

# Lajes Field Quarterly Drinking Water Quality Report

October – December, 2013



The 65th Medical Operations Squadron, Bioenvironmental Engineering Flight (65 MDOS/SGOJ (BE)) informs consumers quarterly about the quality of their drinking water. BE conducts semi-annual testing to ensure compliance with the Final Governing Standards for Portugal (FGS-P). The FGS-P water quality standards are a compilation of the most stringent standards published within the European Union, United States Environmental Protection Agency Safe Drinking Water Act, and local Portuguese standards. Lajes Field has seven groundwater wells, one water treatment plant, and six storage reservoirs which supply our potable water system. All seven wells extract water from the same partially-confined aquifer which meets the demand requirements for the entire installation. The Lajes Field water treatment plant uses a filtration system followed by chlorination for disinfection. Fluoride is also added to the water to help maintain healthy teeth.

The sources for 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 materials and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. 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.

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 transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk for infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their healthcare providers.

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. Per the FGS-P, Lajes Field is required to use only lead-free pipe, solder, flux, and fittings in the installation or repair of water systems and plumbing systems for drinking water. Minimal traces of lead will always be present in said components therefore, water samples are taken twice a year to measure lead levels. Levels have shown to be very minute and cause no risk to health. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for a few seconds before using water for drinking or cooking.

From October to December 2013, BE collected a total of 80 different water samples. The drinking water for Lajes Field was sampled for all contaminants required within the FGS-P. All samples were within FGS-P parameters equating to a 100 % compliance rate.

Individual analytical results are available for your review by contacting the BE office at 535-6206.

**For more information contact:**

- 65 MDOS/SGOJ (BE), DSN 535-6206/295-576-206 or commercial 295-576-206  
- Lt Col (Dr.) Christine Tholen, DSN 535-3261 or commercial 295-573-261