

Questions & Answers: Consumer Confidence Report Rule Revisions

What are Consumer Confidence Reports?

A consumer confidence report (CCR), sometimes called a “Drinking Water Quality Report,” summarizes information about the local drinking water and includes information about source of water, monitoring results of detected contaminants, descriptions of any rule violations, and explanations of additional health information.

What is the CCR Rule?

Promulgated in 1998, the CCR Rule is the centerpiece of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) public right-to-know rules under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The rule requires water systems to deliver a CCR to all consumers by delivering a physical copy of the CCR itself or by electronic means, including delivering a notification that the CCR is available by mail or by sending an electronic copy. To expand the reach of the CCR, the rule also requires water systems make a “good faith” effort to deliver the CCR to non-bill paying consumers.

Why is the CCR Rule changing?

As part of the America’s Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 (AWIA), Congress instructed the EPA to revise the CCR Rule. The final rule supports the goal of the SDWA “right-to-know” provisions by improving the CCRs so people can make informed decisions about their drinking water. AWIA requires the rule be revised to improve the readability, clarity, understandability, accuracy, and risk communication of the CCRs and that water systems provide increased access to the CCRs. *To learn more visit:* <https://www.epa.gov/ccr/consumer-confidence-report-rule-revisions>.

What are the major revisions EPA is making to the CCR Rule?

CCR’s will need to include of a brief summary of the key information, access to translation support, be delivered using more modern delivery methods, and be delivered more frequently in communities of 10,000 or more people.

The CCR’s will also clarify information regarding lead levels and efforts to reduce lead in drinking water. Consumers that live in communities of 50,000 or more people will have access to the reports on a publicly available website, which will be available for at least three years.

How will readability, understandability, and clarity of CCR’s improve?

Every CCR will include a brief summary at the beginning to highlight key information such as contact information for the system, how to receive a paper copy if the report is delivered electronically, and identification of any violations or action level exceedances that occurred in the previous reporting period. In addition, in communities with large proportions of consumers with limited English proficiency, translated CCR’s or translation support will be available to support their understanding of the information in the reports. Large systems must develop plans on how they intend to provide translation access to community members with limited English proficiency. For consumers that may need accessibility accommodations to the CCR, systems will need to make a reasonable attempt to address the request.

How will accuracy and risk communication of CCRs improve?

CCRs will include information about the water system's efforts to prevent lead from entering drinking water. If a water system detected lead concentrations above a specific level, the report will need to explain what actions the water system has or will take to address the action level exceedance and the timeframe for taking those actions. Reports will also include updated language, including specific statements on nitrate and arsenic, improving the risk communication of the information in the reports.

When and how will CCR be delivered?

For many consumers served by community water systems, CCRs will be delivered twice each year. The **first report** delivered by July 1st which will summarize information about the quality of drinking water for January through December of the previous year. Then, the **second report** will be delivered by December 31st. Water system with violations of National Primary Drinking Water Regulations (NPDWRs), detections of lead concentrations above a specific level, or with newly available monitoring data about unregulated contaminants, will include a 6-month update along with the previously delivered annual report. Other systems will deliver the first report again to ensure consumers receive it. Community water systems serving less than 10,000 people will continue to deliver CCRs once per year.

The revised rule's expanded "good faith" CCR delivery options will promote updated methods to reach consumers that do not receive water bills, including advertising the availability of reports on social media, sending alert text messages to interested consumers, or hosting public meetings to educate community members. Furthermore, consumers in communities of 50,000 or more people will have access to CCRs on publicly accessible websites, and any which will remain available for at least three years.

What is compliance monitoring data (CMD) and why are states reporting CMD to EPA?

States, territories, and tribes that have primacy for the Public Water System Supervision program ("primacy agencies") are currently required by regulation to regularly collect water quality monitoring data from water systems that helps them determine if water systems comply with NPDWRs. These data are known as compliance monitoring data (CMD).

Currently, primacy agencies report limited data to the EPA about general water system information (e.g., type of water treatment and the size of the water system), water system violations, and other actions. To improve the EPA's ability to oversee the implementation of the SDWA, provide more complete and accurate information on compliance to consumers, and target technical and financial assistance, the revised rule requires primacy agencies to annually report all CMD they collect from water systems to the EPA beginning in 2027.

What is the timeline for the Implementation of the CCR Rule Revision?

CCRs will need to meet the new requirements beginning in 2027, and states, territories, and tribes that manage the Public Water System Supervision program will begin reporting compliance monitoring data in 2027.