



US Army Corps  
of Engineers ®  
Baltimore District

Public Affairs Office  
P.O. Box 1715  
Baltimore, MD 21203  
(410) 962-2809  
Fax: (410) 962-3660

# News Release

Release No. 04-04  
Contact: Tom Jacobus/Marshall Hudson  
For Release: March 23, 2004  
Phone: 202-764-2753 or 410-962-2809

---

## Washington Aqueduct Conducts Annual Disinfectant Change to Support Water Distribution System Maintenance Program

*Disinfectant will be switched to free chlorine for five weeks*

**Baltimore** - From April 2, 2004 to May 7, 2004, the Washington Aqueduct water treatment plants will switch the secondary disinfectant from chloramine to free chlorine. Customers may notice a slight chlorine taste and odor during this five-week period. This is normal and poses no health risk.

The disinfectant switch has been done annually each spring since the conversion to chloramine in 2000. This is a general industry practice that is accompanied by the water main flushing program. The D.C. Water and Sewer Authority will start its annual flushing program on March 24. The Washington Aqueduct's Virginia customers will also conduct its annual flushing to coincide with the spring conversion.

For any users who take special precautions to remove chloramine from water, note that the temporary change to free chlorine is only for a few weeks and that on May 7 the use of chloramine will resume.

The temporary disinfectant change and flushing of the distribution system mains will have an overall beneficial effect for the chemistry changes the Washington Aqueduct plans to make later this year. However, this temporary disinfectant switch is not connected with the ongoing studies that address water chemistry changes to reduce lead leaching from service lines.

The implementation of chloramine as a secondary disinfectant has, as intended, resulted in a significant reduction of regulated disinfection byproducts and has also provided an added benefit of improving the taste of drinking water. Chloramine will be incorporated into upcoming treatment change decisions.