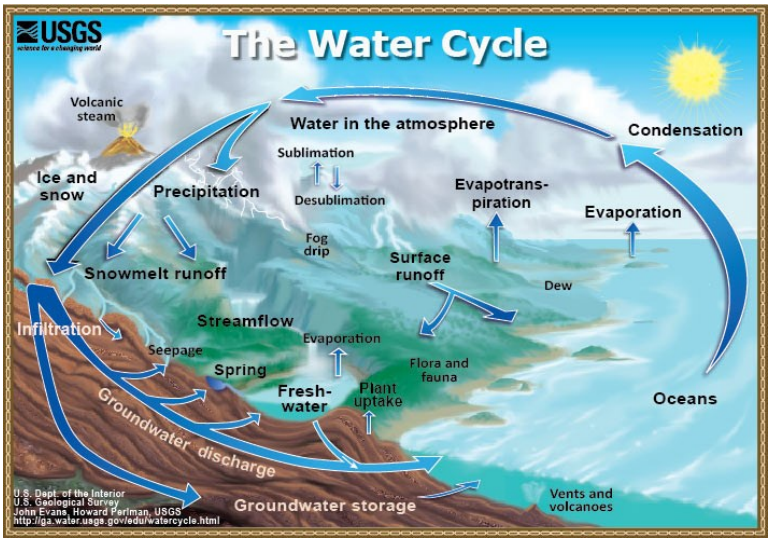
# Water Quality Consumer Confidence Report

## For samples collected during 2015 in the Colfax Water System

Placer County Water Agency is pleased to report this year - as we have each and every year since 1991 - that the drinking water supplied to you meets or exceeds state and federal public health standards for drinking water quality and safety. California water retailers, including PCWA, are required by law to inform customers about the quality of their drinking water. The results of PCWA's testing and monitoring programs of 2015 are reported in this newsletter. If you have any questions about this report, please contact the PCWA Customer Services Center at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030.




## Ensuring The Safety of Your Drinking Water

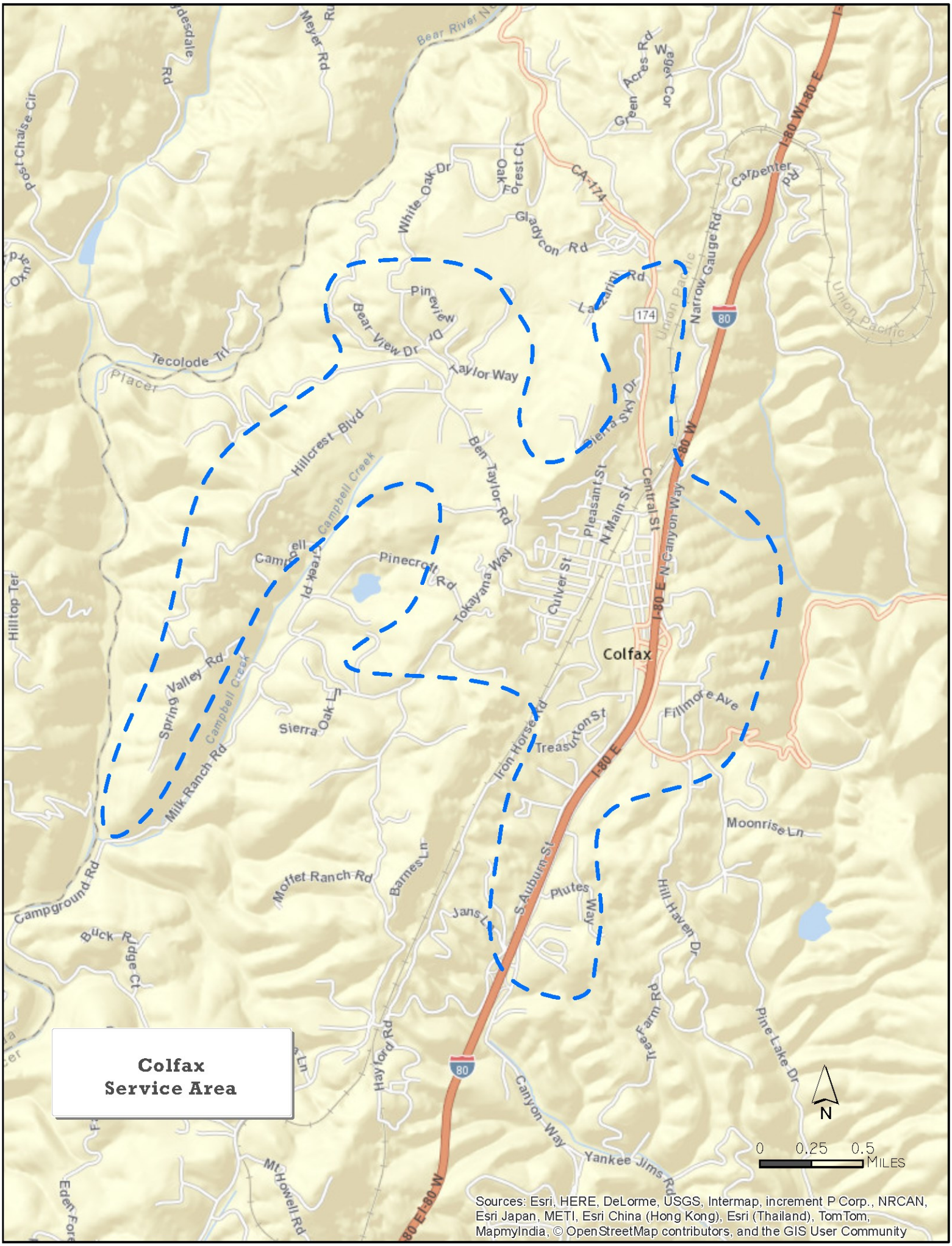
In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) prescribe regulations which limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. State Board regulations also establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.

