



WATER TREATMENT PLANT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Is bottled water safer or healthier to drink than tap water?

A: Not necessarily. The safety of bottled water initially depends on the source of the water. Monitoring and source protection, treatment and testing ultimately determine the quality of the finished product. For the first time, the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act requires that bottled water be monitored and tested in the same rigorous manner that tap water has been subject to for years. City water is safe and costs less than a half a cent per gallon. Bottled water costs approximately \$1.00 per pint. Bottled water should be treated as food and refrigerated after opening to prevent bacteria growth.

Q: Are all bottled water products the same?

A: No. There are many different kinds of bottled water including: sparkling water, natural sparkling water, mineral water, artesian water, natural water, spring water, well water, purified water, and distilled water. Bottled water that contains flavoring and sugar is not subject to the same quality regulations as other bottled water.

ABOUT BOTTLED WATER...

- 50% of bottled water manufacturers get their water from the same sources as municipal water departments
- It is unlawful for bottled water companies to make health claims for their products.- Bottled water labels must include the manufacturer's name, address and the source of the water.
- If the source and treatment of the water are not identified on the label, ask about it by calling or writing for information.
- Because bottled water is not required to be date stamped, its quality can deteriorate over time. Any bacteria in the water at the time of bottling can continue to grow.
- Ask for a copy of the bottler's water quality test results and compare that to the EPA standards for drinking water contaminants.

Q: Will using a home water treatment device make my water safer or healthier?

A: Not necessarily. Some people use home water filters to improve the taste, smell, and/or appearance of their tap water, but it may not make the water safer or healthier to drink.

Q: Can home treatment devices ever do more harm than good?

A: Yes. If regular maintenance is not performed properly, water quality problems can result

Q: My water smells like chlorine. What should I do?

A: Each water system regulates its own use of chlorine to disinfect water. The Willard Water System tries to maintain 2 parts per million (ppm) to ensure proper disinfection of our system. Factors that influence how much chlorine is needed is: warm weather, water use each day, how far we have to pump the water before it is used, water main breaks and repairs.

Q: Why does my water smell or taste funny? Will this make me sick?

A: There are three common reasons for an odd odor or taste in your drinking water.

1. An unusual taste may come from chlorine that is used to disinfect it.
2. Small amounts of hydrogen sulfide may cause an odor similar to rotten eggs.
3. When algae and tiny fungi grow in surface waters, they can release a non-toxic smell that may cause an unpleasant taste in drinking water. Few contaminants that could affect your health can be tasted or smelled in drinking water. In fact, there are no proven incidents showing that an odd taste has caused sickness. If you notice a sudden change in your water, report the incidents to your public drinking water supplier.

Q: Do people really get sick from drinking water?

A: It is important for consumers to be aware of advisories sent out by their local water companies. When chemical or biological concerns arise at a treatment plant, the supplier will notify consumers through various media. One reason for an

advisory to be sent is off there is a chemical concern. In this instance, a no-use or a modified-use advisory is released to the public with specific instructions on proper handling of the water. If it is a biological concern causing precautions, the advisory instructs consumers to boil their water and follow other necessary steps prior to drinking.

Q: What is a boil advisory?

A: In some instances, your water supplier may notify you of a boil advisory. This is a precautionary measure advising consumers that the water may be contaminated and you should boil your water before consumption. Boil advisories are issued when there has been repairs to water mains due to a depressurization (the pressure in the water main falling below 20 psi).

Q: Where can I get my water tested? Will the City test my water?

A: The City of Willard Water Treatment Plant is certified to perform bacteriological tests on the water that it treats. Our laboratory also performs chemical analysis for several different parameters. Some of our testing is performed by outside laboratories. Our laboratory can perform most water quality tests. If we cannot perform a necessary test, you can call the Ohio EPA's division of Drinking and Ground Waters at (614) 644-2752 for a listing of certified labs that perform these tests.

Q: Why is my water bill so high?

A: If your water use is higher than normal there are two reasons for this.

1. You actually did use the water.
2. You have a leak. You probably do not realize that a dripping faucet or other unsuspected leaks may be the cause. Water at 40 pound pressure and a 1/16" leak wastes approximately 600 gallons in 24 hours. And a 1/8" leak wastes approximately 2500 gallons in 24 hours.

Turn your water off everywhere in the house. Then watch the meter. If a RED dial or number is moving you have a leak somewhere!

Check...

Toilets. Take the tank lid off and flush. The water level should come up to about a half inch below the overflow pipe. Gently bend the float arm down, if necessary, so the valve shuts off the water at that level. If the valve is worn it will run like a leaky faucet and have to be replaced.

