

**Is there anything I can do to stop the spotting on my dishes?**

Check your dishwasher owner's manual for suggestions, or call the manufacturer of your dishwasher or visit their website for information. Below are customer service phone numbers for several brands:

- Kenmore: 1-800-469-4663
- General Electric: 1-800-848-7620
- Maytag: 1-800-344-1274
- Kitchen Aid: 1-800-334-6889

**I have a water purification system. Will this condition affect it?**

Please contact the manufacturer of your water purification system for more information.

**Will the company refund customers for bottled water, water softening products or equipment?**

No. The quality of your tap water continues to meet or surpass DEP primary drinking water standards. However, customers have the option to make personal decisions to purchase bottled water or other products during this time for aesthetic reasons.

**Where can I get more information about TDS?**

For more information, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's website at [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us) or visit our website at [www.pennsylvaniaamwater.com](http://www.pennsylvaniaamwater.com), and select Alerts at the top of the page.



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[www.pennsylvaniaamwater.com](http://www.pennsylvaniaamwater.com)  
1-800-565-7292

# Learning About Total Dissolved Solids



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**Facts and answers  
to commonly asked  
questions**

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# TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS

The Monongahela River is Pennsylvania American Water's primary source of supply for drinking water. The river has been periodically experiencing increased levels of total dissolved solids (TDS), which have been affecting the quality of your drinking water. Our water plants, as well as other water treatment facilities in the Monongahela River basin, do not have treatment to remove TDS from the Monongahela River source.

Although noticeable TDS levels are usually temporary, Pennsylvania American Water is dedicated to providing you with the highest quality water service, and we are working with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to monitor this condition and the community's water quality.

This pamphlet addresses some key questions about total dissolved solids.

## **I've noticed spots on my dishes and faucet fixtures recently. What is causing this to occur?**

The Monongahela River is Pennsylvania American Water's primary source of supply for your drinking water. Currently, the river is experiencing increased levels of total dissolved solids (TDS). This condition also is referred to as hard water.

Most water plants, including our two plants serving the Pittsburgh area, are not equipped to remove TDS. These higher than normal levels of TDS may cause spots on your dishes and faucet fixtures. Some customers may also notice that the water tastes more salty.

## **What are total dissolved solids (TDS)?**

The term refers to elements and compounds dissolved in water. TDS can include carbonates, chlorides, sulfates, nitrates, sodium, potassium, calcium and magnesium. Sources of TDS can consist of abandoned mine drainage, agricultural runoff, wastewater from gas well drilling and discharges from industrial or sewage treatment plants.

## **Does this condition pose a threat to my health?**

These elevated TDS levels are not considered a major human health risk. DEP is recommending as a precaution that concerned consumers use bottled water for drinking and preparing food until the exceedance is eliminated.

## **What is being done to prevent this condition?**

The Pennsylvania and West Virginia Departments of Environmental Protection have expanded the water quality monitoring networks on the river and its tributaries. The resulting data will enable these agencies to take the appropriate regulatory steps to reduce the levels of TDS on the river. Pennsylvania American Water is partnering with regulators and assisting with monitoring the condition of our source water. We have installed water quality analyzers at the raw water intakes at our two Pittsburgh water treatment plants and our Brownsville facility. Data gathered from these analyzers is shared with DEP.

## **How long will this condition exist?**

This condition is temporary. We are dedicated to providing you with the highest quality water service, and we are working with DEP to monitor this condition and the quality of your water.