



August 9, 2023

**City of Decatur Water Distribution Annual System Maintenance  
September 06 – September 30, 2023**

The **City of Decatur** public water system, (PWS) ID **2490005**, will temporarily convert the disinfectant used in the distribution system from chloramine to free chlorine. The conversion will begin on **September 06, 2023** and continue through **September 30, 2023**. During this period, you may experience taste and odor changes associated with this type of temporary disinfectant conversion.

Public water systems are required to properly disinfect their water and maintain an adequate disinfectant residual in the distribution system. Chloramine, free chlorine combined with ammonia, is widely used as a disinfectant because it persists for long periods while also limiting the formation of disinfection by-product contaminants. Prolonged use of chloramine coupled with other factors that can impact water quality, such as high temperatures or stagnation of water, may result in the growth and/or persistence of organic matter within the pipes of the distribution system, which may hinder the ability to maintain an adequate disinfectant residual. A temporary conversion to free chlorine, partnered with flushing activities, helps to rid distribution pipes of this organic matter and improve the quality of your water overall.

Please share this information with all people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (i.e., people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

If you have questions regarding this matter, you may contact the Decatur Water Treatment Plant at 940-393-0267.

## **WHY IS A TEMPORARY CHANGE IN DISINFECTION NECESSARY? (ALSO KNOWN AS ANNUAL CHLORINE MAINTENANCE)**

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 treatment, 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 DISINFECTION 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, adding a slice of citrus/cucumber several hours before using.

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 TO 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.