

CITY OF COLUMBIA

Illinois



IN THE GREATER ST. LOUIS METROPOLITAN AREA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
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IMPORTANT ALERT FOR ALL COLUMBIA WATER USERS

On Monday, July 26, 2010 Illinois American Water will be temporarily changing the type of disinfectant used in the water as we always do at this time of year. Instead of combining the chlorine in the water with ammonia, we will be adding chlorine only. You will be notified when we go back to our normal type of disinfectant in approximately four to six weeks. During this time we will also be conducting our annual distribution system flushing program.

How will this program affect me?

The safety of the water will not be affected by this temporary change. Many water plants use chlorine in the free, uncombined form on a regular basis. Illinois American Water will continue to supply high quality water that meets the requirements of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency.

There is no need to boil the water. If an objectionable difference in odor is noticed, then allow water drawn from the tap to sit in the refrigerator for a few hours. **Dialysis patients and renal care facilities should be aware of these changes and adjust their health care practices accordingly.**

Why is it necessary to make a temporary change in the type of disinfectant?

This change is needed to remove residues that have been collected due to our normal disinfection practices. Water leaving the plants is usually disinfected with a combination of chlorine and ammonia. Combining the chlorine with the ammonia is beneficial in that it prevents bacterial growth by keeping the chlorine in the water longer. It also prevents disinfection by-product formation and taste / odor problems. The use of the ammonia with the chlorine, however, can result in a build up of small amounts of certain chemicals. These chemicals can be removed or prevented from forming by using free chlorine rather than the combined chlorine for a short time each year.

Whom do I call for answers to questions?

If you have further questions, weekdays during the hours of 7:00 am – 3:30 pm, please call (618) 874-2462 and someone from our Water Quality staff will call you back with an answer. After hours, you may call our 24-hour customer information hotline at 1-800-422-2782. If our customer service associates cannot answer your question, they will be happy to refer you to someone who can.