

# Drinking Water FAQ's

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## **Is my tap water safe to drink?**

Absolutely! To ensure safe drinking water, the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake takes drinking water samples throughout the system every week and has the samples tested for Chlorine, *E. coli* and other bacteria that may be present. Also, all technicians, operators and laboratories involved in sampling and analyzing drinking water must meet stringent certification and accreditation requirements.

## **Where does my water come from?**

The water that feeds the residents of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake comes from the St. Catharines Decew Water Treatment Plant and the Niagara Falls Water Treatment Plant, both of which are owned and operated by the Niagara Region. The source water for the Decew Water Treatment Plant is drawn from Lake Erie and conveyed to the reservoirs (Lake Moodie & Lake Gibson) via the Welland Canal. The source water for the Niagara Falls treatment plant is the Welland River.

## **Why do we use chlorine in our water?**

Chlorine is the most important tool to produce safe drinking water. It is added to drinking water to kill bacteria, algae and viruses. A small and harmless amount of chlorine is left in the water as it travels from the watermains to your tap to ensure disinfection as the water travels through the pipes.

## **Why is my water orange or rusty colour?**

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake applies various maintenance procedures on our drinking water system that requires flushing through fire hydrants. Sections of the water system that have cast iron mains may form rust on the inside walls and be disturbed during these flushing events. If you experience rusty coloured water from your cold water taps, it is recommended that you run your water until the colour disappears. There are no health risks associated with this condition, however, it is not recommended to drink or use the discoloured water for laundry. Wait until it clears

If the rusty water comes from the hot water tap only, it may be coming from the water heater and it should be serviced.

## **Why does my water smell and taste musty?**

Musty smell and taste is usually a seasonal issue in the warmer summer months. Algae blooms in the source water can cause this unpleasant smell. Although water treatment removes the algae and other odour causing organisms, smell and odour compounds may linger. These compounds can be removed by water filtration systems that use activated carbon systems. This odour does not pose any health risks and is strictly aesthetic.