

Temporary Change to Water Disinfection

The City of Merkel Public Water System (PWS ID 2210002) will temporarily convert the disinfectant used in the distribution system from chloramine to free chlorine. The conversion will begin on July 19, 2024 and continue through August 18, 2024.

Public water systems are required to properly disinfect their water and maintain an adequate disinfectant residual throughout 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 impact water quality, such as high temperatures or stagnation of water, may result in the growth of 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 overall quality of the water.

Citizens may see more flushing of water at fire hydrants by City staff during this process. Certain water lines in areas with low usage are flushed more often to ensure that the free chlorinated water is adequately dispersed throughout the system.

Free chlorine is a stronger disinfectant than chloramine. As a result, water users may experience a change in the aesthetics of their water, including a noticeable chlorine odor and slight discoloration. These changes will lessen over time and do not affect the safety of the water.

Chlorine, like chloramine, must be removed from the water prior to use in dialysis machines. Dialysis patients are encouraged to speak with their equipment supplier; different types of equipment may have varying needs and require adjustments.

Please direct questions or concerns regarding the chlorine conversion or other issues regarding the public water supply to Brian Weaver, City of Merkel, 325-928-4911.

Additional information and FAQs are available on the City of Merkel website, www.merkeltexas.com.