



CITY OF DECATUR, TEXAS

1601 S. State St ★ P.O. Box 1299 ★ Decatur, TX 76234 ★ www.decaturtx.org

August 28, 2017

The City of Decatur “Free Chlorine Burn” Water Treatment Process Is Set to Begin Friday, September 1, 2017

Decatur’s water distribution system free chlorine burn process will be initiated at midnight August 31, 2017.

The City of Decatur; in its’ continual effort to provide the highest quality drinking water, will change disinfection methods to “free chlorine” for a period not to exceed 30 days. Normal disinfection methods will be reinstated by October 1, 2017. This will not affect the quality of your drinking water.

This process is accomplished by turning the ammonia off at the treatment plant, which produces a free chlorine residual that will kill bacterial growth in the distribution system. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality recommends this procedure to help achieve and maintain the required 0.5 parts per-million chlorine residual. Residents may experience chlorine smell and/or red water for approximately one to three weeks.

Ammonia will be turned back at midnight on September 30, 2017.

WHAT IS A FREE CHLORINE BURN, AND WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

The City of Decatur Water System monitors the disinfectant residual in our distribution system on a daily basis. This measurement tells us whether we are effectively disinfecting our water supply. Currently, the City of Decatur Water System uses chloramines for disinfection of the drinking water. Chloramines are created by combining chlorine and ammonia. During this free chlorine burn, the disinfection process will be changed from chloramines to free chlorine. Free chlorine is a stronger and faster-acting disinfectant. It is typical for water systems that use chloramines to temporarily change to chlorine in order to clean water pipes and provide a reliable disinfectant residual throughout all points in the distribution system. Free Chlorine HAS PROVEN to be more effective in killing organisms within the pipes of the distribution system.

WHAT WILL I SEE GOING ON DURING THIS PROCESS?

Customers may notice open fire hydrants throughout the city during this period, and possibly overflowing water storage tanks and towers.

The fire hydrants will be opened to allow flushing of the system. This will help remove sediment from the pipes and distribute the change in disinfectant.

Overflowing water storage tanks and towers further aid in the flushing process.

IS THE WATER SAFE TO DRINK?

Yes, the water will be safe to drink throughout the process. Any odor and color issues will only be a nuisance. They will subside as the flushing is completed.

WHAT ARE POSSIBLE NOTICEABLE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE FREE CHLORINE BURN PROCESS, AND WHAT SHOULD I DO?

It is important to understand that during this change, there may be some discoloration or cloudiness in the water, and possibly a slight odor or taste. If this is experienced, you may want to run the water through the tap for a few minutes until it clears. Fire hydrant flushing should remove a majority of the color and odor, but some may reach customer lines during this process.

Run the cold water tap for several minutes when the water is not used for several days.

Collect and refrigerate cold tap water in an open pitcher

You DO NOT need to boil your water or take other actions. This is NOT an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately.

Minor pressure fluctuations and small air pockets may also occur.

Discoloration in laundry water is possible during this time. Cleaning additives are readily available at local stores to help prevent or remove any discoloration that may occur.

WHAT IF I HAVE USE TAP WATER FOR DIALYSIS?

Customers who use tap water for dialysis at home should consult their doctor to advise them if any changes are necessary in their residual disinfectant neutralization procedures.

WHAT ABOUT THE WATER IN MY AQUARIUM?

Customers utilizing the water for aquariums should monitor both free and combined chlorine residual levels.