

The City of Harker Heights receives its water from the Bell County Water Control & Improvement District No. 1 (WCID). WCID #1 is the regional water supplier for the following customers; City of Harker Heights, City of Killeen, City of Belton, City of Copperas Cove, Fort Hood, Bell County WCID #3 (City of Nolanville), Belton Outdoor Lake Recreation Area (BLORA) and the 439 Water Supply Cooperation.

WCID will convert its disinfection process from chloramines to free chlorine for a period of approximately one month beginning today, October 21. Generally, there are no noticeable changes in water quality because of this temporary conversion. However, some individuals may notice taste and odor changes and a slight discoloration to the water.

WCID #1 currently uses chloramines (a combination of free chlorine and ammonia) to disinfect its drinking water supply prior to customer distribution. This is a reliable disinfection process that has been recommended by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for systems predominantly treating surface waters, such as those in the Harker Heights water system.

It is standard industry practice to periodically convert chloramines back to free chlorine to improve and maintain the highest water quality standards in potable water distribution systems. In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the TCEQ support this process as a necessary and effective measure for maintaining water quality.

The City will implement directional flushing, combined with routine water quality monitoring, as measures to maintain the highest water quality for customers during the conversion.

Some discoloration may still make it into customer service lines despite the City's efforts. Customers who experience discoloration should temporarily flush faucets, tubs, and toilets, until the water has cleared. Clothing should not be washed during times of discoloration to reduce the possibility of staining. Prior to washing clothing, customers may want to run a little water in a bathtub to check for discoloration.

Noticeable water quality changes associated with conversions are normally short lived and are not public health risks.

Customers can safely consume and use their drinking water as normal during the conversion period. However, dialysis patients should consult with their physicians prior to the conversion to ascertain whether pretreatment adjustments are necessary for their dialysis equipment. Most dialysis equipment has already been outfitted with charcoal filters that remove free chlorine and chloramines; however, customers should check with their doctor as a precautionary measure. The City of Harker Heights has notified local hospitals and dialysis clinics in advance so that they can implement process changes if necessary.

Those conditioning water for fish or aquariums may also need to make changes to their water pre-treatment process.

LINKS TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. Public Notice of Conversion.
2. Video on Free Chlorine Conversion (45 min)
<https://utexas.app.box.com/s/0dspz40z3hnixhfj4tpq8itt8pfv6zau/file/843319283531>
3. Temp Free Chlorine Conversion facts
<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/disinfection/temporary-free-chlorine-conversion>