

# Water Quality



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Why is my water dirty?**

Dirty water is caused by sediments becoming re-suspended in the water column. This can be caused by an increase in water flow after repair work on broken mains, outside contractors working in the area, or water trucks filling from metered standpipes.

If affected by dirty water it is recommended that you run garden sprinklers or a tap for a period of time. If the issue does not resolve itself please call customer service on 1300 878 001 and a water crew will flush the mains.

### **Why are there black specks in my water?**

Black specks (sometimes occurs as a slimy black ring) is caused by the degradation of the inner black rubber pipe in flick mix taps (also can occur in the internal hose in toilets). Once the pipes are replaced by your plumber the issue should be resolved. If this does not rectify the issue please call Customer Service on 1300 878 001.

### **Why is my water milky/ cloudy/ white?**

Milky water is caused by tiny air bubbles being dispersed through the water. This can occur when air is trapped in the pipes after repair work or when a faulty valve allows air to enter the pipe. It is completely harmless.

To check if air is in the water supply, a glass filled with water should be allowed to stand. The cloudy appearance should disappear from the bottom upwards. If this does not work then please call customer Service on 1300 878 001. A water crew will flush the mains.

Water can also become aerated and appear white from your hot water service. This is a different issue and is harmless and should resolve itself in a short period.

### **Why is my water blue/ green?**

Copper corrosion in household pipes causes blue water. Generally the water discoloration is accompanied by a metallic taste. It can be seen more clearly by filling a white container. It can occur at only some house taps or all house taps. As this is an internal issue a licensed plumber should be contacted.

## My new appliance is asking for a water hardness setting. What is the water hardness level in Townsville?

Water hardness is caused by dissolved calcium and magnesium (among other metals) held in solution in the water. Hard water requires more soap and synthetic detergents for home laundry and washing, and can lead to scaling in pipes and kettles. Often on the purchase of a dishwasher or washing machine, manufacturers recommend settings that depend on the hardness of the water.

Typically Townsville has soft to moderately soft water, depending upon distance travelled by the water through pipes.

Cungulla has hard water as their water is supplied from the Houghton River.

Paluma's water is very soft. Water is supplied from Paluma Weir.

Location	Calcium mg/L	Magnesium mg/L	Hardness as CaCO <sub>3</sub> mg/L	Hardness as Ca mg/L	Hardness as Degree Clarke	Hardness as German Degree	Hardness as French Degree
Townsville	10	3	37.3	14.9	2.6	2.1	3.7
Cungulla	37	12	141.8	56.7	9.9	7.9	14.2
Paluma	26	2	73.2	29.3	5.1	4.1	0.73

## Why is chlorine added to my water?

Chlorine is added to water as a disinfectant. It provides lasting, effective protection from the treatment plant to your tap. The amount added is minimal, equivalent to less than half a teacup in an average backyard swimming pool.

Chlorine is particularly effective where long pipelines and high water temperature increase the potential for growth of harmful organisms in our water. It is used as a disinfectant by water providers throughout the world, including all major Australian water companies, and most water companies in Europe and the United States.

We keep chlorine dosing levels to a minimum to reduce its impact on the water's taste. However, fluctuations in chlorine levels can occur from time to time, largely due to changes in water demands and hence flow rates.

If you are sensitive to the taste of chlorine an easy and safe way to remove chlorine from water is to fill up a jug with water and put it in your fridge (out of direct sunlight). The chlorine will naturally dissipate from the water. After a few hours the chlorine will have mostly disappeared.

## **Why is fluoride added to my water?**

Fluoridation is the addition of fluoride to drinking water to prevent against tooth decay/ dental cavities. Fluoride is a naturally occurring compound found in water, rocks, soil, air and food. Fluoride is particularly effective in protecting children's teeth as they are forming and helps reduce dental decay in adults.

Fluoridation was commenced in Townsville in 1964 after petitions were filed with the Council by persons supporting fluoridation.

Addition of Fluoride to water is heavily regulated and the target concentration of fluoride for Townsville is 0.7 mg/litre. The allowable tolerance is 0.6 - 0.8 mg/litre.

Fluoride has no taste or smell and will not affect the taste of the water.

For further information on the quality of Townsville's drinking water please refer to the [Water Drinking Quality Management Plan Annual Report 2014-2015](#)