

Chloramination explained

Even after water leaves our treatment works Scottish Water must ensure that the water which reaches your home is of a high quality to meet The Public Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2014. The most common treatment processes for us to do this are to use chlorine or chlorine combined with ammonia (chloramination).

For more information on why we add chlorine to your water, please see Scottish Water Factsheet 5 Chlorine explained.

This factsheet provides you with information on:

- Why chlorine is a safe way to disinfect water
- Where we sample
- What chloramination is and why it is used
- The difference you will notice if the treatment process for your water supply is changed to chloramination
- Special information for owners of pet fish and other aquatic species
- Special information for kidney dialysis patients
- How to contact us

Why chlorine is a safe way to disinfect water

For around a century, chlorine has been the most reliable way of treating water. It is harmless to humans at the concentrations we use in our water supplies.

Chlorine continues to keep water safe after it leaves our treatment works and travels along the network of pipes on its way to your homes and businesses. This helps to ensure that you receive high quality water. Scottish Water is required to meet strict microbiological standards as laid down in The Public Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2014.

Where we sample

Water is sampled regularly at our treatment works, service reservoirs and at our customers' taps to monitor the quality of the drinking water. In addition to this, some water quality parameters are continuously monitored at major treatment works. Across Scotland laboratory tests are carried out on water samples each year for regulatory purposes. Many more samples are taken by staff for operational reasons (e.g. bursts, new mains, complaints). The percentage of all regulatory samples complying with the relevant standards in Scotland is over 99%.

What chloramination is and why it is used

Chloramination is based on the formation of chloramines, formed when chlorine combines with very small quantities of ammonia at our treatment works.



This treatment process lasts longer within the pipe distribution system than using chlorine on its own so there is no need to add additional chlorine along the network of pipes. Plus, unlike chlorine, chloramines have the benefit of having no significant taste or odour.

Chloramination is widely practiced in other parts of the UK to treat public water supplies. As part of our long term investment programme to improve water quality for our customers, Scottish Water is gradually increasing the number of areas in Scotland being supplied with chloraminated water.

The difference you will notice if the treatment process for your water supply is changed to chloramination

If you have been sensitive to the taste or smell of chlorine in your tap water, this should be reduced or even disappear when we change to the chloramination treatment process. Otherwise you should notice no change.

Special information for owners of pet fish and other aquatic species

Chloramines can be harmful to fresh and salt water fish and other aquatic reptiles and amphibians, but can be neutralised by simply adding water conditioning agents. These are available from your specialist aquarium or pet shop.

Biological filters can be effective in reducing the small amount of ammonia present. Please contact your local aquarium or pet shop or specialist society for any advice.

Chloramination is harmless to other domestic pets and should have no effect on plants or soil.

If you are in any doubt your aquatic pet shop, local vet or specialist society should be able to give you advice on pets affected by this treatment process and suitable equipment.

Special information for kidney dialysis patients

Chloramines are only harmful when they directly enter the bloodstream. Please ensure all equipment used in renal care plans is safe and modified accordingly. The relevant Health Authorities have been informed. For medical advice please consult your Doctor or local NHS Board for advice.

Additional information

If you want to know if your water is chloraminated please contact our **Customer Helpline** on **0800 0778778**.

We want to make it easy to contact us – here's how:

We always have someone here to take your call, you can write to us or alternatively you can contact us through our website.

Alternative formats of this leaflet can be made available free of charge. For information on Braille, large print, audio and a variety of languages, please call our Customer Helpline.

If you have a disability, medical condition or other reason where you will need additional assistance from Scottish Water then please contact us and we can add your name, address and requirements to our confidential Additional Support Register.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.

 Customer Helpline 0800 0778778

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