

# **Town of Madison Water Treatment Plant**

## **FAQ's About Water Quality**

### **Why is there Chlorine and Fluoride in our water?**

Chlorine is added to kill bacteria and prevent waterborne illnesses. Fluoride has been proven to promote oral health and is added to water at a concentration between 0.70 mg/l – 1.0 mg/l as recommended by the American Dental Association.

### **Can I remove the Chlorine taste in my water?**

Yes. Chlorine dissipates over time. You can remove the taste by filling a pitcher with water and placing it in your refrigerator for several hours or days.

### **What causes my water to be discolored?**

While the clean water delivered to you is normally clear, occasional pressure changes or fire hydrant use can cause discoloration due to mineral sediments in water pipes. If you have colored water coming from your tap, run your **COLD** water for five minutes and the color will most likely go away. If the water is still discolored, call the Water Treatment Plant at 427-3971. If your **HOT** water is discolored, you may have a hot water heater problem. One way to determine whether the problem is with your hot or cold water is to see if discoloration exists in your toilet bowl. If the toilet bowl water is not discolored then the discoloration is likely in your hot water or your home's plumbing. This is a private plumbing problem and we recommend that you contact a licensed plumber for advice.

### **Why are there pink stains on my fixtures and drains?**

Pink stains are usually caused by airborne microorganisms that settle and grow where there is moisture. Pink stains are “most likely from the environment and not the water supply” (reference: Water Quality Investigator's Field Guide (2005) American Water Works Association) Cleaning these areas on a regular basis will temporarily remove the stains.

### **I detect a strange taste or odor. Is it in the water?**

Taste and odor changes in your water can occur for many reasons; however, they do not always indicate a change in the safety of your water. Water taste is affected by mineral content as well as the presence of chlorine. A metallic flavor may be caused by your plumbing, especially if the water tap has not been turned on for several hours. Newer homes with PVC (plastic) pipes may also experience a temporary altered taste and odor. If you experience problems with the taste or odor of your water, let the **COLD** water run for a few minutes to clear the line, or fill a pitcher and allow it to sit for several hours in your refrigerator. One of the main causes of taste and odor problems involves garden hoses attached to external faucets. This allows tastes and odors from the garden hose to be noticed in the tap water you drink. Madison Water Plant recommends that garden hoses be disconnected when not in use. If problems with taste and odor still exist 24 hours after completing the items mentioned above, please contact 427-3971.

### **Why does my hot water smell like rotten eggs?**

If you only notice an odor in hot water, your water heater may need to be checked by a plumber. Also, certain water heaters have magnesium anodes to prevent corrosion that can cause an odor in tap water. Other odor sources may include food or a blockage in the garbage disposal or a drain.

**Why is a company asking to test my water?**

Several private companies hang surveys and small sample bottles on residential doors or mailboxes with an offer to conduct water quality tests. These tests are **NOT** associated with the Madison Water Plant or any other Town or County Department. If you have any questions about or issues with your tap water quality, please contact 427-3971.

**My water has a yellow or red tint to it. What is it?**

A yellowish tint is possible if the water has been sitting in the pipe for a long time. While the water is waiting to be used, it can collect dissolved iron sediment from older pipes. An increase in this mineral causes water to change color but doesn't affect the safety of the water. Run **COLD** water for several minutes to clear. Reddish water occurs from the buildup of minerals and sediment inside water pipes over several years. When the water is turned on quickly, such as a fire hydrant released rapidly, this built up sediment begins to move and in turn creates red colored water. Run **COLD** several minutes to clear,

**Why does my water look cloudy/milky?**

Sometimes water appears cloudy or milky because air is trapped inside the water pipe, causing excess bubbles. The bubbles will dissipate over time if you let the water sit in a container. If it continues, run your **COLD** water for several minutes.

**Is there bacteria in our drinking water?**

Madison Water Plant treats the water with chlorine to kill any harmful bacteria.

**Is lead found in our water?**

Lead is **NOT** in the water supplied by Madison Water Plant. Lead may be present in the tap water of homes with older plumbing that contained lead. Concentrations may be elevated particularly after the water is unused for an extended period of time. Allowing the faucet to run for a few minutes before using should reduce lead levels.

**Will flushing hydrants affect water service?**

Periodically crews flush water lines to maintain water quality or test the hydrants. While the hydrants are flushing you may see lower than usual water pressure, but it will be restored when flushing ends.