

# CHLORINE

A necessary ingredient in the treatment of drinking water from lakes, streams and rivers



ILLINOIS  
AMERICAN WATER

## Chlorine plays a critical role in the disinfection process

The use of chlorine in drinking water as a disinfectant in drinking water supplies has played a critical role in the prevention of waterborne diseases for nearly a century. According to the World Health Organization, the adoption of drinking water chlorination has been one of the most significant advances in public health protection, stating that “disinfection by chlorine is still the best guarantee of microbiologically safe water.”

## Why is chlorine added to your drinking water?

Chlorine is added to water for the customers’ protection. It is used as a disinfectant to ensure that harmful organisms, such as bacteria and viruses, are destroyed in the treatment process.

In addition, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) require Illinois American Water to maintain low levels of this disinfectant to be present in the water at the furthest point of the distribution system. Our company complies with these minimum levels as the water travels from our treatment facility to your home. Consequently, customers who live or work closest to the facility might experience higher levels of chlorine.

We make every attempt to minimize this level, and we frequently perform monitoring at various locations within our system. The results of this monitoring are used to adjust the chlorine concentrations in the water leaving our facilities to make sure that the levels are not excessive, but are adequate for public health protection. Illinois American Water continues to meet the drinking water standards related to chlorine use in your drinking water set by EPA and DEP in all of its systems.

## Will my home treatment device remove chlorine?

Some home treatment devices can remove chlorine. Please keep in mind, once the chlorine is removed, it is like any other food. You should refrigerate it and use it as quickly as possible. If you do decide to use a home treatment device, it is important that you adhere to the manufacturer’s instructions for maintaining the device. Homeowners who choose not to follow the recommended instructions properly could reduce the effectiveness of these devices and end up with lower quality water.

## Tips on how to remove the taste and smell of chlorine in your water

- If your water is treated with chlorine: Place water in a glass container in the refrigerator overnight uncovered. 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.
- 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. Illinois American Water does not recommend that the public remove all traces of a disinfectant in the water supply.



## For more information

Illinois American Water  
Customer Service  
Center: (800) 422-2782

Our customer service  
representatives are  
available 24/7 to  
assist you.

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

Visit us online at  
[illinoisamwater.com](http://illinoisamwater.com).

**WE CARE ABOUT WATER. IT'S WHAT WE DO.**