## About Your Drinking Water

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's **Safe Drinking Water Hotline: 1-800-426-4791**

## The Source of Your Water Supply

Your water originates in the Sierra snowpack. Surface water from the Yuba and Bear River watersheds and Lake Spaulding flows into the PG&E and PCWA delivery systems. The water is treated at the water treatment plant listed in this report. PCWA has completed and updated a Sanitary Survey and Source Water Assessment of the Yuba-Bear River watershed (2012). It was found the watershed was vulnerable to contaminants from highways, roadways and railroads near rivers and canals, septic tanks, utility pipelines crossing canals, upstream recreation, historic and active mining operations, utility operations, and timber harvest. Contaminants associated with these activities that could pose a threat to source water include but are not limited to sediment, bacteria, viruses, parasites, pesticides, herbicides and trace metals. Historically, contaminant levels have been very low in the source water and watershed. Full details of the Source Water Assessment may be seen at the Placer County Water Agency Business Center, 144 Ferguson Road, in Auburn.




Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

# Colfax Water Quality Results

## Primary Drinking Water Standards

**Turbidity Performance Standards** (that must be met through the water treatment process)

*Turbidity is a measurement of clarity or the level of suspended matter in the water. In reporting turbidity, the highest single measurement and the lowest monthly percentage of samples meeting the turbidity limits are specified.*

Turbidity of the filtered water must:

1. Be less than or equal to 0.3 NTU in 95% of measurements in a month.
2. Not exceed 1 NTU at any time.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Lowest monthly percentage of samples that met Turbidity Performance Standard No. 1** | **100%** |
| **Highest single turbidity measurement during the year** | **0.1** |
| **Number of violations of any surface water treatment requirements** | **0** |

| CONSTITUENT | UNITS | MCL or [MRDL] | PHG, (MCLG) or [MRDLG] | PCWA Range and Average or (HRAA) | Typical Source of Contaminant |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Trihalomethanes | ug/L | 80 | None | 31-57 (67.25) | Byproduct of drinking water disinfection |
| Total Haloacetic Acids | ug/L | 60 | None | 20-34 (32.75) | Byproduct of drinking water disinfection |
| Chlorine | mg/L | [4] | [4] | 0.19-1.03 (0.71) | Drinking water disinfectant added for treatment |
| Total Organic Carbon | mg/L | TT=RAA<2 | None | 0.95-1.3 (1.1) | Various natural and manmade sources |

## Secondary Drinking Water Standards

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Dissolved Solids | mg/L | 1,000 | None | 49 | Runoff / leaching from natural deposits |
| Specific Conductance | uS/cm | 1,600 | None | 71-71 71 | Substances that form ions when in water |
| Chloride | mg/L | 500 | None | 7.5 | Runoff / leaching from natural deposits |
| Sulfate | mg/L | 500 | None | 5.6 | Runoff / leaching from natural deposits |

## Monitoring of Unregulated Substances

| CONSTITUENT | UNITS | MCL or [MRDL] | PHG, (MCLG) or [MRDLG] | PCWA Range and Average or (HRAA) | Typical Source of Contaminant |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sodium | mg/L | None | None | 6.6 | Runoff / leaching from natural deposits |
| Hardness | mg/L | None | None | 12 | Runoff / leaching from natural deposits |

## DEFINITIONS: Understanding Your Water Quality Report

**MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level.** The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. Primary MCL's are set as close to the PHG's (or MCLG's) as is economically and technologically feasible. Secondary MCL's are set to protect the odor, taste and appearance of drinking water.

**MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level Goal.** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. Set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**MRDL: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level.** The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.

**MRDLG: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal.** The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLG's do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

**Primary Drinking Water Standard.** MCL's and MRDL's for contaminants that affect health along with their monitoring and reporting requirements, and water treatment requirements.

**PHG: Public Health Goal.** The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. PHG's are set by the California Environmental Protection Agency.

**AL: Action Level.** The concentration of a contaminant, which if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

**NTU: Nephelometric Turbidity Units.** A measure of the clarity of water. Turbidity is monitored because it is a good indicator of water quality. High turbidity can hinder the effectiveness of disinfectants.

**TT: Treatment Technique.** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**pCi/L: picocuries per liter.** A measure of radiation.

**mg/L: milligrams per liter or parts per million (ppm)**

**ug/L: micrograms per liter or parts per billion (ppb)**

**uS/cm: MicroSiemens per centimeter**

**RAA: Running Annual Average**

**HRAA: Highest Running Annual Average**

**<: Less Than**

**ND: ND or Non-Detected:** An analysis result below detectable levels.

**NA: Non-Applicable**

## Environmental Influences on Drinking Water

The sources of drinking water (both tap and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Contaminants that may be present in source water include:

• **Microbial contaminants**, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.

• **Inorganic contaminants**, such as salt and metals, which can be naturally-occurring or result from urban storm water runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.

• **Pesticides and herbicides**, that may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban storm water runoff and residential uses.

• **Organic chemical contaminants**, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban storm water runoff, agricultural application and septic systems.

• **Radioactive contaminants**, that can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

## Statement on Lead

***(none found in this system)***

Infants, young children, and pregnant women are typically more vulnerable to lead in drinking water than the general population. It is possible that lead levels at your home may be higher than at other homes in the community as a result of the materials used in your home's plumbing. If your water faucet has not been used for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing the faucet for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about elevated lead levels in your home's water, you may wish to have your water tested. Additional information is available from the USEPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline (1-800-426-4791) or at *http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead*.

## Note to At-Risk Water Users

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immune-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. USEPA/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at (800) 426-4791.

## Plumbing Freeze in Winter

PCWA is reminding customers to take a few simple steps during winter to keep your water lines from freezing. Frozen pipes can cause damage to your property and cause a major inconvenience. They can also be expensive to repair. Most frozen lines occur on private property and are the responsibility of the homeowner. Tips on winterizing your home can be found here: http://www.weather.com/activities/homeandgarden/home/hometips/severeweather/pipefreeze_prevent.html

## Away much?

PCWA is aware that many homes in the Placer County area are vacation homes. If you are away from your home often or for extended periods of time for any reason, we'd like to remind you that it is a good idea to thoroughly flush all of your faucets upon return. Try to flush enough water to where you are sure you're getting fresh water from the main. It is also a good idea to pay attention to the freeze warning above.

## 2015 Testing Results

Measurements reported here were collected in 2015 (unless otherwise noted). In accordance with federal regulations, data is from the most recent tests. We are allowed to monitor for some contaminants less than once per year because concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.

*Este informe contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable. Tradúzcalo o hable con alguien que lo entienda bien.*

# Frequently Asked Questions About Water Quality

***It is important for you to know that we take our customers' concerns very seriously. We feel that you wouldn't be calling if there weren't cause for concern, so we investigate every claim fully and in a timely manner before closing a case. Below are some answers to the most common questions or concerns. FOR INFORMATION about this report or to report any concerns with the quality of water in your home or a perceived risk to the quality of our water source, PCWA customers are invited to contact the PCWA Customer Service Center at (530) 823-4850 or (800) 464-0030.***

## Do we have hard water?

No, at less than 20 mg/L (milligrams per liter) PCWA water is on the low end of soft water. General guidelines for classification of waters are: 0 to 60 mg/L as calcium carbonate is classified as soft; 61 to 120 mg/L as moderately hard; 121 to 180 mg/L as hard; and more than 180 mg/L as very hard.

