

CHLORINATION OF CITY WATER SUPPLY INFORMATION

The city of _____ water department is now chlorinating the city water supply for the purpose of treating lead and copper. Chlorine is a chemical substance that is commonly used to bleach the laundry, clean out sinks and bathroom fixtures, and sanitize table and counter tops. Chlorine has been added to drinking water to protect the public health by keeping the water supply free of harmful bacteria and viruses. The process of using chlorine to treat drinking water is called disinfection. Approximately 75% of community water systems in Minnesota presently use chlorine for water disinfection.

As a result of testing for lead and copper, many systems are being required to conduct corrosion control studies, which include the use of small amounts of phosphate chemicals in the water supply. Phosphates tend to enhance the growth of bacteria in water and could cause some increase taste and odor problems. Therefore, the Minnesota Department of Health requires that water systems also provide disinfection with chlorine in order to prevent the increase in bacteria and related problems.

When chlorine is first added to a public water supply, many consumers will immediately notice a slight difference in the taste and odor of their drinking water. After a few weeks most consumers will easily adjust to the difference. For those who continue to notice the chlorine tastes, it is suggested that drinking water be chilled in the refrigerator before consumption and the taste and odor will generally disappear. Careful monitoring of the disinfection process and of residual chlorine levels in the distribution system will insure that consumer complaints are minimized and the new treatment process is acceptable to the consumer. Residents with aquatic fish should use chlorine removal tablets when changing water.

If consumers should have any questions or concerns, please contact the city water department at _____.