

TASTES & ODORS

Causes of unusual tastes and odors in tap water



INDIANA
AMERICAN WATER

Chlorine taste and odor

The most common reason for water that tastes “funny” is the chlorine that is added to drinking water to kill bacteria and other waterborne organisms that can affect human health. Chlorine is used as a disinfectant and is critical to the water treatment process. In fact, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency require water utilities to maintain a certain level of disinfectant in the distribution system to protect consumers from disease-causing bacteria as the water travels from our treatment plant along the miles of pipeline to your home.

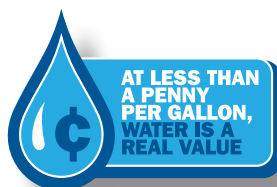
Possible causes of sudden changes in the taste/odor of tap water

- Weather conditions and algae outbreaks can produce earthy or musty tastes and odors in water systems using surface water sources. This typically occurs in the spring or fall. When it does happen, we adjust our treatment processes in surface water systems to address any odors.
- Chlorine odors may be more noticeable in warmer water temperatures than cold water.

Have concerns?

If an unusual taste or odor persists in your water, please call 1-800-492-8373.

- Internal plumbing problems can cause taste and odor issues in certain taps in your home. Drain odors can sometimes be perceived as the odor being present in the water. To verify if the water contains the odor, fill a clean glass (plastic not recommended) with water from the tap and move away from the sink area. If the odor is still present in the water, contact our Customer Service Center for additional information.
- Some home water treatment devices can cause taste and odor issues if they are not maintained according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Hot water heaters need to be flushed periodically to minimize tastes and odors. If not maintained properly, you might experience a rotten egg odor in your hot water only. Follow all manufacturer’s recommendations outlined in your owner’s manual for properly maintaining your unit.
- Water that has not been used for a period of time may have a taste or odor present. Flush your taps when returning home if the water has not been used for 24 hours.
- Some medications increase a person’s sensitivity to taste & odors in water.



Tips to remove the taste and smell of chlorine in water

If your water is treated with chlorine

- Place water in an uncovered glass container in the refrigerator overnight. This will allow the chlorine to dissipate at a faster pace. A container with a large opening works better than one that has a smaller opening. Another option is to boil the tap water for five minutes and allow it to cool. This should remove most of the chlorine.

If your water is treated with chloramine

- Boil the tap water for 20 minutes and allow it to cool. This should remove most of the disinfectant.

Another Option

- Add a lemon slice or a few drops of lemon juice to a glass of drinking water.

Please Note: Once you remove the chlorine, be sure to refrigerate the water to limit bacterial regrowth. Indiana American Water does not recommend that the public remove all traces of a disinfectant in the water supply.

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