

Cities of Louisburg & Paola Water Distribution System Burnout

The Cities of Louisburg and Paola, through the Marais Des Cygnes Public Utility Authority (MDCPUA) will begin a free chlorine burnout of the water distribution system starting Aug. 22, 2022, with residual lasting up to a month. The free chlorine burnout is a change in the disinfection process from chloramines to free chlorine and is a necessary process to eliminate any nitrification or build up in the distribution system. This free chlorine does not contain ammonia. This is a normal procedure and our water quality experts monitor this process closely to ensure optimum levels of disinfectant are present. Due to this temporary change, customers may experience a temporary change in taste and odor, as well as a discoloration of the water. This discoloration is due to the mineral build up in the pipes being removed by the flushing action. There are no associated health risks or cause for concern. This temporary treatment change practice is recommended by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

Here are some commonly asked questions about free chlorine burn outs and its purpose:

- **Possible Noticeable Effects:** There are no associated health risks to the process. During these efforts to improve water quality, there will be times of lower water pressure, possible odor and taste or small rust particles in the water. The MDCPUA will attempt to flush the particles, color and odor from the mains with directional flushing; however, there is a possibility some of the color and odor will get into customer lines.
- **Is my water safe to drink?** Yes, the Cities of Louisburg and Paola, through the Marais Des Cygnes Public Utility Authority, is dedicated to making sure the water is safe to drink and will monitor disinfectant levels continually during the burn out. If you experience an odor or taste in your water, it does not mean it is unsafe to drink. Odors are caused by the free chlorine disinfectant cleansing the system. Nuisance issues will go away as the work is completed.
- **Why is this burn out necessary?** Monthly, the MDCPUA routinely flushes the lines, as well as collects samples and monitors the water quality. Our staff is tasked with ensuring that water in all points of the system is acceptable to our customers. Over time minerals and metals, which are naturally present in water sources, can increase and attach to pipes and release when there are changes in pressure, resulting in discoloration or affected taste. Other processes such as nitrification and the growth of biofilm can also occur in water distribution pipes. The biofilm growth can cause a reduction in the effectiveness of residual disinfectants over time. This free chlorine burnout will help cleanse the lines, reduce the occurrence of nitrification and biofilm, and ensure that the MDCPUA provides quality water for the citizens of Louisburg and Paola.