SFPUC

CHLORAMINE CONVERSION

Making Great Water Better

PREPARE FOR THE CHLORAMINE CONVERSION

In the Fall of 2003, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) will switch from chlorine to chloramine disinfection for drinking water. Chloramine is a combination of chlorine and ammonia that is considered a better disinfectant. Many Bay Area communities are successfully using chloramine disinfection.

Chloramine lasts longer in water to more effectively remove pathogens such as bacteria and viruses. Compared to chlorine, chloramine produces lower levels of trihalomethanes, suspected carcinogens that form when chlorine mixes with natural organic substances in water.

Water customers in San Francisco and communities in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Alameda counties will begin receiving chloraminated water in Fall 2003.

Business and Industry

Which businesses are affected?

Certain businesses using highly processed water may need to remove chloramine from water prior to use. Restaurants or seafood suppliers with fish tanks, beverage manufacturers, labs and high tech operations are examples of businesses that should review current operations and take steps to ensure their water is treated appropriately for use.

What will affected businesses need to do?

Chloramine may require your company to adjust or upgrade its current filtration and treatment system. A water treatment professional or your equipment supplier can answer questions about how chloramine will impact your current system, and recommend solutions to fit your business needs.

How do I prepare for chloramine?

The SFPUC recommends reviewing your current chlorine removal approach to assess any needed changes to remove chloramine for the Fall 2003 conversion. A 2 milligram per liter chloramine level with a chlorine to ammonia-nitrogen ratio of 5 to 1 is expected. A residual disinfectant range of 2 to 4 milligrams per liter is forecast. Changes in pH, temperature, or turbidity are not anticipated.

Companies requiring regulatory approval for their products should start early to obtain needed approvals.

What have other companies tried?

Companies report adding additional activated carbon canisters to their filtration systems or increasing chemical dosage to remove chloramine. Monitoring your system before and after conversion will ensure the treated water meets your requirements.

Chloramine cannot be removed by boiling water, adding salt or letting water stand in an open container to dissipate the chloramine.

Need more information?

Contact your equipment supplier or current water treatment professional.

The SFPUC can answer questions about the chloramine disinfection change scheduled for Fall 2003.

better.sfwater.org

Chloramine Information Line (415) 351-4200