

Did *you* KNOW?

Chlorine in your Drinking Water

BJWSA uses chlorine and chlorine compounds to help with disinfection...

The “Free Chlorine Switch”

BJWSA switches to “Free Chlorine”—or chlorine without ammonia—to flush our system and remove any build-up in our pipelines.

The water is still good for consumption, but you may notice a more pronounced chlorine odor or taste.

Like many utilities, BJWSA uses chlorine to disinfect its drinking water. The water is safe for consumption, and most people do not taste or smell the chlorine in the water. Usually, we use a type of chlorine called “Chloramine.”

The chemical make up of chloramine is pure chlorine mixed with ammonia. The ammonia allows the disinfecting power of the chlorine to last longer in our water distribution system.

Occasionally, BJWSA removes the ammonia from the chlorine—during what is called our “Free Chlorine Switch.” We do this in the colder months, because the “Free Chlorine” can last longer in cold water. This is part of routine maintenance, and it helps clear out any build up in the pipes throughout our system. The switch lasts about two weeks. To enhance the effectiveness of this process, customers can run their faucets for about three minutes, a couple of times per day.

The water is still safe for consumption. But, because of the removal of ammonia, some people may notice a more pronounced chlorine smell or taste. This does not mean more chlorine is in your drinking water, but only that it is more noticeable. Because of regular flushing, you may also notice some slight discoloration.

Those who are sensitive to chlorine taste or odor may want to keep an open container of drinking water in your refrigerator. This will enable the chlorine to dissipate, and reduce any taste or odor problems. Change your water container weekly.

If you have skin irritation, you may want to contact a health care professional. Some people find that using special soothing lotions during the time of the “Free Chlorine Switch” will alleviate any irritation.

Remember: your drinking water is still safe for cooking, cleaning and any other use. The “Free Chlorine Switch” lasts about two weeks, and BJWSA will be in your area flushing lines during that time.



MORE QUESTIONS?

Our website is packed with helpful information!
Visit www.bjwsa.org