COVID-19:
Drinking Water FAQs

Sources: U.S. CDC, Water Transmission and COVID-19 and U.S. EPA, Coronavirus and Drinking Water and Wastewater

The health and safety of our members and the people they serve are ASDWA's highest priorities. We understand that individuals in our communities are seeking timely and accurate information related to the COVID-19 outbreak, and many have questions about potential impacts to drinking water.

There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus survives the disinfection process for drinking water and wastewater.

Is Drinking Tap Water Safe? Should I Boil My Drinking Water?

Americans should continue to use and drink tap water as usual. The World Health Organization (WHO) stated the, "presence of the COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking-water supplies and based on current evidence the risk to water supplies is low."[1]

EPA has established regulations with treatment requirements for public water systems to prevent waterborne pathogens such as viruses from contaminating drinking water. These treatments include filtration and disinfectants such as chlorine that remove or kill pathogens before they reach the tap. WHO notes that, "conventional, centralized water treatment methods which utilize filtration and disinfection should inactivate COVID-19 virus." Additionally, boiling your water is not required as a precaution against COVID-19.

1 World Health Organization. 2020. Technical Brief. Water, sanitation, hygiene and waste management for the COVID-19 virus. March. Reference number: WHO/2019-NcOV/IPC_WASH/2020.1

Is Tap Water Safe to Use for Hand Washing?

According to the CDC, **washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds** helps prevent the spread of COVID-19.

What Should I Do If I'm Concerned About My Drinking Water?

Homeowners that receive their water from a public water utility may contact their provider to learn more about treatments being used. Treatments could include filtration and disinfectants such as chlorine that remove or kill pathogens before they reach the tap.

Homeowners with private wells who are concerned about pathogens such as viruses in drinking water may consider approaches that remove bacteria, viruses, and other pathogens, including certified home treatment devices.

Resources for Building Water Systems

The extensive COVID-19 “stay-at-home” orders across the country have resulted in many commercial buildings (offices, hotels, stadiums, medical facilities, etc.) with reduced or no water use. Stagnant water can cause conditions that increase the risk for growth and spread of Legionella and other biofilm-associated bacteria, lead to low or undetectable levels of disinfectant (such as chlorine or chloramine), and create unsafe levels of lead and copper. Because of these conditions there are actions that will need to be considered when buildings reopen to ensure safe water.

8 Steps to Take Before Your Business or Building Reopens

1. Develop a water management program (WMP) for your water system and all devices that use water. Guidance to help with this process is available from CDC and others.
2. Ensure your water heater is properly maintained and the temperature is correctly set.
3. Flush your water system.
4. Clean all decorative water features, such as fountains.
5. Ensure hot tubs/spas are safe for use.
6. Ensure cooling towers are clean and well-maintained.
7. Ensure safety equipment including fire sprinkler systems, eye wash stations, and safety showers are clean and well-maintained.
8. Maintain your water system.

Learn more at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html

Wash Your Hands with Soap for 20 Seconds

Don’t Flush That! Wipes Clog Pipes!

Learn more and access resources by state ay www.asdwa.org/covid19