

BIS STANDARDS FOR DRINKING WATER

Characteristic	BIS Requirement Limit	BIS Permissible Limit	WHO Guidelines	US EPA Limit
Essential Characteristics				
Colour (in Hazen units)	5	25	15	15
Odour	Unobjectionable	-	-	-
Taste	Agreeable	-	-	-
Turbidity (in NTU)	5	10	5	-
pH	6.5 - 8.5	6.5 - 8.5	-	6.5 - 8.5
Total Hardness (as CaCO ₃)	300	600	-	-
Iron (as Fe)	0.3	1.0	0.3	0.3
Chlorides (as Cl)	250	1000	250	250
Residual Free Chlorine	0.2	-	-	-
Desirable Characteristics				
Dissolved Solids	500	2000	1000	500
Calcium	75	200	-	-
Copper	0.05	1.5	2	1.3
Manganese	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.05
Sulphate	200	400	250	250
Nitrate	45	100	50	10
Fluoride	1.0	1.5	1.5	4
Phenolic Compounds	0.001	0.002	-	-
Mercury	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.002
Cadmium	0.01	0.01	0.003	0.005
Selenium	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.05
Arsenic	0.05	0.05	0.01	-
Cyanide	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.2
Lead	0.05	0.05	0.01	Zero
Zinc	5	15	3	5
Anionic Detergents	0.2	1.0	-	-
Chromium	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.1
Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbons	-	-	-	-
Mineral Oil	0.01	0.03	-	-
Pesticides	Absent	0.001	-	-
Alkalinity	200	600	-	-
Aluminium	0.03	0.2	0.2	0.05 – 0.2

- All units in mg/liters unless mentioned otherwise.
- US EPA standards are Maximum Contaminant Level Goals (MCLG) and are non-enforceable public health goals.