



**Gwinnett's Tap
Water Meets
Federal Drinking
Water Standards**

Department of Water Resources

WATER QUALITY REPORT

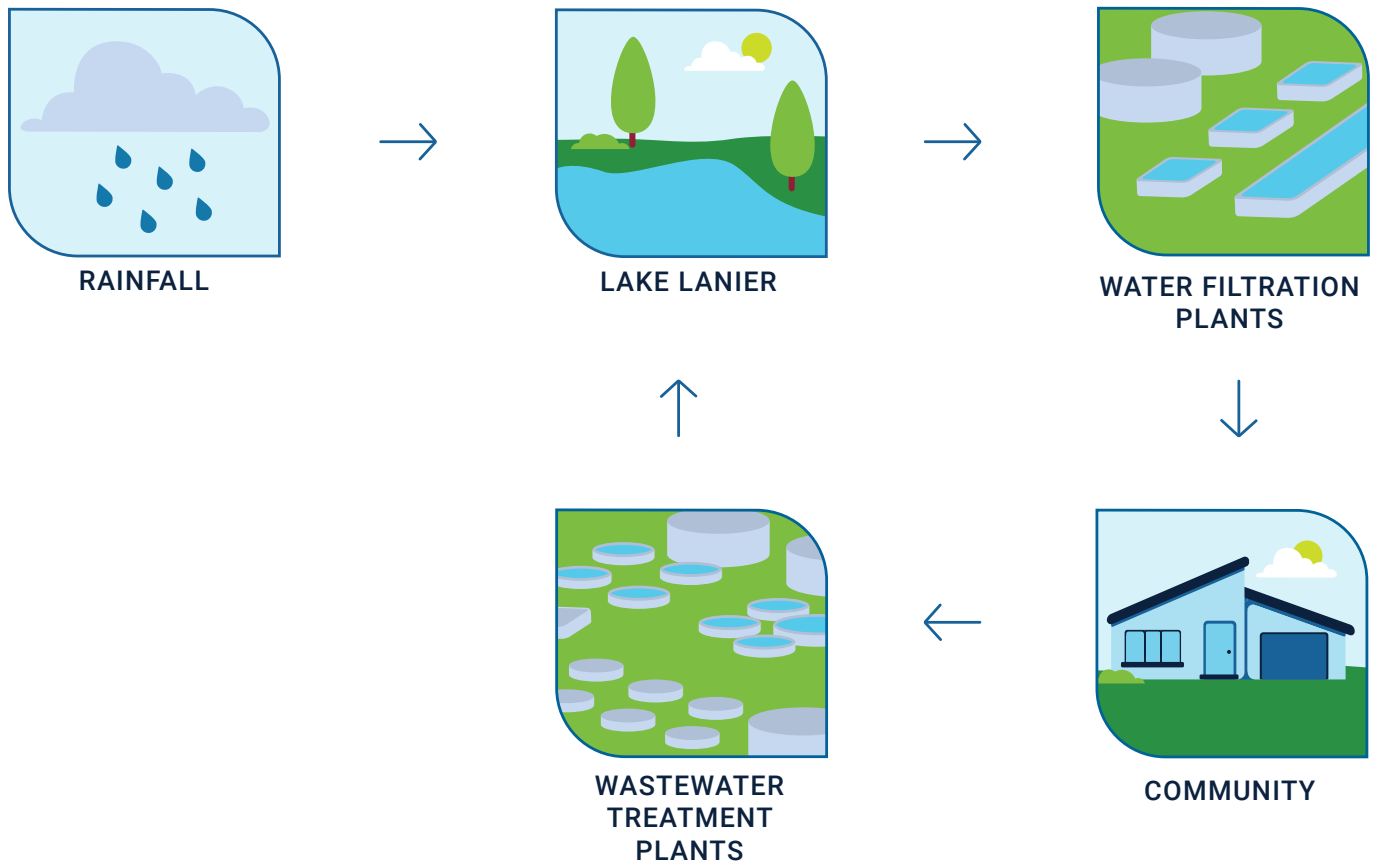
Data collected from January 1 through December 31, 2023

