

SOUTH SANGAMON WATER COMMISSION MAKING CHANGE IN DISINFECTION PROCESS

The current implementation schedule is to start feeding chloramines on December 16th, 2019.

The South Sangamon Water Commission (SSWC) will soon be making a change in its disinfection process. It will be replacing the current method of chlorination with a change to chloramination. This process involves disinfecting our finished water with chlorine but also adding ammonia to convert the chlorine residual to chloramine before it is pumped into our distribution system. The reason for this change is to ensure that we are able to purchase treated water from the City of Springfield when needed. Springfield's CWLP water plant already uses chloramines as its disinfectant. To put it simply, chlorinated water and water using chloramines do not play well together. While mixing the two is not illegal the problems that it creates makes using the same disinfectant the best option. Chloramines are already used in many water plants that treat surface water (rivers and lakes) to reduce the levels of Disinfectant By-Products (DBP). Some of these DBPs are suspected carcinogens.

It is important to note that chloramines do have some different properties than chlorine. While chlorine will dissipate from drinking water if left standing exposed to air or if the water is aerated, chloramines will not. This is one reason that chloramines offer a longer-lasting period of ensuring that your water is protected from any bacterial contamination than chlorine does.

You may also think that the water has a different taste or smell after the changeover. This is because you will no longer have the taste or smell of chlorine.

While the general public won't experience any problems with the change-over, we do want to stress to our customers that receive dialysis or keep live fish that special considerations must be taken.

Any medical facility providing kidney dialysis must have pretreatment steps to remove the chloramines instead of just being able to remove chlorine. Public health agencies will ensure that these facilities meet these steps.

Any individuals or entities that have either fresh water or salt water fish-hobbyists, schools, restaurants, and fish markets-will have to ensure that they have the appropriate equipment and training to neutralize chloramines.

If you do have any questions regarding this matter please don't hesitate to contact water plant manager at 217-685-6210 or by email at sbivin@sswc.us.