Faucets and Pipes. Most leaks result from worn washers in household faucets. Turn off the water supply line to that faucet, replace the washer and turn on the line again. If you do not feel comfortable doing these repairs yourself, call a plumber. The cost of a plumber will be less than the cost of the leak.

Q: Does the City of Willard fluoridate?

A: Yes, the City of Willard adds fluoride to a level that will significantly reduce tooth decay. Guidelines are set by the Ohio Department of Health; this level is maintained at 1 ppm.

For families with infants, this question may be raised during your child's check-up. If you are feeding the child pre-mixed formula or formula made with distilled water, the doctor may recommend a fluoride supplement. If you are using City of Willard water to prepare the formula, the doctor will generally forgo the supplement. If you have any concerns about this you should consult your health care professional.

Q: Why does the Water Department flush fire hydrants?

A: The Water Department general flushes fire hydrants twice a year in April and October. There are several reasons this is done.

1. It cleans out the iron deposits and other settlements that form on the side of the water lines.
2. It allows for routine maintenance of every hydrant.
3. It identifies hydrants in need of repair.
4. It determines the volume of water available at each hydrant for fire fighting.
5. It familiarizes both water and fire department personnel with hydrant locations.
6. It provides important information for pre-fire planning.

Q: How do I know when fire hydrants in my area will be flushed?

A: Hydrants are flushed twice a year. Generally in April and October. The schedule is posted by the following means:

1. In the local newspaper, Willard Times-Junction
2. On the City's web page
3. By calling the Water Department at 419-933-4001 or 419-933-7531

Q. What is backflow and cross-connection?

A. Backflow is the flow of water or other substances such as sewage, gases, or industrial fluids into the distribution pipes of a potable water supply from any source other than the intended potable water supply.

A cross-connection is any physical link or route that makes it possible for this contamination to flow into the potable water system. While the cross-connection provides the physical link, there must also be a pressure differential that acts to force the contamination into the potable water system. Backflow will occur when the pressure in the potable water system is lower than the pressure in the system containing the contamination. The physical link could be a pipe, a hose casually dropped into a mud puddle, a hair rinse sprayer added to the back tub faucet, or any other condition that would allow flow of a contaminant into the potable water supply.

The potential hazard of a backflow occurring in almost any potable water system is all too likely. In many of our homes, factories and public buildings the existence of improper plumbing connections present cross-connections that may, under certain conditions, permit the water to flow the "wrong way" within a pipe or series of pipes. The probability of backflow taking place at any given outlet may be actually very small but, in view of the large number of possible situations, the probability becomes very significant and must be dealt with in a positive way.

Q: How do I protect my pipes from freezing in the winter?

A: Don't let winter weather catch you unprepared. The following tips will help you prevent the expensive and inconvenience of frozen and broken pipes.

1. Regularly check your plumbing. Perform preventative maintenance and repair all leaks and seepage.
2. Disconnect all garden hoses from outside hose-bib faucets.
3. Shut down and drain all lawn-sprinkler systems.
4. Know where the shut-off valve for your water system is. If you don't have one, you may consider having a plumber install one.
5. Don't turn off your heat while on vacation. Instead, lower the thermostat, but not below 55 degrees.
6. Open cupboard doors in the kitchen and bathroom to get heat to waterlines in those areas.
7. Insulate water pipes. Exposed pipes are especially vulnerable to freezing weather.

If you are going to leave your home vacant for an extended period, take the following steps to protect pipes from freezing:

1. Use your home shut-off valve and turn off the water.
2. Turn off and drain your water heater.
3. Open indoor and outdoor faucets to drain (after you have turned the water off)
4. Pour motor home-type anti-freeze in your toilet bowl to prevent freezing. Also consider pouring it in shower drains and "P" traps under sinks.
5. Drain your toilet tank.

THAWING FROZEN PIPES

Frozen pipes may be thawed by wrapping them with rags and repeatedly pouring hot water over the rags. Once the pipes are thawed, remove the rags and re-wrap the pipes with dry insulation material to prevent re-freezing. If this method is not successful, call a plumber. NEVER USE AN OPEN FLAME OR ELECTRICAL DEVICE TO THAW FROZEN PIPES. Using these methods can cause fire or electric shock.

The City of Willard maintains the water supply system from the source to your property line. You are responsible for protecting water pipes from freezing and repairing broken pipes on your property. If you lose all water service during a freezing period and still have a problem after the suggested emergency measures, call a plumber.

If pipes on your property break, and you are unable to turn off the house shut-off valve, the City of Willard can turn off/on your water in the event repairs are needed.