The first thing that stood out when comparing the maps to each other was in how many of the contaminants did not make the threshold in any state station. With only fluoride and arsenic being exceptions, every other contaminant map shows a lack of contamination reaching the threshold in any water station. This shows that the US is doing a fairly good job at minimizing the risk of contaminants in its drinking water.

However, there was still variation in the data within this low level of contamination. PCB stood out for having many states that not only failed to reach the threshold in any stations, but for having the majority of its states not record any of the contaminant whatsoever in its water stations. Conversely, asbestos levels were either below threshold or not found whatsoever in water stations for which data was recorded, but asbestos also had many states in which no data was recorded in their water stations, which may be skewing results.

Looking at the maps for arsenic and fluoride does show that the US does still have some room for improvement in its water management. At first glance, it may appear as if it’s mostly California and Texas that have issues with their water management. Looking at the whole picture though and taking into account that states with more people will have more water stations, it is actually a few states with low populations that have the worst water systems. New Mexico, Arizona, and New Hampshire are all states with average or below average populations, but with many more water stations above the threshold than similar states.

In contrast, both New York and Florida have few stations that exceed the threshold for arsenic and fluoride despite the two states having very high populations that consume vast quantities of water. Even some relatively well performing states with low populations such as Montana and Maine have similar amounts of stations above the threshold.