deposits or erosion
Specific Conductance ( $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ )	NE	2019	280	NA	NA	Measures how well water conducts electricity depending on the amount of dissolved ions
Total Dissolved Solids (ppm)	500	2019	167	NA	NA	Measures amount of minerals dissolved in water
Total Hardness as Calcium Carbonate (ppm)	NE	2019	134	NA	NA	Hardness is the sum of the many forms of naturally occurring calcium and magnesium compounds

ND: Not Detected - Substance was tested for but not detected.

NA: Not Applicable

NE: None Established

# MEASUREMENTS

## Contaminants are measured in:

**ppm:** Parts Per Million or milligrams per Liter (mg/L)

**ppb:** Parts Per Billion or micrograms per Liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ )

**$\mu\text{S/cm}$ :** Micro Siemens Per Centimeter - a measurement of a solution's ability to conduct electricity

## HOW MUCH IS ONE PART PER MILLION?

### ONE PART PER MILLION IS THE SAME AS:

1 second in 12 days

1 penny in \$10,000

7 drops of water in a bathtub

1 inch in 16 miles



## HOW MUCH IS ONE PART PER BILLION?



### ONE PART PER BILLION IS THE SAME AS:

1 second in 32 years

1 penny in \$10 Million

1 drop of water in a swimming pool

1 inch in 16,000 miles

# DEFINITIONS

## **MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level**

The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

## **MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level Goal**

The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risks to your health. The MCLG amount allows for a margin of safety.

## **MRDL: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level**

The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

## **MRDLG: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal**

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 contamination.

## **AL: Action Level**

The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that the utility must follow.

## PAY YOUR CUC BILL ONLINE OR BY PHONE

Save time and money by paying your CUC bill online or by phone! You can pay with your Visa or MasterCard debit or credit card.

Register your account for online payments at [www.cucgov.org](http://www.cucgov.org)  
For payment by phone, please call  
(855) 729-2282.

## DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION?

Call CUC at (670) 664-4282

For information about your water quality or to find out about opportunities to participate in public meetings, please contact our 24-hour Call Center at (670) 664-4282.

Visit CUC online at  
[www.cucgov.org](http://www.cucgov.org) or  
email us at [cucadmin@cucgov.org](mailto:cucadmin@cucgov.org)

## Information About Lead

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 Commonwealth Utilities Corporation 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 the 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** at (800) 426-4791 or at [www.epa.gov/safewater/lead](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead).

EPA requires testing for lead and copper at customers' taps that are most likely to contain lead and copper.

**We thank our customers for their help in collecting these samples!**

None of the sites tested exceeded the action level for lead or copper.

## Water Outages to Repair Lines

Unscheduled service interruptions occur when operators need to make adjustments or repairs to the water system.

For an update about when your water service will be restored, please call the **CUC Call Center** at (670) 664-4282 or visit our [website](#) for the most recent information.

## Secondary Water Constituents *NOT ASSOCIATED WITH ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS*

Many constituents, such as calcium or chlorides, which are often found in drinking water, can cause taste, color, and odor problems. The taste and odor constituents are called secondary constituents and are not regulated by the US EPA or the CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ). **These constituents are not causes for health concern.** While secondary constituents are not required to be reported in this document, they may greatly affect the appearance and taste of your water.

Hardness is a measure of the amount of calcium and magnesium compounds in the water. Chlorides measure the amount of salts in the water.

The CUC Rota water contains very low amounts of chlorides and has no salty taste. The Rota operators add just enough chlorine to keep the CNMI's best tasting water safe to drink.

## CUC is on Facebook!



Follow us to  
get the  
latest news  
about CUC.



# What is a Water Quality Report?

Here is your annual Water Quality Report. It is about the water supplied by the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation. In 1996, the U.S. Congress amended the Safe Drinking Water Act and now requires that the CUC, your “Community Water System,” publish this report each July. **This report contains important**

**information about your drinking water. Speak with someone who understands it or who can translate it.**

We hope you read about the source of your water, the levels of detected contaminants, why our water is so different from village to village, and what is being done to correct or improve water services in the CNMI.

As consumers become better informed, they become involved and make better decisions about our environment, how money is spent, and our options in water utility management.

