

ODOR IN YOUR DRINKING WATER & WHAT YOU CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT

The source of the odor can be hard to determine. Before considering adding expensive treatment equipment try these corrective action steps:

- 1) **First and foremost: newly developed odor in your water supply may be a sign of bacterial contamination. Collect a sample and have it tested for coliform (bacteria) to make sure this organism is absent from your water supply.**
- 2) **Flush out your hot water tank. Open the drain valve wide open and drain out several gallons until the water becomes clear. Water when heated can cause chemicals to precipitate to the bottom of the tank creating an obnoxious odor. Drain the tank regularly (every month or two).**
- 3) **If you have a sediment filter on your system replace the cartridge regularly (every month or so). These filters get plugged with manganese, iron, sediment, and bacteria that once spent can actually be put these chemicals and bacteria back into the water. Before installing a new filter make sure you clean out the filter housing with detergent and water, followed by a thorough rinsing, and a final rinse with a solution of bleach and water.**
- 4) **Check to make sure your treatment equipment is working. If in doubt collect a treated water sample and have it tested.**
- 5) **Maintain your water softener and any other treatment equipment you have. Water softeners should have a clean salt tank with salt heaped above the water surface. If your salt tank is dirty, dump or bail out the salt and brine, clean out the tank, rinse with a mild solution of bleach to disinfect, then refill with a good grade of salt. Also make sure your salt tank has a lid to keep out airborne contaminants and insects.**
- 6) **Check your hot water heater owner's manual about the cathodic protection rod. This rod is usually made of a magnesium alloy that may give off a rotten egg odor. The owner's manual may suggest that it be replaced with another type that does not produce the odor such as one made out of aluminum. The plumbing company that installed the unit should be able to perform this for you for the cost of a service call plus the cost of the rod. The big box hardware stores usually carry replacement rods.**
- 7) **Chlorinate your well to disinfect and kill off nuisance bacteria such as sulfate and iron bacteria that can produce obnoxious odor. We can test your water for the presence of these bacteria. Follow proper chlorination procedures.**
- 8) **To reduce odor in a small volume, fill a gallon jug $\frac{3}{4}$ full, shake it, then keep it in the refrigerator. The odor should dissipate as the water becomes oxygenated.**
- 9) **Contact a water treatment company if all these steps do not reduce odor to a satisfactory level.**