



2515 Highlands Road
Punta Gorda, FL 33983

***Notice to Charlotte Harbor Water Association (CHWA) Customers
Change of Water Disinfection Process to Chloramines***

This notice is to inform CHWA customers beginning summer 2024 there will be a change in the water disinfection process to include chloramination. Chloramination is a water treatment process that involves the addition of both chlorine and ammonia or ammonium compounds to drinking water. This method forms chloramines, which are effective disinfectants that provide longer-lasting protection compared to chlorine alone. The chloramination process is designed to effectively reduce disinfection by-product formation in drinking water.

In order to continue to meet drinking water regulations governed by the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act, CHWA is working to improve the quality of water used in households, for personal use, and for drinking purposes through improved disinfection methods.

CHWA has been using a chlorine disinfection process to improve the water system. Chlorine is known to inactivate microbes that can make you sick, it also readily reacts with naturally occurring organic matter in the water to form unwanted disinfection by-products. As a part of the chloramination process CHWA will continue to use chlorine to disinfect the water, in addition a small amount of ammonia (less than one part per million) will be added to the water to form chloramines.

Chloraminated water is safe for drinking, cooking, and other everyday use. Most people in the community will not need to change their normal activities. However, if you use dialysis or have an aquarium, you should read the additional information provided on the Frequently Asked Questions. Chloramines are used in other cities in the state of Florida such as Tampa, Fort Myers, and the Miami-Dade area.

Please note that this change in disinfection affects CHWA customers only.

Questions? Need more information?

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact CHWA's public information consultant at 239-337-1071 or via email to info@chwawaterimprovements.com or visit website at www.chwawaterimprovements.com.

If you have any questions about the conversion to chloramines, please contact: Charlotte County Health Department at (941) 624-7200.

*****Included with this notice is Frequently Asked Questions**.***

Frequently Asked Questions about Chloramination

Is chloramine disinfection new?

No. Chloramine disinfection has been used in Florida for over 25 years and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that some utilities have used chloramines since the 1930s. Today, the EPA estimates more than one in five Americans uses drinking water treated with chloramines.

Are chloramines safe?

Yes. Chloraminated water is safe for bathing, drinking, cooking, washing, and other everyday uses. However, there are two groups of people who need to be especially aware of chloraminated water: kidney dialysis patients and fish owners.

What do you need to know if you use dialysis?

Like chlorine, chloramines must be removed from water used in kidney dialysis machines. The County is working with representatives of local health care centers to educate them about this change. If you are a dialysis patient or have questions, call your physician or the dialysis center nearest you.

Why do kidney dialysis patients have to take special precautions?

Like chlorine, chloramines in water used for dialysis would be toxic and must be removed. Medical centers performing dialysis are responsible for preparing the water that enters the dialysis machines. Like you, they are being notified of this change.

Kidney dialysis patients can safely drink, cook, and bathe in chloraminated water. Chloramines are only harmful if they directly enter the bloodstream. Since water comes in contact with the bloodstream during hemodialysis, very strict water purification standards are already being followed by the kidney dialysis industry.

Water purification techniques used for kidney dialysis are already designed to remove both chlorine and chloramines. Industry standards require that a nurse, technician or trained caregiver test for both chlorine and chloramines after the purification process to ensure that these chemicals have been removed from the water before it can be used in a dialysis machine.

What do you need to know if you have an aquarium?

Chloramines must be removed from water before it is used in aquariums or ponds. Most pet stores sell water conditioners for chloraminated water. If you have questions, contact your local pet store for information and detailed instructions.

How do chloramines affect fish?

Like chlorine, chloramines are toxic to fish and must be removed from their water. Two methods are generally used to remove chloramines from water: 1) Add specific agents to remove chloramines and ammonia, or 2) Use a high grade of granular activated carbon to remove chloramines. See your pet store for details.

Since fish and other aquatic animals take chloramines directly from the water into their bloodstreams through their gills, chloramines, just like chlorine, must be removed from water used for keeping live freshwater and saltwater fish and other aquatic life including Koi fish, lobster, shrimp, frogs, turtles, snails, clams and live coral.

The de-chloramination process is similar to what you may already be doing to remove chlorine from your aquarium water. Some people, however, may simply let water sit for a period of time to allow chlorine to dissipate. Chloramines will not dissipate in this manner. A water-conditioning agent or activated carbon filter specifically designed to remove chloramines must be used according to product instructions. Area pet stores have been notified of the change and should be able to provide information on de-chloramination products and instruction.

What will my water smell or taste like with chloramines?

If you notice any change, the water may have less of a chlorine odor or taste.

Will there be any noticeable difference in my water?

You may notice a temporary variation in watercolor or sediment in the water for a few days following the conversion process. Any observed variations in the water will cease when the system stabilizes.

Can children and pregnant women drink chloraminated water?

Yes. Everyone can drink water that contains chloramines.

Will chloramines affect swimming pools?

No. You will still need to add chlorine to prevent algae and bacterial growth. Contact your pool supply store for details.

Where can I find more information regarding *chloramine disinfection*?

Visit the United States Environmental Protection Agency's website at:

<https://www.epa.gov/dwreginfo/chloramines-drinking-water>