

Louisville's Water – Frequently Asked Questions

Is Louisville's tap water safe to drink?

Yes, your tap water meets or exceeds all regulatory requirements. Drinking water is regulated through the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The storage reservoirs and their sources are routinely monitored for contaminants that could create a health risk or interfere with the water treatment process.

What can make water smell/taste bad?

Water can pick up tastes and odors from new pipe, from low usage in the treated water system, or from natural elements in the source water. Taste and odor events often occur seasonally during blooms of algae or aquatic plants. Although the plant material is removed during treatment, sometimes the odors persist. Tastes and odors in treated water are not harmful, but we do take steps to try and eliminate them.

Why does the taste of my water change throughout the year?

Water sources change at certain times of the year due to the availability of supplies. Surface water, or water that comes from sources like rivers and lakes, tends to taste slightly different than water pumped from underground aquifers.

Where does Louisville's water come from?

Louisville's source water originates as snow melt from the Rocky Mountains. Water is diverted in Eldorado canyon from the South Boulder Creek to several reservoirs for storage and eventual treatment at one of the City's two water treatment plants. Source water is also delivered via the Northern Supply Project which serves much of the Front Range.

How can I find out what is in my water?

Every year the City mails out a [Consumer Confidence Report](#) to all Louisville water customers. This is summary of all the water treatment parameters and results during the previous year. For questions on this report please contact the Water Quality Line 303 335 4791.

Louisville Water asks us to conserve the water, yet I see your crews wasting water, by flushing hydrants. Why do you do that?

Water will get stale and taste unpleasant if not used sufficiently. Conservation is important, but to maintain good, fresh water, flushing is vital, especially in areas where water usage is low. The

flushing process ensures the proper operation of the fire hydrants and cleans the water system mains, improving water quality within the distribution system.

They are flushing hydrants in my area and my water turned brown! Is this water safe?

Your water is safe. In the spring, the Utilities Operations team will begin fire hydrant flushing throughout the City for approximately five weeks. During the flushing operation, City of Louisville water customers may experience cloudy or rust-colored water from the tap. This effect should go away after a few hours. The water is safe to drink during this time

What causes odor in the hot water?

The most common cause of odor in hot water is the water heater. If your cold water smells fine, check your water heater to ensure that the temperature setting is correct. Water heaters also need to be maintained (see manufacturer's instructions). Please contact the Water Quality Line 303 335 4791 if the odor persists or if it is present in both the hot and cold water.

Why does my water have a chlorine taste (or smell)?

We disinfect your water to ensure that it is free of harmful bacteria. To reduce any chlorine taste or Smell, try refrigerating your water before drinking or letting it sit on the counter for a few minutes.

Why does my water have a chemical smell to it?

The City uses chlorine dioxide as a disinfectant at the water treatment plant. It is an excellent disinfectant, but can cause short-term odor problems for customers.

When a water tap is opened, small amounts of chlorine dioxide diffuse into the air and combine with existing household odors. All homes have volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the ambient air produced by scented products (soaps, candles, air fresheners, incense, potpourri), cleaning agents or solvents, paint, carpet, furnishings, fresh flowers or wreaths, and many other common household items. The VOC/chlorine dioxide combination odors have been described as smelling like fuel oil, kerosene, chemicals or cat urine, to name the most common. Studies have not identified any health concerns associated with this combined odor.

The strongest odors are associated with installing new carpet, upholstered furniture or draperies and interior painting. The odor will continue until the level of VOCs decreases (new smell goes away). This can take from a few weeks up to several months to dissipate depending on the situation, type of materials, amount of ventilation, etc. In enclosed areas with little ventilation, such as laundry rooms, basements, bathrooms and closets, these compounds will accumulate, so the odor will tend to be stronger or last longer than in well-ventilated areas. Increasing ventilation by opening windows and turning on fans will help to eliminate the odors more quickly.

Alternatively, you can remove chlorine dioxide and other chlorine compounds from the water by using an activated carbon filter. This will prevent the formation of compounds causing unpleasant odors.

Why don't you allow recreation on some of your reservoirs?

We do not allow recreation on some of our reservoirs because this protects the water from potential contamination prior to treatment. A cleaner source helps yield a cleaner product.

Is bottled water safer than tap water?

Not necessarily. Bottled water is not as heavily regulated or tested as tap water. Instead bottled water is regulated through the Food and Drug Administration and is considered a food product. Additionally, water utilities are required to release information on their water's quality and bottled water companies are not.

If you have any questions or concerns about your tap water that was not answered here, please email Info@LouisvilleCO.gov or call the Water Quality Line at **303 335 4791**.

