



Fact Sheet for Kidney Dialysis Patients and Medical Professionals

In June 2012 Glendale Water and Power will convert a small portion of the distribution system from a free chlorine residual to a chloramine residual. This change will affect all GWP customers living in Northern Glendale above Oakmont Golf Course in the Verdugo Canyon, including Montrose and La Crescenta. Drinking water throughout the rest of Glendale has been receiving water with chloramines since 1985.

This conversion will be done to comply with new federal drinking water regulations and will match the disinfectant residual in the rest of Glendale. Water with chloramines is safe for drinking, bathing, cooking and all other uses for water. However, there are three groups that need to take special precautions when using chloraminated water: kidney dialysis patients, fish pond and aquarium owners and specialized businesses using highly treated water.

What are Chloramines?

Chloramines are a disinfectant used to treat drinking water. They are formed by mixing chlorine with ammonia at carefully controlled levels. Similar to chlorine, chloramines are effective at killing harmful bacteria and other germs. Chloramines have been used safely in Glendale and throughout the United States for years.

Why Is GWP Doing this Now?

The Metropolitan Water District (MWD) supplies treated drinking water to approximately 18 million people in southern California. Glendale receives 65-70 percent of its treated drinking water from MWD. In 1984, MWD converted its distribution system from a free chlorine residual to a chloramine residual. At that time the majority of Glendale was also converted from free chlorine to chloramines. However, a small portion of the Glendale distribution system continued to have a free chlorine residual. Because of new federal and state drinking water regulations, GWP is converting that final portion of the distribution system from free chlorine to chloramines.

What do Dialysis patients and providers need to know?

Similar to chlorine, chloramines can harm kidney dialysis patients during the dialysis process if they are not removed before entering the bloodstream. Dialysis units must be prepared for the anticipated chloramines concentration of 2-4 milligrams per liter. The removal of chloramines before the dialysis process is typically achieved by using a granular-activated carbon filtration system, specifically designed to remove chloramines.

Is it safe for kidney dialysis patients to drink water containing chloramines?

Yes, it is safe for kidney dialysis patients to drink chloraminated water. During the digestive process, chloramines are metabolized before reaching the bloodstream. Everyone including pregnant women, young children, and the elderly can drink, cook and bathe in chloraminated water.

What should people with home dialysis machines do to remove chloramines?

Residents with home dialysis machines should contact a physician first for proper water treatment recommendations. In addition, home dialysis service companies can be helpful in making necessary modifications to your equipment.

Is it safe to wash open wounds with chloraminated water?

Yes. Chloraminated water is completely safe to use on cuts and wounds because no water enters the bloodstream.

Will chloraminated water interact with my medication?

There are no known interactions between chloraminated water and any kind of medication.

Can people with kidney ailments, low sodium diets or with diabetes use chloraminated water?

Yes. Individuals with kidney ailments, low sodium diets or diabetes can use chloraminated water for all purposes.

Will boiling remove chloramines?

No, chloramines cannot be removed by boiling water, adding salt, or letting water stand in an open container to dissipate. Certified treatment devices designed to reduce or remove chloramines in water are available.