



WHAT'S THE FUNNY TASTE IN MY WATER?

Consumers expect the water flowing from their home taps to be safe, clear, and good-tasting. After all, the water treatment industry has been developing technologies to purify water for centuries, so why can't we deliver a consistent product that meets these expectations?

Unfortunately, undesirable tastes and odors are common in drinking water supplies, and controlling them can be frustrating for both customers and water treatment staff. Chlorine compounds used for disinfection, distribution system materials, and changes in raw water quality may all cause undesirable tastes and odors.

The most difficult problem for Broomfield is often due to flavors that residents describe as "earthy," swampy," "musty," or "moldy." This problem is very common in surface water supplies, such as lakes and reservoirs, and is caused by microorganisms, primarily certain types of soil bacteria and blue-green algae. These organisms are widespread in the environment and manufacture compounds that humans can detect in incredibly small quantities - as little as five parts per trillion. For perspective, it would require only three drops of the odor-producing compound in one of Broomfield's 136th Avenue storage tanks to result in a concentration of five parts per trillion! For many of these compounds, the human nose is more sensitive than the most sophisticated laboratory instruments, so calls from customers frequently provide the first warning that a problem exists, and customer-feedback is often the best way to evaluate the success of treatment strategies.

IS IT SAFE TO DRINK?

Broomfield's water is treated to remove potentially harmful contaminants and microorganisms, and the organisms responsible for the unpleasant taste are not present in the treated water. Although the smell or taste of the water may be unappealing, there is no evidence that the substances that cause these flavors can make people sick.

WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE MY WATER TASTE BETTER?

Many consumers find the following measures helpful for improving the taste of their tap water:

- Flush the cold water tap for at least 30 seconds before drawing water for drinking or cooking, especially if the water has not been used for several hours.
- Collect water for consumption in a glass or hard plastic container and keep it refrigerated.
- Mix the water with an electric mixer, blender, or wire whisk, then store in refrigerator in a glass or hard plastic container (good for chlorine).
- Carbon filters and filtering pitchers are effective for reducing many undesirable flavors. Be sure to change the filter according to the manufacturer's instructions.

We value your input! Please report any unusual tastes or odors in your drinking water to the Broomfield Water Treatment Facility at 303.464.5606 or 303.464.5600. You can also email Public Works at publicworks@broomfield.org.