GWINNETT'S TAP WATER MEETS FEDERAL DRINKING WATER STANDARDS

The Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources is pleased to present the annual Water Quality Report, also known as the Consumer Confidence Report. This report contains important information about the quality of our drinking water, including detailed results of state and federally mandated tests for various contaminants. We are proud to say that in 2023, there were no EPA Safe Drinking Water Act violations to report. A safe and reliable drinking supply is essential to a growing, progressive community like Gwinnett. Our team is committed to the research and implementation of innovative ways to deliver high-quality drinking water at an affordable price.

THE HUMAN WATER CYCLE

Gwinnett County receives its drinking water supply from Lake Sidney Lanier. The 38,000-acre man-made reservoir is the largest lake in Georgia and supplies water to more than five million people in Gwinnett County and neighboring jurisdictions.



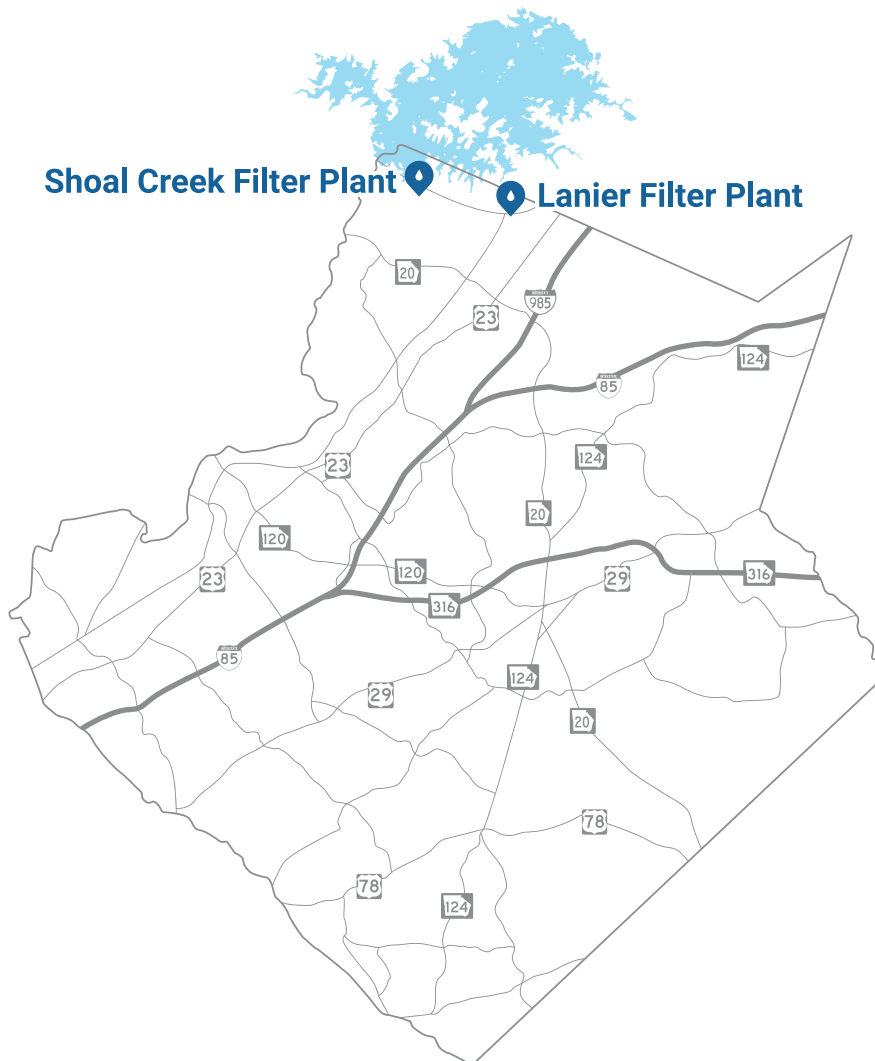
DRINKING WATER SUPPLY

Gwinnett County receives its drinking water supply from Lake Sidney Lanier. Water from the lake is drawn in through two large intake pipes underwater. That water, commonly called “raw water”, then travels through pipes to one of two water filter plants, Shoal Creek or Lanier. It is then filtered and disinfected through advanced processes. Chlorine is added to keep the water clean as it travels through over 4,000 miles of pipes to homes, schools, and businesses around the County.

Once the water is used and goes down the drain, it enters the sewer system. This used water, or wastewater, is then brought into wastewater treatment plants through a different underground system, which consists of over 3,000 miles of wastewater, or sewer, pipes.

The treatment plants use different advanced techniques to remove solids and clean the water to some of the highest standards in the country! This cleaned wastewater, known as effluent, is then put back into the environment to start the cycle again!

The water we use today is the same water that has been on Earth for millions of years. Because of this, it is incredibly important that we all do our part to take care of this precious and limited resource. Gwinnett County has a completely different set of pipes spanning more than 1,600 miles that keeps our stormwater separate from drinking or wastewater. This water does not go to a treatment plant. Anything that goes down the storm drains leads straight to the waterways that we enjoy at our parks and in our backyards.



PROTECTING AND CONSERVING GWINNETT'S WATER

How does Gwinnett protect water quality?

- Ensures federal and state water quality standards are met
- Produces and distributes over 25 billion gallons of water per year
