

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information related to drinking water standards, customers can also call the EPA Hotline: 1-800-426-4791



## QUESTIONS?

We can be reached at our Customer Service Center: 1-866-430-0820

Hours: 7 a.m.–7 p.m.

For emergencies, we're available 24/7.



# PROVIDING QUALITY IN EVERY DROP

## DISCOLORED WATER

### YOUR GUIDE TO WATER DISCOLORATION

Please refer to the information below to help identify and resolve water discoloration that can sometimes arise in home plumbing. If the issue is present in all water faucets throughout your home or business, is present in primarily the cold water, does not disappear after running the water for a few minutes, and is impacting multiple customers, then there may be a disturbance in our water lines. Please contact Missouri American Water and we will work to address your concern. If the problem develops in just certain faucets or areas, and/or primarily in the hot water, then the cause is likely occurring internally. For internal plumbing concerns, customers may wish to consult with a licensed plumber.

### BROWN, RED, ORANGE OR YELLOW WATER

#### **Yellow, red or brown water CONSTANTLY in all cold water faucets and possibly hot ones:**

Sudden disturbances to the water mains including nearby excavation and construction activities, pressure changes, utility line work, and water main flushing can disturb the materials in water mains, primarily iron, and cause your water to turn brown, yellow or red. This discolored water is not a health concern, however, it is unpleasant and can stain laundry.

These events are generally temporary, but the discolored water must be flushed from your water lines to pull in fresh water. Flush the tap until the water becomes clear, saving the water for plants. Ensure the water is clear prior to doing laundry, using your dishwasher, or making ice. It may also be necessary to flush your hot water heater if the discoloration has been persistent. If discoloration persists even after flushing your water lines, please contact Missouri American Water for assistance.

**Yellow, red or brown water when first turning on the faucet:** The internal plumbing of your house might be the culprit if you live in an older home with galvanized plumbing and the discolored water appears for only a few seconds after your tap is turned on. When the zinc coating on the inside of galvanized iron pipe begins to wear thin, water becomes discolored as it comes in contact with bare iron. The longer the water sits in the pipes, the worse the discoloration will become. Customers often notice the problem first thing in the morning or when they have just returned from school or work.

Run the tap until the water becomes clear, allowing fresh water from the main to flush away the discolored water. If your water is being discolored by old, rusty pipes, the only permanent solution is to replace all your pipes. If some of the old steel pipes are replaced with new copper pipes and the two different metals are connected directly together, the copper can cause the steel to rust even more than before the replacement.

**Brown or yellow water from hot tap only:** Discoloration primarily in hot water indicates problems within a water heater. Customers should consult the owner's manual. Alternatively, customers may wish to consult with a licensed plumber to resolve this problem.

#### MILKY WHITE WATER

Also described as cloudy, hazy, or foamy, milky white water is almost always caused by air in the water. Water contains dissolved oxygen, or air. Sometimes the air comes back out of the water in the form of many tiny bubbles. This gives the water a milky white appearance. To determine if the white color in the water is due to air, fill a clear glass with water and set it on the counter. Observe the glass of water for two or three minutes. If the water begins to clear at the bottom of the glass first and then gradually clears all the way to the top, the color is from tiny air bubbles. This is a natural phenomenon that occurs more often in the winter months when drinking water is cold and contains more dissolved oxygen. This is completely normal and poses no health concern.

Cloudy water that sputters from the faucet can also be an indication that construction work is being performed on water lines in your area. These air bubbles from construction activity are temporary. To help remove them, go to the farthest or highest tap from the point where the water enters the home and let the cold water run for a few minutes to help the air pockets escape.

#### GREEN OR BLUE WATER

Standing water sometimes has a greenish cast to it. Different types of lighting sources will also make your water appear varying casts of green or blue, as will tiny traces of naturally occurring minerals. If the blue-green water does not leave any staining behind, the color is from the lighting source and trace minerals. This is completely normal and poses no health concern.

#### BLUE-GREEN WATER ACCOMPANIED BY STAINING

The water supplied to Missouri American Water customers does not contain any measurable amount of copper. Copper corrosion, however, can be caused by your electrical system being grounded to your water pipes, especially if you have a mixture of different pipe material. If the color is more predominant in hot water, it may be due to the water temperature being set too high. Hot water circulating systems can also contribute to copper corrosion. Blue-green water can also be caused by dezincification of some bronze alloys found in valves, water pumps, and water pump parts. Customers may wish to consult with a licensed plumber to resolve this problem.

#### BRIGHT BLUE WATER

Back siphoning of blue disinfectant from your toilet into your tap water may cause discoloration, particularly if the water supply to your home was recently turned off. This might create conditions in which water from the toilet tank was siphoned into the plumbing of your house. Do not drink this water. These disinfectants contain chemicals that may pose health hazards if ingested or touched. Flush your plumbing by opening each tap until the water runs clear. If you experience any of these issues, you may wish to contact a licensed plumber.

