



WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY

To the University Community:

Drinking water for the City of Springfield (and many other local communities) is treated and supplied by the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission (SWSC). The SWSC takes weekly samples of the drinking water (treated and filtered from Cobble Mountain Reservoir) from various sampling stations located within the communities it serves. There happens to be a sampling station located here on our campus. This weekly testing ensures that the water being supplied meets the strict quality standards set by State and Government Environmental Agencies. The SWSC annual water quality report can be found at the following link.

<http://waterandsewer.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Water-Quality-Report-2016.pdf>

It is always good practice to allow water to flow from the faucet (or drinking fountain) for a minute or two before taking a sip, or, filling a glass or pot or pan. This is especially true in large Commercial buildings where water can be stagnant in pipes for sometime considering water demand varies day to day. Allowing the water to run before your use will enable sediment, minerals and other impurities (that may have concentrated while the water sat in the pipes) to flush out.

Some common observations associated with drinking water:

1. Chlorine smells – Chlorine is added to the drinking water supply by the SWSC in very minor concentrations. This is done to control bacterial and algal growth. Changes in daily supply and demand and changes in weather (i.e. heavy rain) may impact chlorine odor observations. Allowing water to run from the tap for an extended period, or leaving the tops of filled containers off, should allow the chlorine odor to quickly dissipate.
2. Musty or sewage like smell – This could be a sign of bacterial growth and should be more closely investigated. Allow the water to run and see if the odor dissipates. If this does not help, fill a glass and move away from the sink. If the glass does not smell, than the problem is likely with the sink sewer drain. If the glass does smell, and the glass was filled with hot water, then the odor might be in the hot water tank. If the glass smells and it was filled with cold water it could be a problem with a supply pipe.
3. Cloudy or Blue/Green color – Copper can leach from piping while water is sitting within it. This copper leachate (copper particles) is the source of the cloudy or blue color. This is primarily a cold water concern. If blue or cloudy water is noticed it should not be used. Allowing the water to run for an extended period will flush these particles (and color) out of the piping. Clearer water should begin to flow quickly.
4. Rust or brown color – Rust or brown colors can occur when a drastic change in water pressure creates a disturbance in the piping system. Opening a fire hydrant, or a water main break, can create such a disturbance. This again would be on the cold water side. Rust can also be entering the system from an issue with a hot water tank. This would be only on the hot water side. Rust or brown colored water should not be used. Allowing the water to run for an extended period will flush these particles (and color) out of the piping. Clearer water should begin to flow quickly.

Potential issues with drinking water here on Campus can be further investigated by submitting a Facilities Management work order. At your home, if you are an SWSC customer, you can contact them at (413)-452-1300

Thank you.