- Maintains two water production plants, three wastewater treatment plants, and more than 8,000 miles of pipe
- Performs nearly 20,000 water quality tests each year as part of the drinking water production and distribution process
- Samples waterways regularly throughout the county as part of the Adopt-A-Stream program
- Provides water conservation programs and education
- Removes an average of 11 tons of trash from waterways each year through volunteer events

What can you do to help?

- Minimize pesticide and fertilizer usage and follow directions for use and disposal to prevent chemicals from getting into streams and rivers
- Do not pour fats, oils, grease, or hazardous waste down the drain, onto the ground, or into storm drains to prevent sewer system backups and environmental pollution
- Pick up pet waste to prevent rainwater from picking up bacteria and carrying it to our surface waters
- Ensure that only rain goes down the storm drain
- Never flush anything besides human waste and toilet paper down the toilet
- Get involved in our Adopt-A-Stream program; visit [GwinnettCB.org](https://www.gwinnettcba.org) to learn more
- Participate in a volunteer cleanup or host your own

Water Conservation Tips

Conserving water at home can save you money on your water bill. Try the money-saving tips below:

- Turn off the faucet while you brush your teeth or shave
- Catch the initial cold water in a bucket while waiting for the shower or sink to warm up and use it to water plants
- Run the dishwasher or clothes washer only when you have a full load
- Routinely check your faucets and toilets for leaks
- Use a broom to clean walkways and driveways instead of a hose
- Water plants early in the morning to reduce evaporation
- Use auto shut-off nozzles on your hose
- Install rain barrels to collect rainwater

To request an indoor or outdoor conservation kit and to learn more tips on how you can save water and money, visit [DWRConserve.com](https://www.dwrconserve.com).

IMPORTANT HEALTH INFORMATION

When talking about drinking water, contaminants are any physical, chemical, biological, or radiological substance in water. Basically, this is anything other than water molecules. Most contaminants are harmless, but some can be harmful at high levels. The presence of contaminants in drinking water does not necessarily mean there is a problem or a health risk.

How are Contaminants Measured?

- **Parts Per Million (ppm):** One part per million corresponds to one drop of water in a hot tub
- **Parts Per Billion (ppb):** One part per billion corresponds to one drop of water in an Olympic-sized swimming pool
- **Parts Per Trillion (ppt):** One part per trillion corresponds to one drop of water in 20 Olympic-sized swimming pools



Parts Per Million (ppm)



Parts Per Billion (ppb)



Parts Per Trillion (ppt)

Why are contaminants in water?

