

O'Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Co.

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR WATER QUALITY

The most important thing to know is that the water delivered to the properties within the area served by The O'Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Company (O'Connor Water) is safe to drink. **The water meets the primary standards for safety** under the California State regulations administered by the State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water (CDDW). O'Connor Water performs regular tests to make sure the water meets primary standards in accordance with a testing plan approved by CDDW.

If at any time you have any concerns or questions about the water, please call O'Connor Water at 650-321-2723, regardless of the day or time.

O'Connor Water was established in 1921 to supply water to the area where you reside (the service area). The water comes from wells and is pumped into a holding tank on the O'Connor Water property on Oak Court in Menlo Park. From the holding tank it is pumped into the mains and delivered to properties in the service area. Each property's service lines lead into the building plumbing and the faucets where you get your water. Unlike surface water, well water does not require that chlorine be added to the water at all times to be safe. Therefore, O'Connor Water chlorinates the water only twice a month.

The well water contains natural minerals that are dissolved from the earth. **The significant minerals in the well water include:**

- **Calcium**, which causes the white deposits (calcium carbonate) in your tea kettle and shower. Water with calcium in it is referred to as "hard water." This hardness does not have any bad health effects. Calcium is an important element in the diet. It is impractical to remove calcium from the source water from the wells, although some owners have installed water softeners.
- **Manganese**, which has no taste or odor. Manganese cannot be seen when dissolved in the water but when it comes out of solution (precipitates out) and separates from the water, it can cause a gray or black deposit that you might see in your toilet tank and may appear as dark color in the water.

Secondary standards govern issues affecting odor, taste or appearance. It is safe to drink water that does not meet secondary standards. The water delivered by O'Connor Water does not meet the *secondary* standard for manganese and has not met that standard for at least 37 years. In 2013, average manganese in Well #1 was 64 parts per billion (ppb) and in Well #2 was 138 ppb. The secondary standard for manganese is 50 ppb. The water tests required by the state are done on the water coming from the wells. Additional tests are occasionally done on water from the faucets in individual residences, but that may not represent the water in the system as a whole.

You have been receiving information every three months notifying you that the water coming from the wells does not meet the secondary standard for manganese. The state CDDW, under regulations instituted in 2006, requires that O'Connor Water distribute these notices. This does not mean the water has changed or is unsafe.

Manganese has no bad health effects except in much higher concentrations than is found in the O'Connor Water wells. The state CDDW would require additional notification for potential health concerns

(neurological effects) if the manganese level were 500 parts per billion or higher. O'Connor Water well water has never come close to that level.

In **April/May 2012**, more than **two years ago**, a situation developed in an apartment house on E. O'Keefe. All water, including O'Connor Water, needs to keep moving through the pipes of the distribution system and building plumbing. We understand that for several months or more, the water in the building's plumbing was not moving adequately, resulting in large amounts of manganese accumulating in the plumbing because the handles to the outside hose bibs had been removed. This water was black in color. Unfortunately, O'Connor Water was not notified of the problem during the time from when it first became noticeable until it became a serious problem for the building residents. This is why the problem escalated unnecessarily to near crisis levels. Since that time, O'Connor Water staff has worked with apartment managers to make sure they follow procedures to flush the water lines and keep the water moving through the plumbing to prevent manganese deposits from building up. O'Connor Water believes that this procedure will prevent this problem from ever recurring.

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