



NEWS RELEASE

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CITY CHANGING DRINKING WATER DISINFECTION PROCESS IN NORTH STOCKTON

(Stockton, CA) – In January, the City of Stockton Municipal Utilities Department will be changing the drinking water disinfection process for its north Stockton service area. During this process, drinking water is treated using a chemical process to kill microorganisms like bacteria, viruses, and protozoa that can cause sickness and disease. The City currently uses chlorine to disinfect drinking water and will be converting to chloramines in its service area north of the Calaveras River for City water utility customers and County areas served by the City.

The current use of chlorine to disinfect the water supply creates a higher amount of total trihalomethanes (TTHM) byproduct, which was recently found to exceed acceptable levels at two test sites in the north Stockton area. The change to chloramines in low concentrations will help eliminate high concentrations of TTHM byproducts and allow the City's water utility to meet U.S. EPA rules enacted to reduce levels of such regulated byproducts caused by chlorination.

“As a scientist, I can tell you that a large number of Americans, including many in the Bay Area and Southern California, use water daily that is treated with chloramines. Chloramines have been used safely by water utilities as far back at 1908 in New Jersey,” shares Dr. Mel Lytle, Director of Municipal Utilities Department. “In fact, chloramines significantly reduce or eliminate the creation of disinfection byproducts, such as TTHM.”

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Chloramines are a chemical compound formed when chlorine and ammonia react together and are commonly used in a very small amount to disinfect drinking water during the treatment process. The compound is formed in a controlled environment using very low-chemical concentrations that remain in the treatment and distribution system as required by law. The taste and odor of Stockton's drinking water will not change.

The City completed construction on the project in 2014 and has prepared for this change for more than a year. Notices were sent to customers within the past two weeks. Specific outreach was also sent recently to dialysis treatment centers and local hospitals with information about the change, as chloramines must be removed from water used for kidney dialysis. In addition – like chlorine – chloramines are toxic to fish and other aquatic life, and retail stores selling aquatic life have been asked to display information for their customers. Otherwise, chloramine-treated water is a safe, proven method to disinfect water to protect the public health.

For additional information about the City's chloramine conversion project, please visit www.stocktonca.gov/ccproject or call 866-786-5987. To view a map of the City's water service areas, please visit www.stocktonca.gov/watermap.

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