As rainfall travels over or through the ground, it picks up naturally occurring minerals as well as other substances that may be on or in the ground left by humans or wildlife. Drinking water, both tap and bottled, is supplied by rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. All of Gwinnett's tap water comes from Lake Lanier. Contaminants could include viruses, bacteria, salts, metals, pesticides, herbicides, and more. Gwinnett County's filter plants follow a strict disinfection process that results in the removal of at least 99.9 percent of contaminants.

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 **1.800.426.4791**.

Important Health Information

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 people, 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 microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at **1.800.426.4791**.

INFORMATION ON LEAD AND PFAS

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. Gwinnett County Water Resources 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 2 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 **1.800.426.4791** or at **[EPA.gov/SafeWater/Lead](https://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead)**.

Gwinnett is required to test a minimum of 50 homes for lead and copper every three years. The last testing occurred in 2023. Compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule is based on obtaining the 90th percentile of the total number of samples collected and comparing it against the lead and copper action levels. To have an exceedance, the 90th percentile value must be greater than 15 ppb for lead or 1.3 ppm for copper.

Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

PFAS, which stands for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are a group of over 6,000 man-made compounds that can be found in many products. Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid, also known as PFOS, and perfluorooctanoic acid, also known as PFOA, are widely used in industries around the world because of their resistance to heat, oil, stains, grease, and water. These compounds can be found in food wrappers, water and stain resistant coatings, non-stick cookware, coated paper and packaging, firefighting foam, paints, waterproof clothing, shampoo, cosmetics, and other personal care products.

The chemical makeup of these compounds makes them extremely stable and they do not break down in the environment. Because they do not break down, there is a national concern that these compounds can be released into our water sources.

On April 10, 2024, the Environmental Protection Agency or EPA published final National Primary Drinking Water Regulation for PFAS. They have set the limit for perfluorooctanoic acid and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid to 4.0 parts per trillion each. Gwinnett has been following this research and has been monitoring our PFAS levels in spite of it not being required. Our data shows that Gwinnett meets this EPA regulation (see the chart on pages 7 – 8).

As we continue to navigate the complexity of PFAS, we will continue to ensure we are transparent with our data.

WATER HARDNESS

Water hardness is calculated by the amount of magnesium, calcium, and carbonate in milligrams per liter (mg/L) or grains per gallon (gpg). Gwinnett tests water hardness several times a week and has a consistent hardness around 22 mg/L or 1.5 gpg.

How hard is your water?

The hardness scale is measured in grains per gallon (gpg) of calcium carbonate. You can see how hard your water may be by using these ranges.



What's the difference between hard water and soft water?

Hard water has a better taste, provides necessary minerals, and rinses soap better. Soft water does not build up in water appliances and soap lathers better in soft water than hard water.

Why do I sometimes taste and smell chlorine?

Chlorine is used in the water production process because it protects the water from contamination as it travels through pipes to your home. Some people are more sensitive to the taste and smell of chlorine and can detect even small amounts. If you notice a smell or taste of chlorine, you can fill a pitcher with water and place it in the refrigerator to dissipate the remaining chlorine.

Why is fluoride in the water?

Georgia state law requires the addition of fluoride into drinking water. This is meant to prevent dental decay. Gwinnett adds the lowest allowable amount of fluoride during the drinking water production process.

What should I do if my water has an odd smell, taste, or appearance?

A change in your water's taste, appearance, or smell does not necessarily mean there is a health concern. However, it is always best to let Gwinnett County know by calling our 24/7 dispatch line at **678.376.7000**.