## Is there Fluoride in my water?

**PCWA does not fluoridate its water.** There is a very small portion of the City of Rocklin, which receives water from the City of Roseville during high demand in warm months only. In addition, our Bianchi system receives Roseville water at all times. Roseville is required to fluoridate its water. To find maps of these areas, you can go to: http://www.pcwa.net/water-resources/water-quality.html

## My water smells like Chlorine!

Chlorine is required in the distribution system to keep bacteria from making it to your tap. We regulate our Chlorine dosage very strictly so that we have just enough without having too much. The maximum residual level for Chlorine is 4 mg/L (milligrams per liter), and a common level for our systems is between 0.5 and 1.5 mg/L. Some people are more sensitive to the smell of Chlorine in water. It is common for people to think that the level of the Chlorine must be too high under these circumstances; however, we've found that the most common reason for smelling Chlorine at your tap is when the Chlorine is dissipating or the level is dropping. The reason for this is that the water sits in your plumbing before you use it. Most likely, if you flush your taps out, the smell will disappear.

## Why is my tap water milky or cloudy?

This is caused by tiny air bubbles in the water. It is completely harmless. Cold water from snowmelt has the potential to hold lots of air. As the water warms a bit on its way to your tap, it has more potential to release that air. When you turn on your tap, the rapid reduction in pressure causes the air to come out of solution, and creates the milky look you see. If this is the case, it will clear before your eyes as in the picture.

## How do I know my water is safe?

Distribution operators and treatment plant operators certified by the State Water Resources Control Board collect hundreds of bacteriological samples each year throughout the water distribution systems as well as performing thousands of individual tests in the treatment facilities and in the distribution system, of which only the detected constituents are found in your annual Consumer Confidence Report. Field tests for things like temperature, turbidity, pH and chlorine residual help to let us know that our water is maintaining its quality throughout the distribution system.

# Frequently Asked Questions About Water Quality

***Continued...***

## My water is dirty!

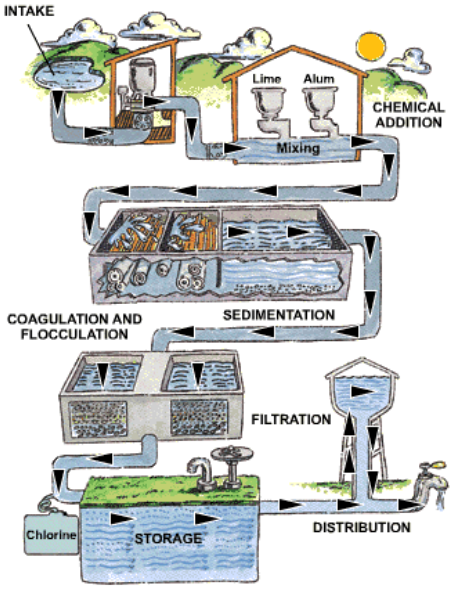
It is actually very common for people to experience discolored or "dirty" water at their tap. In most cases, we can trace this condition to a particular aspect of the household plumbing. It is very common for a water heater to corrode or rust and cause discolored water in the hot water. You can test this by turning your tap to the full hot position and observe whether the water is discolored. If the water is discolored in your hot water, but not cold, you can be reasonably certain the issue lies in your water heater. If the problem occurs in the cold water as well, and doesn't clear up after running for a few minutes, we may need to flush the main line. If you get discolored water out of your cold water tap and it clears up after running for several minutes, the main line is likely clean and you may have a plumbing fixture or an old galvanized line causing the problem.

## Why are there pink or dark stains in my toilet or around my drains?

Airborne organisms are usually the cause. You will see grey, black, or sometimes pink filmy stains on surfaces that are regularly moist, including toilet bowls, shower heads, shower drains, sink drains, dishwashers, shower and bath floors and walls. These organisms are not in the drinking water, but they find moist areas of your house to thrive. The only way to control these organisms is to disinfect the surfaces regularly, and ventilate the area well.

## How is my water treated?

Your water is treated by conventional methods, utilizing coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, and finally disinfection. The facility or facilities serving your area are operated by State Water Resources Control Board certified operators. It may also be comforting for you to know that our facilities have built-in fail-safes which will immediately shut the treatment process down and not allow any water to the system if something within the facility is not operating correctly. The operators receive alarms for immediate intervention so they can correct the problem and begin treating water again.




## My water tastes like chemicals!

Another common call we get is that the water has a strong chemically taste all of a sudden. Most times, this can be traced to the either the Chlorine topic covered earlier, or to a hose bib being left on. This is most common during warm times of year when the hot sun beats down on a pressurized hose and creates backpressure. When you open a tap inside the house, you can be sure that high pressure hose water feeds right into your house, and it doesn't taste good. The best way to avoid this is to always shut your hose off at the hose bib shut-off valve, and depressurize your hose. For this reason, it is not a good idea to have your hose bib set up as it is in the picture.