

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The City of Garnett Water Department Announces Water Utility Maintenance “Chlorine Burn”

The City of Garnett Water Department is currently conducting a free chlorine burn for disinfection of the water distribution system beginning May 15, 2020. This process will last about one month. Flushing and chlorine burns are routine distribution system maintenance conducted by utilities with chloramine disinfection. Chlorine burns also reduce the potential future occurrence of coliform or other types of bacteria in the system.

During this free chlorine burn, the water disinfection process will be changed from chloramines to free chlorine which is a stronger and faster-acting disinfectant. The fire hydrants will be opened to allow flushing of the system to help remove sediment from the pipes and distribute the change in disinfectant. Customers may notice open fire hydrants throughout the city during this period. At the end of the free burn, the standard chemicals used for disinfections will be reintroduced to the system and be returned to normal operating conditions.

Possible Noticeable Effects: It is important to understand that during this temporary change there may be some discoloration or cloudiness in the water and possibly a chlorine odor or taste. If this is experienced, please run the water through the tap until it clears. Minor pressure fluctuations and small air pockets may also occur. Fire hydrant flushing should remove most of the color and odor, but some may reach customer lines during the process. Discoloration in laundry is also possible during this time. It is recommended that customers check for discolored water before adding clothes to their washing machine. If discolored water appears, customers can set their washing machine to spin cycle to purge the water, and then refill the machine with clear water. In addition, customers may wish to purchase and use a cleaning additive to help prevent or remove any discoloration that may occur.

Is the Water Safe to Drink? Yes, the water is safe to drink throughout this process and boiling water is not necessary. Customers may notice a change to the taste and smell from the water and may want to let their water tap run for several minutes or until the water runs clear. Any odor and color issues will subside as the flushing is completed. Customers who use tap water for kidney dialysis at home should properly monitor their process for complete neutralization of disinfectant residual and should contact their doctor for more information. Customers utilizing the water for aquariums should monitor the chlorine residuals.

Why is this burn out necessary? The City routinely collects samples and monitors the water quality. The Garnett Water Department is tasked with ensuring that water in all points of the system is acceptable to our customers. Over time minerals and metals,

which are naturally present in water sources, can increase and attach to pipes and release when there are changes in pressure, resulting in discoloration, odor or affected taste. Other processes such as nitrification and the growth of biofilm can also occur in water distribution pipes. The biofilm growth can cause a reduction in the effectiveness of residual disinfectants over time. This free chlorine “burn-out” will help cleanse the lines, reduce the occurrence of nitrification and biofilm, and ensure that we provide quality water for the citizens.

If you have questions please contact Garnett City Hall, 785-448-5496, and the Garnett Water Department will return your call.

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