UNDERSTANDING THE WATER QUALITY CHART

The Water Quality Chart compares the quality of your tap water to national drinking water standards. **All results meet EPA standards.** Unless otherwise noted, this data is based on testing completed from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

Terms to Know:

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs are set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as technologically feasible.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): 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 (MRDLG): 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 contaminants.

Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU): Turbidity is a measure of the cloudiness of the water. We monitor it because it is a good indicator of water quality. High turbidity can hinder the effectiveness of disinfectants.

Treatment Technique (TT): A required process intended to reduce the level of contaminant in drinking water.

Regulatory Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements that a water system must follow.

Type	Meets EPA Standard	Substance	Testing Frequency
EPA Regulated Substances or Contaminants	✓	Fluoride (ppm)	Daily
	✓	Nitrate/Nitrite (ppm)	Annually
Disinfection By-Products and Disinfectant Residuals	✓	Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) (ppb)	Quarterly
	✓	Haloacetic Acids (HAA5s) (ppb)	Quarterly
	✓	Total Organic Carbon (TOC) (ppm)	Monthly
	✓	Chlorine (ppm)	Monthly
	✓	Bromate (ppb)	Monthly
Cloudiness	✓	Turbidity	Continuously
Microbiological Contaminants	✓	Total Coliform Bacteria	Monthly
Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)	N/A	Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA)	Quarterly
	N/A	Perfluorooctane Sulfonic Acid (PFOS)	Quarterly
Type	Meets EPA Standard	Substance	Frequency
Lead and Copper Levels at Residential Taps	✓	Lead (ppb)	50 homes tested every 3 years
	✓	Copper (ppm)	50 homes tested every 3 years

Typical Source	Maximum Level (MCL)	Maximum Goal (MCLG)	Gwinnett's Range	Gwinnett's Average	Notes
Water additive that promotes strong teeth	4 (ppm)	4 (ppm)	0.58 – 0.96 (ppm)	0.85 (ppm)	Fluoride is added to water to help promote dental health in children.
Fertilizer runoff, leaching from septic tanks, or erosion of natural deposits	10 (ppm)	10 (ppm)	N/A	0.40 (ppm)	Nitrate and Nitrite are measured together
By-products of drinking water disinfection	80 (ppb)	0 (ppb)	11.0 – 65.6 (ppb)	65.6 (ppb) (Highest Detected LRAA)	Locational Running Annual Average (LRAA) – the average of analytical results for samples taken at a particular monitoring location during the previous four calendar years
By-products of drinking water disinfection	60 (ppb)	0 (ppb)	10.7 – 26.9 (ppb)	26.9 (ppb) (Highest Detected LRAA)	
Decay of naturally occurring organic matter in the water withdrawn from sources such as lakes and streams	TT	N/A	0.90 – 1.80 (ppm)	1.2 (ppm)	
Drinking water disinfectant	MRDL=4	MRDLG=4	0.02 – 2.46 (ppm)	1.57 (ppm)	
By-products of drinking water disinfection	10 (ppb)	10 (ppb)	<5.0 (ppb)	<5.0 (ppb)	
Soil runoff	TT, <0.3 in 95% of monthly samples	0 NTU	N/A	0.14 NTU (Highest Detected)	100% Lowest % of samples meeting limit
Naturally present in the environment	<5% positive samples (monthly)	0	0% – 0.64%	0.64% (Highest % positive samples monthly)	Approximately 306 samples taken monthly
Consumer, commercial, and industrial products	4 (ppt)	0 (ppt)	0.93 – 1.28 (ppt)	1.10 (ppt)	Though it wasn't required in 2023, Gwinnett monitored the amount of Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in the drinking water. These substances are found in water, air, fish, and soil across the world. During this reporting period, these substances were not regulated by the EPA, but recent changes in regulation mean they will be regulated in the future.
Consumer, commercial, and industrial products	4 (ppt)	0 (ppt)	0.90 – 1.16 (ppt)	1.02 (ppt)	
Typical Source	Action Level 90% ppb	90 th Percentile Sample Result in Gwinnett	Sites Exceeding Action Level in Gwinnett (AL)	Of 50 homes tested, number that exceeded action level (AL)	Notes
Corrosion of household plumbing systems	15	0	1	1	Gwinnett is required to test a minimum of 50 homes for lead and copper every three years. The last testing occurred in 2023. Compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule is based on obtaining the 90 th percentile of the total number of samples collected and comparing it against the lead and copper action levels. To have an exceedance, the 90 th percentile value must be greater than 15 (ppb) for lead or 1.3 (ppm) for copper.
Corrosion of household plumbing systems	1.3	0.18	0	0	

