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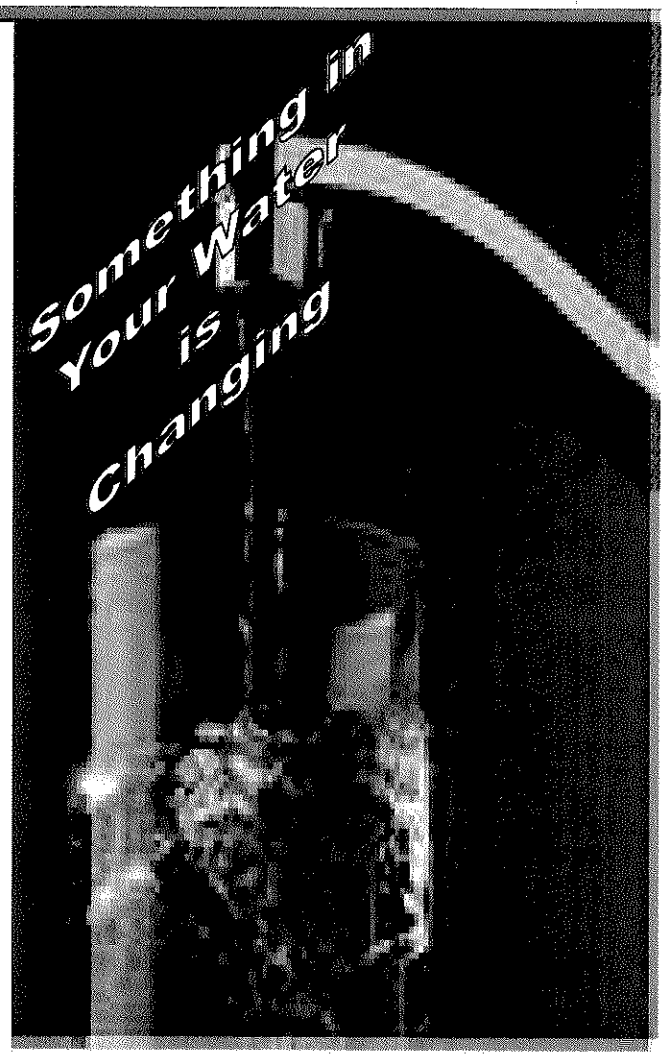

Questions & Answers about Our Conversion to Chloramine Disinfection and how the change may impact you, as our customers.

Here are some questions and answers regarding the upcoming change in our method of disinfection from "chlorination" to "chloramination".

Telphone Numbers for further information:

Walpole Water Department	508-660-7308
Massachusetts Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP Info Line)	1-800-462-0444
U.S. EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline	1-800-426-4791

Websites for further information:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts	www.mass.gov
Environmental Protection Agency	www.epa.gov
American Water Works Assoc.	www.awwa.org
American Water Works Assoc. Research Foundation	www.awwarf.org

CHLORAMINE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

WHY are we switching to chloramine?

Currently we use chlorine as a means to disinfect the water we supply to our customers. The conversion to chloramines is intended to provide better quality water to reduce disinfection by-product formation to comply with increasingly stringent federal regulations. Application of chloramines will also help to maintain a more stable disinfection residual through our distribution system.

WHAT is the difference between chlorine and chloramine?

Chlorine is a disinfectant chemical that is added to the drinking water at the treatment plants. The chlorine then stays in the water at a low concentration throughout the distribution system to keep the water safe by protecting against biological growth.

Chloramines is a form of chlorine that is created by adding ammonium sulfate to the water after chlorine is added. We have invested in the use of ammonium sulfate, a food-grade substance that safely transforms chlorine to form chloramines. Like chlorine, chloramines also keep the water safe by protecting against biological growth throughout the distribution system, but it also produces less disinfection by-products.

WHEN will the change to chloramine take place?

The Walpole Water Department is currently installing new chemical feed equipment that will provide for the use of chloramines. However, the new equipment will not be activated until the first week in May in order to provide plenty of time for customers to understand and prepare for this change in disinfection method.

