

Changes to Potable Water Disinfection

Beginning June 23, 2014, the City of LaBelle will begin utilizing free chlorine, in its water system. This entails feeding free chlorine instead of chloramines (chlorine combined with ammonia) as the disinfectant at the water treatment plant and its storage tanks. The new Reverse Osmosis Water Plant will also be coming on line. The new treatment will allow the City to convert to free chlorine, a preferred method of disinfection.

Here are some commonly asked questions about free chlorine:

Possible Noticeable Effects: There are no associated health risks to the process. During these efforts to improve water quality, there will be possible odor and taste of chlorine. The City will attempt to flush the remainder of the chloramines from the system with directional flushing. During this period particles of calcium and rust may be disturbed during the flushing process, there is a possibility that some of the color and odor will get into customers lines. This does not mean the water is unsafe to drink. The nuisance issues will go away as the work is completed.

Is my Water Safe to Drink? Yes, the City of LaBelle is dedicated to making sure the water is safe to drink and will monitor disinfectant levels continually during this process. If you experience an odor or taste in your water, it does not mean it is unsafe to drink. Odors can be caused by the free chlorine disinfectant cleansing the system. Nuisance issues will go away as the work is completed.

Why is this necessary? The City routinely flushes lines, as well as collects samples and monitors the water quality. Our staff is tasked with ensuring that the water in all points of the system is acceptable to our customers. Over time minerals and metals, which are naturally present in water sources can increase and attach to pipes and release during changes in pressures and velocities, resulting in discoloration or affected taste. Other processes such as nitrification and the growth of biofilm can also occur in water distribution pipes. The biofilm growth can cause a reduction in the effectiveness of the disinfectants over time. The free chlorine will help cleanse the lines but also eliminates the occurrence of nitrification and biofilm, and ensure that we provide quality water for the citizens of LaBelle.