

Improving Myponga's Drinking Water



Information for Myponga Town Residents | July 2018

We disinfect water supplies to protect public health and ensure the drinking water we provide is safe, clean and reliable.

We are committed to continually improving what we do and how we do it. This year we are beginning a long term project to improve the quality and taste of the water supplied from the Myponga reservoir.

What will be changing

We are changing the disinfection method applied to cleaned and filtered drinking water from the Myponga reservoir from **chlorine** to **chloramine**.

This change will overcome water quality challenges presented by the source water and long pipelines in this network, as well as producing a better tasting water.

Why we're making this change

The water in the Myponga reservoir is fed purely by rainfall and therefore collects large amounts of natural organic matter (such as leaves, earth and sediment) as it runs into the catchment area, creating dissolved organic carbon.

Chlorine – added to protect public health – reacts with this and produces by-products, one of which are trihalomethanes (THMs).

Levels of trihalomethanes in some parts of Myponga's supply network have exceeded recommended guidelines from time to time, and while SA Health has always confirmed the water is safe to drink, we aim to achieve the guideline, 100 per cent of the time. Changing the disinfection process to chloramine will mean THMs will continuously be within recommended guidelines.

Like chlorine, chloramine destroys bacteria and other pathogens that can be present in source water. Chloramine is also better than chlorine at penetrating the length of the pipes in the Myponga supply network, which has approximately 600 kilometres of water mains.



Government of
South Australia

sawater.com.au



A better tasting tap water

We understand that people have different perceptions about the taste of tap water in South Australia.

Some people notice that water disinfected by chlorine can have a distinct smell and taste. Chloraminated water lessens this effect.

For the last two years the chloraminated water from our Morgan Water Treatment Plant has won best tasting South Australian tap water and is a favourite during our own 'blind' taste tests.

You spoke – we listened

We have talked with people who live and work in Myponga, interviewing nearly 100 people in the Township recently to understand water use and if you like to drink it.

We're confident you'll notice an improvement to the taste of your tap water after the change.

We've road tested the future chloraminated Myponga water with an expert taste panel who liked it better than the current chlorinated water.

When the change will happen

Planning and preparation works are underway, and the changeover to chloraminated tap water will occur starting from **Monday 8 October 2018**.

Possible short-term inconvenience

There may be some practical matters for you to manage as a result of this change, but we're here to work with you through these.

As we change the water disinfection process on Monday 8 October 2018 to chloramine, the water running from your taps may be temporarily discoloured.

While the water may be slightly discoloured it is still perfectly safe to drink.

Discoloured water is normal and is a possible part of the change process.

It's caused by organic matter – called biofilm – which may be present on the insides of pipes, being lifted off by the new chloramine as it begins to come through the network.

What is biofilm?

Biofilm is the name of a collection of organic and inorganic materials that can collect, over time, on the insides of pipes. It is not harmful.

How long could it last?

If there is any discoloured water coming out of your taps, we expect it will be temporary.

However, it's only in the doing that we can be certain about the timeframe.

We thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.

What we'll do

We will be on hand throughout the changeover period to carefully monitor the process and test the water.

We will provide cask water to residents in the event of your water being discoloured.

You may notice some water on the streets as we flush the mains network during the change.

We are experts at successfully changing treatment systems and disinfection methods.

Several of the state's regional drinking water networks already supply chloraminated water, including from Morgan, Keith, Bordertown and Swan Reach. In fact, more than 220,000 South Australians currently enjoy water treated by chloramine.

If you'd like to try the new chloraminated water, come along to our information session: Tuesday 11 September, 7pm, Myponga Town Hall.

Who the change will affect

Initially, the change to chloramination will be for Myponga Township residents only.

In the coming 24 months we will extend, in stages, to our customers throughout the Fleurieu Peninsula and most areas of the Southern Vales, whose drinking water is also treated at Myponga.

This will include parts of Aldinga, Aldinga Beach, Sellicks Beach, Willunga, Carrickalinga, Normanville, Yankalilla, Victor Harbor, Port Elliot, Encounter Bay, Middleton, Goolwa and Hindmarsh Island.

By June 2020, we expect that approximately 37,000 people in the region will be drinking the improved water.

Why Myponga Township is the first to change

We're starting the wider rollout of the change to chloramination in Myponga because of operational efficiencies with our network.

It makes sense to change Myponga Township first because of how the water network has been built in relation to the source.

Important information – if you are a home dialysis patient

Home dialysis patients may need to undertake a minor change to their dialysis units as part of the changeover to chloramine. We work closely with SA Health, and the Renal Unit is aware of the upcoming change to chloraminated water.

If you, or anyone you know of in the Myponga Township has or will be receiving a home dialysis machine it is important that you contact us and SA Health's Renal department soon as possible.

Please contact Michael McCarthy, Senior Engagement Advisor SA Water, on 7424 1417, or SA Health's Renal Unit on 8222 6721.

Important information – if you have a fish tank or pond

If you have a fish tank or pond, the change from chlorine to chloramine could affect your fish or other living aquatic creatures.

