

Chloramination explained



Even after water leaves our treatment works Scottish Water must ensure that the water which reaches your home is of a high quality to meet The Public Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2014.

The most common treatment processes for us to do this are to use chlorine or chlorine combined with ammonia (chloramination). For more information on why we add chlorine to your water, please see [Scottish Water Factsheet 5 Chlorine explained](#).

This factsheet provides you with information on:

- **Why chloramination is a safe way to treat water**
- **What chloramination is and why it is used**
- **The difference you will notice if the treatment process for your water supply is changed to chloramination**
- **Special information for owners of pet fish and other aquatic species**
- **Special information for kidney dialysis patients**
- **How to contact us**

1 Why Chloramination is a safe way to treat water

Chloramination has been used in the water industry throughout the UK for many years as a reliable and effective way to disinfect water to ensure it is safe to drink. Scottish Water is required to meet strict health based standards laid down in The Public Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2014 and the treatment processes we use meet these standards. Chloramination is recognised as a valid and safe treatment process by the Drinking Water Quality Regulator for Scotland (DWQR) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). Around a third of Scottish Water customers, more than 1.75 million people, receive chloraminated water.

Chloraminated water is safe for bathing, drinking, cooking and all uses we have for water every day. This includes use by children, pregnant women and people on low-sodium diets and diabetes. However, adjustments to equipment for kidney dialysis patients and for aquarium owners may be required. More information is on the next page of this factsheet.

2 What chloramination is and why it is used

Chloramination is based on the formation of chloramines, formed when chlorine combines with very small quantities of ammonia at our treatment works. Chloramination is widely practiced in other parts of the UK to treat public water supplies. As part of our long term investment programme to improve water quality for our customers, Scottish Water has introduced chloramination in areas where untreated water is highly coloured due to peat based water sources. It is also effective where drinking water has to travel long distances as it removes the need to add additional chlorine within the network of pipes before it reaches customers taps. Plus, unlike chlorine, chloramines have the benefit of having no significant taste or odour.



3 The difference you will notice if the treatment process for your water supply is changed to chloramination

If you have been sensitive to the taste or smell of chlorine in your tap water, this should be reduced or even disappear when we change to the chloramination treatment process.

4 Special information for owners of pet fish and other aquatic species

Most fish and aquatic pet owners should already be aware that chlorine is harmful to their fish/ amphibians. Similarly chloramines can also be harmful. Water conditioning agents and filtration systems are available to remove these, please contact your local pet shop or aquarium for further advice.

Chloramination is harmless to other domestic pets and should have no effect on plants or soil. If you are in any doubt your aquatic pet shop, local vet or specialist society should be able to give you advice on pets affected by this treatment process and suitable equipment.

5 Special information for kidney dialysis patients

For customers who are undergoing kidney dialysis, equipment modifications may be required. Most people on home dialysis machines are provided with a renal service under a NHS Scotland care plan and we inform the relevant NHS authority ahead of any water treatment process change. For medical advice please contact your Doctor or local NHS Board for advice.

Renal dialysis patients can safely drink, cook and bathe (including bathing wounds) in chloraminated water as no water enters the bloodstream this way.



We want to make it easy to contact us – here's how:

We always have someone here to take your call, you can write to us or alternatively you can contact us through our website.

Alternative formats of this leaflet can be made available free of charge. For information on Braille, large print, audio and a variety of languages, please call our Customer Helpline.

If you have a disability, medical condition or other reason where you will need additional assistance from Scottish Water then please contact us and we can add your name, address and requirements to our confidential Priority Services Register.

We record all calls for quality and training purposes.

-  www.scottishwater.co.uk
-  help@scottishwater.co.uk
-  facebook.com/scottishwater
-  [@scottish_water](https://twitter.com/scottish_water)
-  Customer Helpline **0800 0778778**

Please quote this reference code when contacting us: **SWFact CLME5 05/20**