**If you need the report translated, wish to speak with someone about the report, or would like a paper copy delivered or emailed to you, please call CUC at (670) 664-4282.**

Estagui iyon-miyu ripot gi sákkán nu i Kuálidát i Hånum. Put atyu i hånúm ni ginin i Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ni mu nåná’i hamyu, iyon-mámi customer. Gi 1996 (mit nuebi sientu nubentái sais) na sákkán, i U.S. Congress ha amenda i Áktun Sináfu Magimin Hånúm ya pá’gu manisisita atyu i CUC, iyon-miyu “Sisteman Hånúm Kumunidát” para u pupblika esti na ripot ántis di Hului 1. **Esti na ripot ha sasaguan siha manimpottánti na infotmasion put i un gigimin na hånúm. Kuentus yan otru na taotao ni mu kumprendi pat háyi siña mu transláda para hágu.**

In espiránsa na un taitai put source i hånúm-mu, i levels ni masodda’ i binenu siha, háfa na i hånúm-ta na ti pumarehu gi kada songsong esta otru songsong, ya háfa machochó’gui para u manadinanchi pat manake’maolik i setbision hånúm siha gi hálum i CNMI.

Kumu consumers manma’infotma máolik, mañånão yan manma’tinas la’máolik na disision siha put i uriyáta, taimanu magásta i saláppi’, yan inayek-ta siha gi minanehan water utility.

**Kumu un nisisita i ripot matransláda, ya malagu’ hão kumentusi háyi put i ripot pat malagu’ hão kopian páppit u ma’entrega pat mana’hånão guatu para hágu, put fabot hágan i CUC gi (670) 664-4282.**

Iyeel yóómw arongorong reel Water Quality ghal ráágh. Mileel nge reel schaal iye Commonwealth Utilities Corporation re ayoorai ngálúgh, lemám customer. Llól 1996, U. S. Congress re liiweli mille Safe Drinking Water Act nge ighila re tipáli bwe CUC, yóómw “Community Water System,” bwe ebwe ghommwal akkatééwow arongorong yeel mmwalil Ullyo 1. **Eyoor impotantil arongorong yeel reel schaal iye si ghal úlúmi. Kkapas ngáli iyo mwu e metaff me ebwe bwal affata ngálúgh reel mileel.**

Ai ghal tettengágh ngáli ghámi bwe ów bwe árághi milikka e toowow bwe arongorong reel schaal iye yáami, level reel milikka re schúngi bwe mil nngaw, meta bwulul bwe schaal ese weewe me schaalil sóóbw ikka akkáv, me meta iye emmwel sibwe fééru ngáre siiweli bwe ebwe ghatchúló aar alilis reel schaal llól CNMI.

Ngáre re aronga ghatchúr consumers, emmwel rebwe schuu bwe rebwe ppwol fengál reel mwóghutughut ikka e lo weleórosch, efaisúl re yáali selaapi, me sibwe áfilihatch reel mwóghutughutúl mille water utility management.

**Ngare eyoor arongorong iye u mwuschel rebwe seleti, ngare u mwuschel kkapas ngáli escháy reel arongorong yeel, me ngare u mwuschel rebwe afanga ngare email ngalúgh pappid yeel, fafailó CUC reel (670) 664-4282.**

Naglalaman ang report na ito ng importanteng impormasyon tungkol sa iyong iniinom na tubig. Magkaroon ng isang tao na isasalín ito sa iyong wika para sa iyo, o makipag-usap sa isang tao na nakakaintindí dito.

このレポートには飲料水に関する重要な情報が記載されています。この英文を訳してもらるか、またはどなたか英語が分かる方にたずねてください。

此报告包含有关您的饮用水的重要信息。请人帮您翻译出来，或请看懂此报告的人将内容说给您听。

이 보고서에는 귀하의 식수에 대한 중요한 내용이 실려있습니다. 그러므로 이 보고서를 이해할 수 있는 사람한테 번역해 달라고 부탁드립니다.



**Commonwealth Utilities Corporation**  
P.O. Box 1166  
Rota, MP 96951

Fax (670) 532-9415  
E-mail at [cucadmin@cucgov.org](mailto:cucadmin@cucgov.org)



CUC Rota Water operator Anthony Barcinas adjusts the amount of chlorine needed to disinfect the water served to customers.

**CUC 24-Hour Call Center (670) 664-4282**