**City of Rosenberg Utilities Department Water Distribution System Quality Maintenance**

The **City of Rosenberg** public water system, (PWS) ID **# 0790003**, will temporarily convert the disinfectant used in the distribution system from chloramine to free chlorine. The conversion will begin on **December 6, 2021,** and continue through **December 27, 2021**. During this period, you may experience taste and odor changes associated with this type of temporary disinfectant conversion.

Public water systems are required to properly disinfect their water and maintain an adequate disinfectant residual in the distribution system. Chloramine, free chlorine combined with ammonia, is widely used as a disinfectant because it persists for long periods while also limiting the formation of disinfection by-product contaminants. Prolonged use of chloramine coupled with other factors that can impact water quality, such as high temperatures or stagnation of water, may result in the growth and/or persistence of organic matter within the pipes of the distribution system, which may hinder the ability to maintain an adequate disinfectant residual. A temporary conversion to free chlorine, partnered with flushing activities, helps to rid distribution pipes of this organic matter and improve the quality of your water overall.

Customers may notice a slight chlorine taste or odor in the tap water for a short period during the change. The water is safe to drink, to use for cooking, to bathe in and for other everyday uses. During this period, we will sample and test our water to monitor the effectiveness of the temporary modification. Once the free chlorine disinfection process is complete, we will return to the chloramine disinfection.

This temporary change in our treatment process is performed in accordance with State and Federal drinking water regulations. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), which regulates water quality, has approved this method for routine maintenance of potable water distribution systems.

Users of home kidney dialysis machines, owners of tropical fish aquariums and managers of stores and restaurants with fish and shellfish holding tanks are advised that the methods for testing and removing free chlorine residuals differ from those used for chloramine residuals. Both types of residuals if not handled properly may affect users of kidney dialysis machines, as well as fish and other aquatic animals. We encourage customers who may be affected by this change to seek advice from professionals and visit our website at **rosenbergtx.gov/water-disinfection** for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s)

If you have questions regarding this matter, you may contact **Heriberto “Eddie” De Leon, CPM, CWP** at 832-595-3590.

**Mantenimiento de Calidad del Sistema de Distribución de Agua del Departamento de Servicios Públicos de la Ciudad de Rosenberg**

El sistema público de agua de la **Ciudad de Rosenberg**, ID # **0790003**, convertirá temporalmente el desinfectante utilizado en el sistema de distribución de cloramina a cloro libre. La conversión comenzará el **6 de Diciembre de 2021** y continuará hasta el **27 de Diciembre de 2021**. Durante este período, usted puede experimentar cambios en el sabor y el olor asociados con este tipo de conversión temporal de desinfectante.

Se requiere que los sistemas públicos de agua desinfecten adecuadamente su agua y mantengan un residuo adecuado de desinfectante en el sistema de distribución. La cloramina, el cloro libre combinado con amoníaco, se usa ampliamente como desinfectante porque persiste durante largos períodos, mientras que también limita la formación de contaminantes derivados de la desinfección. El uso prolongado de cloramina junto con otros factores que pueden afectar la calidad del agua, como las altas temperaturas o el estancamiento del agua, puede resultar en el crecimiento y/o la persistencia de materia orgánica dentro de las tuberías del sistema de distribución, lo que puede dificultar la capacidad de mantener un residuo adecuado de desinfectante. Una conversión temporal a cloro libre, junto con actividades de enjuague, ayuda a eliminar esta materia orgánica de las tuberías de distribución y mejora la calidad del agua en general.

Los clientes pueden notar un ligero sabor u olor a cloro en el agua de la llave durante un corto período de tiempo durante el cambio. El agua es segura para beber, usar para cocinar, bañarse y para otros usos cotidianos. Durante este período, tomaremos muestras y eximinaremos nuestra agua para monitorear la efectividad de la modificación temporal. Una vez que se complete el proceso de desinfección con cloro libre, volveremos a utilizar la cloramina como desifectante del agua.

Este cambio temporal en nuestro proceso de tratamiento se realiza de acuerdo con las regulaciones estatales y federales de agua potable. La Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), que regula la calidad del agua, ha aprobado este método para el mantenimiento de rutina de los sistemas de distribución de agua potable.

Se informa a los usuarios de máquinas domiciliarias de diálisis renal, propietarios de acuarios de peces tropicales y administradores de tiendas y restaurantes con tanques de almacenamiento de peces y mariscos que los métodos para examinar y eliminar los residuos de cloro libre difieren de los utilizados para los residuos de cloramina. Ambos tipos de residuos, si no se manejan adecuadamente, pueden afectar a los usuarios de las máquinas de diálisis renal, así como a los peces y otros animales acuáticos. Recomendamos a los clientes que puedan verse afectados por este cambio a que soliciten el asesoramiento de profesionales y visiten nuestro sitio web en **rosenbergtx.gov/water-disinfection** para ver las Preguntas Frecuentes (FAQs, por sus siglas en inglés).

