

February 15, 2026

Town of Lakeview Town Council
525 N. 1st Street
Lakeview, OR 97630

CC: Oregon Health Authority - Drinking Water Services; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10; Lake County Examiner; Oregon Public Broadcasting

RE: 2025 Consumer Confidence Report — Questions Regarding Water Quality Testing Transparency

Dear Mayor, Town Council Members, and Public Works Director Fortune,

Thank you for publishing the 2025 Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) for the Town of Lakeview’s drinking water system. As a Lakeview resident, consumer of this water, and parent raising children in this community, I appreciate that this report is made available. I’ve read it carefully, and I’m writing because I have questions that I believe deserve clear, transparent answers — not just for myself, but for every one of the approximately 1,600 consumers this system serves.

I am not writing this letter to be adversarial. I’m writing it because the report itself raised more questions than it answered, and I believe our community deserves to fully understand what’s in our water and what isn’t being tested for.

Regarding the Testing Data Presented

The CCR states that “the most recently required sampling results met all Primary Federal and State drinking water standards.” However, the testing data table presents results from a wide range of dates:

Nitrate and Arsenic: May 16, 2022

Lead and Copper: August 4, 2020

Gross Alpha and Radium Combined: October 1, 2019

Disinfection Byproducts (TTHM/HAA5): August 30, 2022

Total Coliform Bacteria: 2025 (the only current-year data referenced)

This means the data in a report titled “2025” spans six years, with no results at all from 2023, 2024, or 2025 for the majority of regulated contaminants. This leads me to ask:

1. Can you help me understand why a 2025 Consumer Confidence Report contains no water quality testing data from 2023, 2024, or 2025 for contaminants including nitrate, arsenic, lead, copper, radionuclides, and disinfection byproducts?
2. The report states on page 10 that “during the past couple of years, the Town failed to conduct required testing for inorganics, nitrate, volatile organics, disinfection byproducts, synthetic organics, nitrite, radionuclides, and lead and copper.” If the Town acknowledges it has not conducted the required testing, how can the report’s opening statement that our water “meets all Federal and State requirements” be considered accurate?
3. The testing results presented appear to have been selected from different years — some from 2019, some from 2020, and some from 2022. What criteria were used to select which historical results to include? Were any test results from these years excluded from the report, and if so, why?

Regarding What We Don’t Know

The report acknowledges that it is “unknown when the most recent asbestos testing was performed,” despite asbestos testing being required once every nine years. This is concerning for several reasons, but primarily because it suggests a lack of institutional knowledge about the system’s compliance history.

4. How long has the Town been out of compliance on required water quality testing? Is the “past couple of years” referenced on page 10 an accurate characterization, or has the gap in testing been longer?
5. The report mentions that the Town owns six wells but actively uses only three (Wells #2, #7, and #9) due to “maintenance and water quality issues.” What specific water quality issues caused the other wells to be taken offline, and when were those decisions made?
6. The report states that 28 spring sources along Bullard Canyon are “currently unused.” What is the status and condition of these spring sources, and is there a plan to assess or utilize them?
7. The report notes that the Town’s water contains “exceedances in certain chemical species set forth within the EPA’s National Secondary Drinking Water Standards.” Which specific secondary standards are being exceeded, and at what levels? Why wasn’t this data included in the report?

Regarding the Water Treatment Facility

The report references a Water Treatment Facility “currently under construction” to address iron and manganese content.

8. What is the projected completion date for the Water Treatment Facility, and what is its current construction status?

9. Will the new facility address only iron and manganese, or will it also treat for other contaminants? If only iron and manganese, what is the plan for addressing the other identified contaminants and the gaps in testing?

Regarding the Service Line Inventory

The report acknowledges the Town is “deficient” on its service line inventory, which is required by OHA specifically to identify any remaining lead-based service lines.

10. What is the current timeline for completing the service line inventory, and how many service lines have been assessed to date?

11. Have any lead service lines been identified so far in the inventory process? If so, how many, and what is the plan for replacement and notification to affected residents?

Regarding Accountability and Next Steps

12. The report states that required testing “will be conducted within the first half of 2026.” What specific testing schedule has been established, and will the results be made publicly available as they are received — rather than waiting for next year’s CCR?

13. What consequences, if any, has the Town faced from OHA for the acknowledged failures in required testing? Has OHA issued any notices of noncompliance, and if so, are those available for public review?

14. Will the Town commit to issuing a supplemental public report once the overdue testing is completed in 2026, so that residents don’t have to wait until 2027 to learn what is in their water today?

I want to reiterate that I am asking these questions in good faith. I understand that infrastructure challenges are real, budgets are tight, and small towns face unique difficulties. But this is our drinking water. This is what our children drink, what we cook with, what we bathe in every day.

A Consumer Confidence Report is supposed to provide confidence. Instead, this report presents years-old data as current, acknowledges widespread testing failures buried on the second-to-last page, and opens with a declaration of compliance that appears to be contradicted by its own contents. That doesn’t inspire confidence — it raises serious questions about whether we are being given the full picture.

Our community deserves to know — clearly and honestly — what is in our water, what isn't being tested for, and when that will be corrected. I respectfully request written responses to each of the questions above, and I ask that those responses be made available to all residents.

I also request that this letter be entered into the public record and read at the next Town Council meeting.

Respectfully,

/s/ Lauren Simms

Lauren Simms

Lakeview Resident and Consumer

cc: Oregon Health Authority – Drinking Water Services

OHA Compliance

U.S. EPA Region 10

EPA Safe Drinking Water

Lake County Examiner

Oregon Public Broadcasting