

## TEMPORARY SWITCH TO FREE CHLORINE

Beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> through October 29<sup>th</sup>, WMU will temporarily change the disinfectant used in the water treatment process. WMU will be using chlorine rather than chloramines during this time period.

### **Why would WMU Convert from Chloramines to Free Chlorine?**

The brief, scheduled change in disinfectant is a standard water treatment practice to keep water mains clean and free of potentially harmful bacteria throughout the year. The temporary use of chlorine will ensure that a high level of disinfection is maintained the distribution system.

Free chlorine is more aggressive than chloramines, and this temporary switch in the treatment process denies bacteria the ability to form resistance to the usual disinfection process.

### **What is Free Chlorine?**

Free chlorine is a slightly stronger disinfectant than chloramines, and may be used to remove resistant bacteria and viruses that may be found in the water distribution system.

### **What is Chloramine?**

Chloramine is a disinfectant used in drinking water to remove bacteria and viruses that can make you sick. It is made up of chlorine and ammonia.

### **Why Does WMU use Chloramines?**

While chlorine is an effective disinfectant, using chlorine alone creates byproducts which are regulated by the US Environmental Protection Agency. Chloramine is a better long-term choice because it produces lower levels of disinfection by-products like trihalomethanes, improves the taste and odor of water (compared to chlorine), and lasts longer in the distribution system to prevent bacterial growth.

### **When Will the Conversion Occur?**

Beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> and continuing until October 29th

### **Will I Notice a Difference in My Water?**

Possibly. Some customers may notice a slight change in the taste or smell of their tap water. Free chlorine may have a bit of a chemical odor or smell slightly like water in a swimming pool. Each individual customer has his or her own sensitivity level to the taste and/or odor of free chlorine. Many detect no change at all. The mild chlorine taste and odor is normal and poses no health risk.

### **Are Free Chlorine and Chloraminated Water Safe?**

Yes, both forms of chlorine are effective and safe for people and animals to drink, for cooking and bathing, and all other common uses. However, precautions must be taken to remove or neutralize chloramines and free chlorine during the kidney dialysis process, in the preparation of water for fish tanks and ponds, and for businesses requiring highly-processed water. A de-chlorination procedure optimized for chloramine removal will work equally well with free chlorine. People who normally take precautions to remove chloramines from tap water should continue to take the same precautions during the temporary switch from chloramines to free chlorine.