

# What is a primacy Fee?

The primacy fee is a user fee, paid by the customers of Missouri's public water supply systems and was initially established by state law. Two percent of the primacy fee goes to the public water system to cover the costs of collecting the fee. The remaining fees are forwarded to the Missouri Department of Revenue for use by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The Department of Natural Resources uses the primacy fee to fund testing for drinking water contaminants, inspections, compliance activities, complaint investigations and technical assistance. The **Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services** receives an appropriation from the primacy fee for the Missouri State Public Health Laboratories bacteriological testing of water systems.

The benefits of the primacy fee to public water systems:

- Laboratory testing services provided by the State Public Health Laboratory have saved Missouri's public water systems, and their customers, millions of dollars annually
- Reduced monitoring to match contamination risk, based on vulnerability assessments provided by the Department of Natural Resources
- Water system inspections and compliance oversight provided by the Department of Natural Resources to satisfy federal requirements
- Technical assistance from the Department of Natural Resources to help maintain and achieve compliance and improved customer satisfaction
- Access to low-interest loans for capital improvements from the state revolving fund
- Additional operator training opportunities funded by the state revolving fund

Missouri's primacy creates a positive financial impact to public water systems and their customers. The State Public Health Laboratory performs tests for significantly less than a water system would have to pay on the open market. Public water systems would have to do more monitoring under the federal regulation than they do under state regulation. Vulnerability assessments performed by the Department of Natural Resources reduce the amount of monitoring by approximately 75%. EPA does not perform such assessments and would require the full scope of monitoring. The costs of increased monitoring would inevitably affect customer water bills.