

DISCOLORED WATER

Causes of discolored water or stains on fixtures



INDIANA
AMERICAN WATER



Cloudy or Milky White

Cloudy or milky water is typically caused by air bubbles in the water. This condition is not a public health concern. Cloudy water occurs more often in the winter months when drinking water is cold. This is because colder water holds more air. When the water warms within the house, the air escapes. The cloudiness is temporary and clears quickly after water is drawn from the tap.

Cloudy water could also be an indication that construction work is being performed on Indiana American

IF DISCOLORED WATER PERSISTS

If you try the provided recommendations and discoloration persists in your water, please contact Indiana American Water at 1-800-492-8373.

Water's pipelines within its distribution system. Air can enter the pipeline in the system, causing bubbles to show in your tap water. Air in water is temporary and should be present for a short period of time.

Recommendations

- Let the water stand until it clears. If the water clears from the bottom of the glass toward the top, the condition is caused by air.
- Go to the farthest or highest tap from the point where the water enters the home and let the cold water run for a few minutes to help the air bubbles escape.

Yellow, red or brown water

Discolored water can be the result of controlled and uncontrolled events in the distribution system, including main breaks and use of hydrants for fire-fighting and water main flushing procedures. When these events occur, sediment in water mains sometimes gets stirred up due to the changes in the flow of water in the mains. Though these events are temporary and in most cases harmless, these sediments might cause your water to turn brown, yellow or red, and can stain your laundry. To learn more about our flushing program, visit us online.

Recommendations

- Flush the tap until the water becomes clear, saving the water for plants.

- Please check the water to make sure that it is clear prior to doing laundry, using your dishwasher or making ice cubes.

The internal plumbing of your house might be the culprit if discolored water appears for only a minute or two after your tap is turned on. When the zinc coating on the inside of galvanized iron pipe begins to wear thin, water becomes discolored as it comes in contact with bare iron. Since iron is an essential nutrient, this condition poses no health hazard. Note: The longer the water sits in the pipes, the worse the discoloration will be. That's why you are most likely to notice the problem first thing in the morning or when you have just returned from school or work.

Recommendation

- After running your tap for a few minutes, clean water from your water heater or water main will replace the discolored water.

Brown or yellow water from hot tap only

If discoloration is detected only in your hot water supply, it is likely to be an issue with your hot water heater.

Recommendation

- Turn off your hot water heater and allow it to cool. Once cool, safely drain and flush your unit according to the manufacturer's instructions. Fill and turn your unit on.

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Blue water

The use of blue disinfectant in your toilet might cause discoloration of your tap water, particularly if the water supply to your home was recently turned off. This might create conditions in which water from the toilet tank was siphoned into your household plumbing system.

Recommendations

- **Do not drink this water.** These disinfectants contain chemicals that may pose health hazards if ingested or touched.
- Flush your plumbing by opening each tap until the water runs clear.

Green water

Standing water sometimes has a greenish cast to it. Fluorescent lights will make your water appear green, as will tiny traces of copper leached from the pipes in your home. In systems using surface water sources, greenish water is most commonly associated with seasonal blooms of algae in the supply. When this occurs, Indiana American Water adjusts its water treatment process to remove algae when it is present in its source water.

Recommendation

- No immediate action. If discoloration persists, please contact us.

Blue-green stains on sink and tub fixtures

The blue-green stain that is sometimes found on sink and bathtub surfaces is a copper compound. The stain will form when there is copper content in the water and water is able

to stand and evaporate. The most common circumstances that result in a stain are a dripping faucet and the presence of copper plumbing. The stain will form faster when the surface is porous, such as an older sink or bathtub, for the copper compounds to adhere to. The water supplied to Indiana American Water customers meets all EPA regulations regarding copper levels, but the water can pick up copper from the copper pipes and fixtures in your household plumbing.

Recommendations

- The stain can be removed by treating the stained surface with a rust remover or a mixture of retail toilet cleaning crystals (Saniflush® or Vanish®) and water.
- Keep in mind: the stain will reappear sooner on porous surfaces than it will on a smooth surface, and will need to be cleaned more often.
- Abrasive cleaners are not as effective at removing copper or iron stains as crystal bowl cleaners. Also, the use of abrasive cleaners can make the fixture surface become more porous, which causes the stain to reappear faster.

Pink stains on fixtures

Pink rings can develop on flat surfaces of showers, in pet water bowls and toilets that are not used frequently. This is a colored organism that is present in the air and grows in these areas. It is a harmless bacterium and exists in moist/humid conditions.

Recommendation

- Customers can remove the pink ring by cleaning the area periodically with a commercial cleaning product that contains bleach.

Black film on surfaces

Black film can be a result of many factors, some internal to the home, such as a water softener or plumbing.

Black slime is usually mold/mildew that thrive in moist areas like bathroom toilets and tiles where it is warm. The film that develops on sink stoppers is non-harmful bacteria and residue buildup.

The film might also be related to the condition of the water coming in to the premise. Hard water can leave deposits on toilets and dishwashers, which are the mineral salts left behind as the water evaporates.

Recommendation

- Black film can be removed by cleaning the area periodically with a commercial cleaning product that contains bleach.

Crystals

Crystals or sediment left behind after water evaporates might be calcium carbonate. Calcium carbonate poses no health hazard. This is a naturally-occurring mineral, identical to the calcium found in your bones and in most calcium supplements. If these deposits appear green, blue or brown, they might have been colored by tiny amounts of the metals found in your water pipes.

Recommendation

- Carbonate deposits can be dissolved with white vinegar.
- Dishwasher deposits can be minimized by using a commercial conditioner, by using liquid detergents and by using the “air-dry” instead of the “power-dry” setting on your dishwasher, which bakes the carbonates onto glassware.