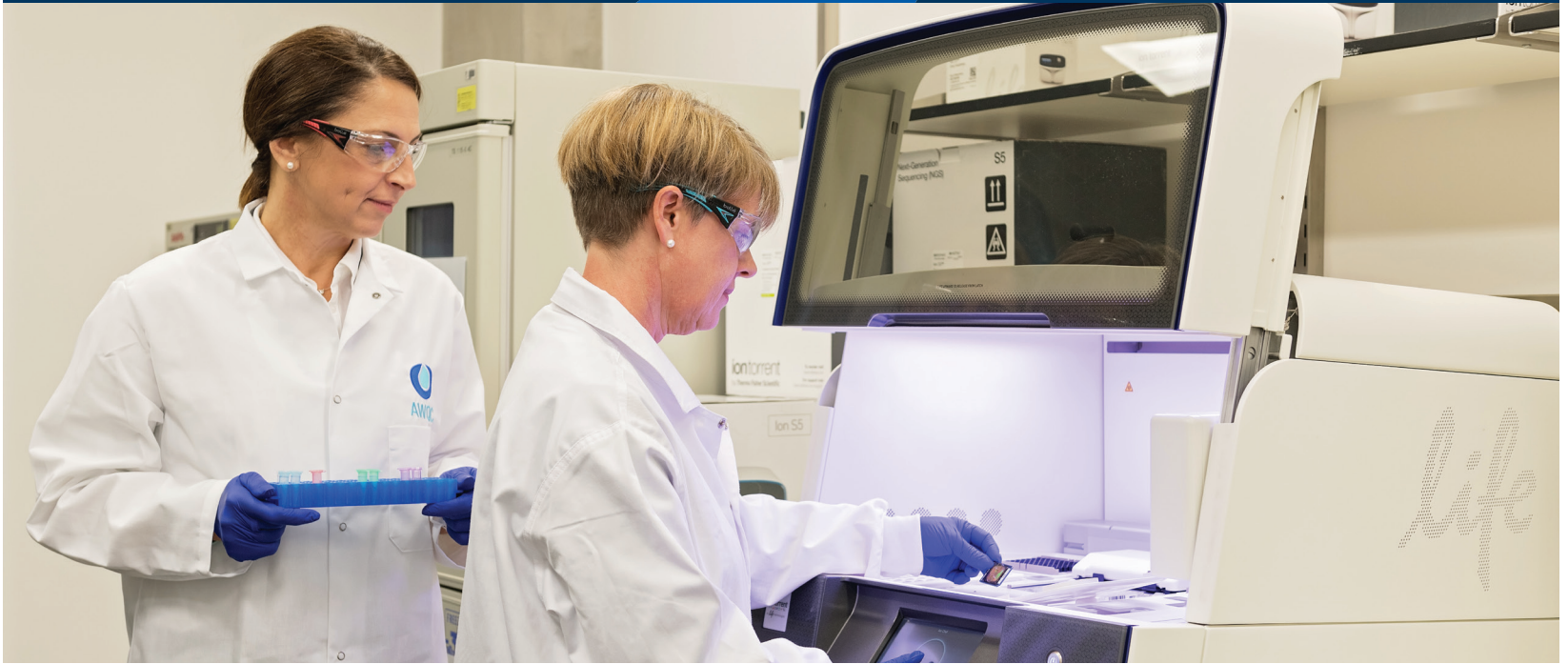
Chloramine is made by combining ammonia and chlorine. While very small amounts of ammonia can sometimes be present naturally in fish tanks, the higher levels of ammonia through the use of chloramine to disinfect drinking water can be harmful to fish and aquatic amphibians, even at low levels.

Chloraminated tap water must be neutralised before it is used in fish tanks, aquariums and ponds.

To protect your fish or other living aquatic creatures, you'll need to remove (or neutralise) the new chloraminated tap water after the changeover, before using the water in your pond or tank.

This can be done using a product such as a water conditioner or a carbon filter. We'll be providing bottles of standard water conditioner for fish tank and pond owners free of charge at our upcoming community information session.

However, if you'd like specific advice on the most appropriate product for your situation, please contact your local pet shop or aquarium retailer.



How our water quality is tested

Our comprehensive water testing program ensures quality is maintained throughout the water treatment process. South Australia's tap water consistently meets national quality standards as set out in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.

More than 250,000 water samples are collected and analysed each year by our experts from a variety of locations across South Australia, from source to tap.

Interesting history

Some residents may remember when a change to chloramination in Myponga was trialed more than 30 years ago, in 1987, to improve the quality of the raw water from the Myponga reservoir.

High levels of iron and manganese stained the water a dark colour, necessitating a change back to chlorine.

Things were different back then, as the drinking water supplied from Myponga was raw, unfiltered water collected by the reservoir.

Our modern Water Treatment Plant was established in 1993 which provides the filtered and clean water to the region.

This time, the change to chloramination will be different – coming from filtered water through the

Myponga Water Treatment Plant which removes iron and manganese – rather than raw water straight from the reservoir as it was in 1987.

We provide world class water services for more than 1.7 million South Australians every day, protecting public health and helping to maintain modern lifestyle standards by efficiently and expertly operating our drinking water and used water networks.

We work to keep water prices as low and stable as possible and are committed to ensuring our services are excellent value.

We encourage you to give your new drinking water a fresh try!

We're here to help

For any questions or support, you can contact us via the following channels:

Michael Carthy, 7424 1417 or
michael.mccarthy@sawater.com.au

Our 24/7 Customer Care Centre
on 1300 650 950