

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT DRINKING WATER



I can sometimes taste and smell chlorine in the water. Why?

On an annual basis we change our system disinfection process from chloramine to free chlorine for maintenance purposes. While the system is changing from chloramines to free chlorine and then back you might notice some chlorine odors particularly when you are using warm or hot water. These changes are typically done in the fall of the year and last less than 30 days.

Questions regarding levels of chlorine, fluoride, and hardness in our drinking water supplies are commonly asked and we have listed in the table below some information regarding these and a few others. If you would like additional information please contact the Utility Department at 972-875-1234.

Substance	Units	Average	Minimum	Maximum	MCL	MCLG	Possible Source
Bicarbonate	ppm	85	84.0	85.6	NA		Corrosion of carbonate rocks such as limestone
Chloride	ppm	27.3	27.3	27.3	300		Abundant naturally occurring element; used in water purification; byproduct of oil field activity
Hardness as Ca/Mg	ppm	85.6	85.6	85.6	NA		Naturally occurring calcium and magnesium
pH	units	7.5	7.3	8.0	>7.0		Measure of corrosivity of water
Sodium	ppm	34.0	34.0	34.0	NA		Erosion of natural deposits; byproduct of oil field activity
Sulfate	ppm	53.5	53.5	53.5	300		Naturally occurring; common industrial byproduct; byproduct of oil field activity
Total Alkalinity as CaCO ₃	ppm	84	84	84	NA		Naturally occurring soluble mineral salts
Total Dissolved Solids	ppm	243	243	243	1000		Total dissolved mineral constituents in water
Fluoride	ppm	0.57	0.48	0.66	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits, water additive which promotes strong teeth, discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Chloramines *3	ppm	3.5	2.2	4	MRDL=4	MRDLG=4	Disinfectant used to control microbes

Sometimes the water coming out of the faucet isn't clear. Why?

If your home or business has old galvanized pipes, they can give water a reddish-brown or yellowish appearance. It is most noticeable if the water has been sitting in the pipes for an extended period of time. Iron is the cause of this color. Water in our system also at times due to temperature changes can have high levels of dissolved oxygen which can cause water to appear milky when it is drawn from the tap.

Flowing the water for a few minutes usually clears the from both the iron and dissolved oxygen discolorations. Occasionally maintenance or firefighting activities can result in customers receiving discolored water, even when using best management practices to prevent it. Again, flushing the plumbing in your home is needed to replace the discolored water.

If the water does not clear after complete flushing, contact City of Ennis Utilities at 972.875.1234 ext. 2249 to report the problem. If after 5 pm, contact 972-875-4465. We will clear things up as soon as possible.

The aerators on our faucets are filled with white debris. What is it?

“White chunks” or eggshell-like particles that clog faucet aerators and showerheads are actually pieces of plastic from hot water heaters that are experiencing dip tube failure.

The dip tube delivers cold water to the bottom of the hot water heater tank. Many dip tubes manufactured between 1993 and 1996 were found to be defective and, over time, have deteriorated. As the plastic dip tube breaks apart, pieces flow out of the tank through the hot water outlet and clog aerators and showerheads. These plastic pieces could be white or light green in color and if placed in a glass of water they will float. They are in no way toxic and will not make the water toxic. The defective dip tube can, however, affect the performance of your water heater.

There are two solutions to this problem.

1. One is to flush all the dip tube debris from the heater tank, install a new dip tube, and then clean all the strainers and aerators.
2. The second solution is to replace the water heater and then clean and flush the strainers and aerators. Contact a licensed plumber for additional information.