

Free Chlorine Burn

The Gatesville Regional Water Plant will be temporarily changing the disinfection process for the month of May. Your water will be disinfected with free chlorine (chlorine only) rather than chloramines (chlorine and ammonia). This conversion to free chlorine (which is a stronger, faster-acting disinfectant) from chloramines (which is a longer-lasting disinfectant) allows the Gatesville Regional Water Plant to cleanse the entire water system. The Gatesville Regional Water Plant conducts system flushing as part of its utility practice. Flushing will ensure that the free chlorine reaches even the most distant connections on our system. This transitional period, which will last 2-3 days, may create unfamiliar odors as the old disinfectant is flushed out by the new.

Flushing and chlorine burns (the use of free chlorine for disinfection) are routine distribution system maintenance conducted by utilities that use chloramines as a means of primary disinfection. Chlorine burns have immediate treatment benefits as well as future benefits, helping to prevent water quality issues that some cities face in the hottest months of the year.

This process will not cause adverse health effects. However, during this period, you may notice some discoloration and or cloudiness in your water. The discoloration and air are harmless. Fire hydrant flushing should remove a majority of the color and odor. If you do come across this, you may want to run water through the tap until it runs clear. Some areas may also experience a temporary fluctuation in water pressure or a slight increase in the taste and odor of chlorine.

The duration of a free chlorine burn varies depending on the size of the system. Typically, the entire process is completed within four to six weeks. Boiling water is not necessary, as the water meets Federal and State standards for safe drinking water during the program.