

# ARSENIC CONTAMINATION IN DRINKING WATER

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

To make provision of potable tap water supply in adequate quantity, of prescribed quality and on regular & long-term basis to every rural household in the country by 2024, since August, 2019, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) is being implemented in partnership with States. Under JJM, while allocating the funds to States/ UTs, 10% weightage is given to the population residing in habitations affected by chemical contaminants including Arsenic.

Since, planning, implementation and commissioning of piped water supply scheme based on safe water source may take time, purely as an interim measure, States/ UTs have been advised to install community water purification plants (CWPPs) especially in Arsenic and Fluoride affected habitations to provide potable water to every household at the rate of 8 – 10 litres per capita per day (lpcd) to meet their drinking and cooking requirements.

Under JJM, upto 2% of the annual allocation to States/ UTs can be utilized for Water Quality Monitoring & Surveillance activities (WQM&S) i.e. for setting up and strengthening of water quality testing laboratories, surveillance by community using field test kits (FTKs), awareness generation and educational programmes on water quality, etc.

To enable States/ UTs to test water samples for water quality in drinking water quality testing laboratories and using Field Test Kits (FTKs), and for sample collection, reporting, monitoring and surveillance of drinking water sources, an online JJM – Water Quality Management Information System (WQMIS) portal has been developed, which is available in public domain on JJM Dashboard and can also be accessed at:

<https://neer.icmr.org.in/website/main.php>

This portal also provides automated alerts to concerned authorities in States/ UTs, if the water sample tested is contaminated, to initiate remedial actions. On this portal an individual can also register his sample and choose nearby water quality testing laboratory to get the water sample tested. Thus, testing of water samples and reporting in rural areas, has been made accessible and easy, which will help consumers to become aware of the quality of drinking water being supplied in their homes.

Under Jal Jeevan Mission, States/ UTs have been advised to plan schemes of bulk water transfer from long distance in villages with water quality issues and non-availability of suitable surface water source in nearby areas.

(c) & (d) Contamination in drinking water sources in rural areas is monitored on habitation wise. As reported by States, as on date, State-wise number of districts and habitations reported to have Arsenic contamination in drinking water sources, is **annexed**.

**Annex**

## **State-wise number of Arsenic -affected districts and habitations**

(As on 15.03.2022)

S. No.

State/ UT

No. of districts

Number of Arsenic-affected habitations

No. of Arsenic-affected habitations wherein CWPP\* installed

1.

Assam

3

32

32

2.

Bihar

3

11

2

3.

Jharkhand

1

1

1

4.

Punjab

13

560

94

5.

Uttar Pradesh

10

107

107

6.

West Bengal

7

946

253

**Total**

**37**

**1,657**

**489**

\* Community Water Purification Plant (CWPP)

*Source: JJM-IMIS*

This Information was given by the Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel in a written reply in Rajya Sabha today.

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**BY/AS**

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**END**

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