



The York Water Company
Tap Water vs. Bottled Water Frequently Asked Questions
Updated Fall 2021

Q: Why does my water have an odor of chlorine or bleach?

A: The York Water Company, and almost all water treatment facilities, use chlorine or a food-grade sodium hypochlorite (bleach) solution to properly disinfect the water during the treatment process. Our regulators at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), require that some of the disinfectant remains in the water as it reaches our customers' taps. This is meant to ensure that the water is safe from waterborne diseases. If your tap water has a bleach aroma, that is a very good sign that your water is safe to drink. If you prefer your water to have less of that aroma, you can boil it or run it through a carbon filter (Brita-style filter) and the aroma will be reduced.

Q: Why does my water appear brown?

A: It should not normally be brown in color, but on occasion, it does happen. There are miles of iron pipe in our water system. Rust and sediment settle to the bottom of the pipes until the water in the pipes moves fast and stirs it up. Normal household use is not fast enough to stir up the water, but hydrant use for firefighting, or a water main break could cause the water to move fast enough to lift that sediment back into the water and carry it into your home.

Q: Is there anything that can be done to get rid of brown water?

A: If you have brown water, you should make sure you are only running your cold-water tap, otherwise you can get that sediment into your hot water heater. If you notice reduced pressure or flow, close your faucet- that likely means that a fire or main break is still happening, and you risk drawing in dirty water. Once flow/pressure returns to normal, run the cold water in your bathtub for a few minutes. If the color improves, flush your toilets, and run cold-water taps through the house. The idea is to flush the sediment out of the pipes in your home and bring in the fresh water from the main. If this still does not help after 15 minutes, please call York Water at 717-845-3601 and we will work with you to find a solution.

Q: Is my water safe to consume when it temporarily appears brown?

A: Although the color is off putting, the drinking water still meets safety standards and regulations.

Q: Does York Water monitor PFAS and PFOA?

A: PFAS and PFOA are typically found in groundwater near areas of high risk, such as military air bases, companies that manufacture Teflon products, and airports. These chemicals seep into the ground, eventually making its way into the water supply. They do not degrade quickly. The York Water Company has tested for these compounds and has found no results that could be considered a threat to consumers' health. Presently, these compounds are not regulated, and it is not mandatory for public water suppliers to analyze for them, however we have chosen to inform ourselves prior to any potential regulatory roll-out to help ensure the health and safety of our customers.