

Hardin County Water District No. 1

Serving Hardin County for Over 60 Years

1400 Rogersville Road
Radcliff, KY 40160

Questions & Answers

Using Chloramines for Disinfecting Drinking Water

Without some type of disinfectant in drinking water, disease-causing organisms may exist and cause widespread health issues for a community.

What are chloramines?

Chloramines are disinfectants that are formed when ammonia is added to chlorine to treat drinking water. Chloramines provide long-lasting protection as they do not break down quickly in water pipes.

Which water systems will be switching from chlorine to chloramine for its disinfectant?

All systems that receive drinking water from Hardin County Water District No. 1 will convert from chlorine to chloramines for disinfection of the drinking water.

When will the change occur in the water system?

Fall of 2020. There will be another notification as time draws near.

What can I expect to notice with the change?

Chloramination is expected to improve the taste and smell of the water delivered through the system. You may, however, notice an unfamiliar odor or taste for a few days during the change.

Are chloramines safe?

Yes, chloraminated water is safe for bathing, drinking, cooking and all everyday uses. Chloramines have been used safely in the U.S., Canada and Great Britain for more than 90 years. Other utilities, such as Louisville Water Company, Kentucky American Water and Hardin County Water District No. 2 have been using chloramine as part of their water treatment process. The EPA estimates that more than one in five Americans regularly use drinking water treated with chloramines.

Should we take special precautions with water containing chloramines?

Kidney dialysis patients and aquarium owners must take precautions and remove the chloramines from the water used.

What special precautions do dialysis patients have to take?

Chloramines, like chlorine, must be removed from the water before it can be used in kidney dialysis machines. Kidney dialysis patients should contact their physician or local kidney dialysis center for guidance on modifications to dialysis machines and procedures. Medical centers that perform dialysis are responsible for purifying the water

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that enters the dialysis machines. Kidney dialysis patients can still bathe, drink and cook with chloraminated water. The digestive process neutralizes the chloramines before they reach the bloodstream. It's only when water interacts directly in the bloodstream, as in dialysis, that chloramines must be removed.

What does the change in water disinfection mean for aquarium owners?

Chloramines, like chlorine, must be removed from the water before it is added to aquariums or fish ponds, including fish and lobster tanks in restaurants and stores. The ammonia used to form chloramines is toxic to fish and other aquatic life as it enters the bloodstream directly through the gills. The water can be purified for fish and other aquatic life by adding specific agents (sold at pet stores or other retail outlets with pet or aquarium supplies) to remove chloramines and ammonia or by using a high grade of granular-activated carbon to remove chloramines. Leaving water to sit is not a reliable method for removing chloramines from the water. Aquarium owners should visit local pet stores or other retail outlets with pet or aquarium supplies for dechloramination products and instructions. Water conditioners specifically designed for removing chloramines are commercially available.

If chloramines are harmful to dialysis patients and fish, why are they not harmful to me?

Chloramines are harmful only when they enter the bloodstream directly, as in the kidney dialysis process. Chloramines are broken down by the saliva and further neutralized by stomach acid. They leave the body through human waste quickly and cause no adverse health effects.

How can I remove chloramines from my tap water?

Unlike chlorine, chloramines can't be removed from drinking water by boiling water, allowing water to sit at room temperature over an extended period of time or by using reverse osmosis filters. However, there are commercial products available that remove chloramines from drinking water. Please contact a local carrier of home water filters for information on chloramine-removing filters.

I already have a water filter installed at my home, will it remove chloramines?

Some modern household treatment and filter systems may remove chloramines. To verify whether your current treatment or filter removes chloramines, please refer to your original filter packaging or contact a local provider of home water filters.

Additional questions?

Contact our Water Quality Specialist, Mr. Daniel Linder at 270-862-4340 or dlinder@hcwd.com.