WATER RESOURCES ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Providing leak repair, septic repair, and water-saving fixtures

Help is available

Do you need assistance fixing a leak, getting more water-efficient fixtures, or fixing your septic tank? Gwinnett Water Resources has developed a water resources assistance program that can help.

Services offered

- Plumbing repairs: services could include repairs such as leaking/broken toilets, leaking fixtures, water heater leaks, and service line leaks
- Retrofitting homes: services could include the retrofit of the home with low-flow, high-efficiency toilets, faucets, and showerheads if the home was built prior to 1992
- Septic systems: services could include septic system repairs and replacements

Need additional help?

Gwinnett Water Resources has customer advocates that can help you through the application process. Contact a customer advocate at WRAP@GwinnettCounty.com or by calling **678.376.6800**.

Learn more and apply at GwinnettCounty.com/WRAP.

GETTING INVOLVED

The Department of Water Resources offers many opportunities for residents to get involved, to learn how to save water to save money, and to learn how to protect our most precious resource. All public outreach programs are offered free of charge to Gwinnett County residents, schools, and businesses:

- Workshops and classes
- Events and festivals
- Stream cleanups
- In-school programs
- Volunteer opportunities

Learn more about programs and events, see a full schedule, or request a speaker at Gwinnetth2o.com.

To schedule an educational program or tour for your group, please contact DWR Outreach and Education at DWRSchools@GwinnettCounty.com or **678.376.6722**.

PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

The Gwinnett County Water and Sewerage Authority, which owns the Water Resources water and wastewater system, acts as an advisory agency to the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners. The authority meets monthly at the DWR Central Facility. For the meeting schedule, visit Gwinnetth2o.com/PublicMeetings.

YOUR WATER IS AWARD WINNING!

Best Tasting Water in Georgia

– Georgia Association of Water Professionals (2022)

Best Operated Plant of the Year, Lanier Filter Plant

– Georgia Association of Water Professionals (2023)

Platinum Rating, Shoal Creek and Lanier Filter Plant

– Georgia Association of Water Professionals (2023)

Laboratory Quality Assurance Gold Award

– Georgia Association of Water Professionals (2021, 2022, 2023)

Platinum Level Distribution System

– Georgia Association of Water Professionals (2023)

Gwinnett Water Resources has also won awards for wastewater treatment, stormwater, customer service, and safety training.



CONTACT US

Billing/Customer Care:

678.376.6800

DWRCare@GwinnettCounty.com**Report a Problem:**

678.376.7000

General Information:

678.376.6700

DWRInfo@GwinnettCounty.com**Backflow Questions:**

678.376.4213

DWRBackflow@GwinnettCounty.com**BMPs/Detention Ponds:**DWRStormWaterBMP@GwinnettCounty.com**In-School Presentations:**

678.376.6722

DWRSchools@GwinnettCounty.com**Water Conservation:**

678.376.6722

DWRConserve@GwinnettCounty.com**Workshops, Events, Volunteer Opportunities:**

678.376.7193

DWRWorkshops@GwinnettCounty.com**Water, Sewer Availability, Mapping, GIS:**

678.376.7139

Sewer Capacity Certification:

678.376.7026

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For additional information about this report, contact the Gwinnett County Water Resources Laboratory at 678.376.4272.