IS chloramine disinfection safe? IS it a proven treatment method?

Yes to both questions. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) accepts chloramines as a disinfectant and recognizes its ability to control the formation of disinfection by-products. There are many cities and towns throughout the country that use chlorarmines for disinfection. Communities throughout the metropolitan Boston region are currently using chloraminated drinking water, as the drinking water provided by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) is currently chloraminated and has been since the 1930's.

Cloraminated water is safe for bathing, drinking, cooking and other everyday uses. The vast majority of consumers will not be affected by this change. **However, there are two groups of people who need to take special care with chloraminated water: kidney dialysis patients and fish owners. This is discussed further in this brochure**

HOW will the change in chloramine disinfection affect me?

Your drinking water will have less disinfection byproducts and less of a chlorine taste and odor. Most customers will not observe any difference, other than some reduction in the "swimming pool and bleach" smell they may have experienced when drinking a glass of water. Any facility or household providing kidney dialysis; and individuals, commercial establishments and laboratories maintaining fish tanks will have to ensure that the pretreatment steps they currently use to remove chlorine are adjusted, if necessary, to remove chloramines. For example, carbon filtration or water treatment products that neutralize chloramines may be used. If you use a carbon filter it must contain high quality granular activated carbon and you must permit sufficient contact time.

HOW are kidney dialysis patients affected by chloramine?

Chloramine can diffuse through the reverse osmosis membrane filters used by some hemo-dialysis machines, and patients undergoing kidney dialysis could be adversely affected. To prevent this, dialysis equipment must be adjusted to remove chloramines, and the treated water must be monitored to measure the final chloramines concentration. Dialysis facilities will need to review their dialysis treatment equipment to determine its continued safe operation.

WHAT should people with home dialysis machines do to remove chloramine?

Check with your physician. Often, home dialysis service companies can make the needed modifications.

WILL reverse osmosis treatment units or water softeners remove chloramine?

No, chloramines may pass through reverse osmosis membranes and most softeners are not designed to remove chloramine.

WHAT is the Water Department doing to ensure that kidney dialysis patients and facilities are prepared?

The Walpole Water Department will be contacting the national Kidney Foundation and medical centers throughout the community to notify them about the upcoming change to chloramines disinfection. This informational brochure will be placed in the Town Hall and mailed to all Walpole customers to help make sure that they are aware of this change.

IS it safe for kidney dialysis patients to drink water containing chloramine?

Yes. Since the digestive process metabolizes chloramine before it reaches the bloodstream, everyone can drink chloraminated water. It is only when water interacts directly with the bloodstream as in dialysis or in a fish's gill structure, that chloramines must be removed.

WHAT about fish, reptiles, amphibians and crustaceans?

Fish tank owners, including hobbyists, restaurants and fish markets that now treat for chlorine in the water should assure that they have appropriate carbon filtration equipment or use water treatment products that neutralize chloramines (chlorine and ammonia). This includes koi and saltwater fish and is also true for reptiles, amphibians and crustaceans. These products are readily available through pet and aquarium stores, as well as from companies that service commercial fish tanks. Please note that all other pets including dogs and cats can safely consume chloraminated water.

DOES letting water sit for a few days remove chloramine from tanks or ponds?

No. Unlike chlorine, which disappears when water sits for a few days, chloramines may take weeks to disappear.

WILL boiling water remove chloramine?

No. Boiling water or adding salt will not remove chloramines.

WILL chloramine affect the way I treat my swimming pool?

No. You will still need free chlorine residual to retard algae and bacteria growth.

CAN children and pregnant women drink chloraminated water?

Yes, everyone can drink water containing chloramines.

CAN I use chloraminated water to prepare baby formula?

Yes.

CAN people on low-sodium diets or with diabetes use chloraminated water?

Yes, people with those medical concerns can use chloraminated water.

IS it okay to wash an open wound with chloraminated water?

Yes. Even large amounts of chloraminated water used in cleaning a cut would have no adverse effect because virtually no water actually enters the bloodstream that way.