Si tiene preguntas sobre este asunto, puede comunicarse con Heriberto “Eddie” De Leon, CPM, CWP al 832-595-3590.

**City of Rosenberg Utilities Department**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Water Distribution System Free Chlorine Maintenance Program**

**What is the "Water Distribution System Free Chlorine Maintenance Program?"**

This program is a temporary conversion from chloramine to free chlorine disinfection, and is a water industry routine maintenance measure designed to keep water mains clean and free of potentially harmful bacteria throughout the year.

**Can I drink the water during this maintenance program?**

The water will continue to meet Federal and State standards for safe drinking water during this program; however, customers may notice a difference in taste and/or smell. Each individual has his or her own sensitivity level to the taste and/or odor of free chlorine. Many detect no change at all. The chlorine taste and smell during the first two weeks of the maintenance program is normal and poses no health risk.

**Why is the maintenance program being conducted?**

This is a planned treatment designed to provide additional protection to our customers against bacteria in the water supply. Many utilities using chloramine disinfection find it helpful to periodically switch to a free chlorine treatment program to help maintain system integrity.

**When will the program be conducted?**

The maintenance program is planned for December 6, 2021 through December 27, 2021. This duration is based on recommendations that the maintenance period should last for about three weeks. If there are any changes in the duration of the program, customers will be notified.

**Who will be affected?**

The program will include all customers of the City of Rosenberg Utilities Water System.

**Are free chlorine and chloraminated water safe?**

Yes, both forms of chlorine are safe for people and animals to drink, for cooking and bathing, watering the garden, and for all other common uses. However, precautions must be taken to remove or neutralize chloramines and free chlorine during the kidney dialysis processing, in the preparation of water for fish tanks and ponds, and for businesses requiring highly-processed water. Most customers will not need to take any precautions as the water remains safe to drink and is treated according to both state and federal standards.

People and businesses that normally take special precautions to remove disinfectants like chloramines from tap water, such as dialysis centers, medical facilities and aquatic pet owners, should continue to take the same precautions during the temporary switch from chloramines to free chlorine.

**Kidney Dialysis** - Just like chloramines, free chlorine must be removed from water used in kidney dialysis machines. We advise customers who are dialysis patients to call their physicians or dialysis centers if there are any questions.

**Fish Owners** - Like chloramines, free chlorine is toxic to fish. Fish owners need to remove chlorine, ammonia and chloramines from the water before use with tropical fish. Local pet stores carry water conditioners that remove chloramines and free chlorine. If customers have questions, we recommend contacting their pet store for information and detailed instructions.

**Why are we switching to free chlorine so often?**

The frequency with which utilities switch to free chlorine depends upon the specific conditions of that system including climate and system demands. Free chlorine maintenance is practiced more often in warmer climates such as Texas, especially during the summer. The City of Rosenberg Utilities Department has determined that routine free chlorine maintenance should be practiced once and/or twice per year to promote a healthy distribution system given the low consumption during cold weather, and decreasing water demands for irrigation. This is consistent with the practices of other water utilities in the region.

**Do the local or regional distribution systems have a bacteria problem?**

There are no indications of bacteriological contamination problems. The flushing and disinfection program is designed to maintain distribution system water quality and minimize the potential for any future problem. The maintenance program will include daily testing to monitor water quality and to measure the effectiveness of the program.

**What is free chlorine?**

Free chlorine is a slightly stronger disinfectant than chloramines, and can be used to remove more resistant organisms that may be found in the water distribution system.

**What is combined chlorine or chloramine?**

Chloramine is a Federal and State approved disinfectant used in drinking water to removed bacteria and viruses that can make you sick. It is made up of chlorine and ammonia.

**Why does City of Rosenberg Utilities use chloramines most of the year?**

While chlorine is an effective disinfectant, using chlorine alone can create disinfection byproducts, which are regulated by the US Environmental Protection Agency. In addition, free chlorine may cause taste and odor in the water while chloramines tend to be more palatable.

**Will customers notice any changes in the water during the program?**

Utilities customers may experience a difference in taste and/or smell in the water during this temporary change in treatment. Initially during the first week of the maintenance program, the changes will likely be more apparent but will later decrease as the system adjusts to the change. These are normal occurrences and carry no negative health effects.

**Why all the flushing?**

In order to change the process and facilitate rapid system conversion, we must flush to spread the free-chlorinated water throughout the system.

**What changes can be expected once the routine maintenance is completed?**

Local distribution systems will be flushed to clear the chlorinated water as chloraminated water is reintroduced to the system. During this process, customers may see a temporary variation in color. Running water at the tap for one to two minutes should remedy this temporary occurrence.

**If I have questions, who should I call for more information?**

For more information, please call the Customer Service Department at 832-595-3400.