

CHLORIDES AND WATER SOFTENERS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CHLORIDE:

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has reissued Fairwater's waste water discharge permit. The new permit requires lower limits on chlorides than the treatment plant discharges. Chlorides or salts are not something we can treat at our sewer plant therefore; we must concentrate on reducing chlorides in the water coming into the sewer plant, primarily from water softeners.

If the Village is unsuccessful in reducing the amount of chlorides in the waste water, the alternative will be costly improvements to our wastewater treatment plant and therefore increased costs to residents.

WHERE DOES CHLORIDE COME FROM?

Small amounts of Chloride come from soaps, detergents, and other cleaning products. Some also comes from commercial processes and road deicing operations.
A significant amount of Chloride comes from self-regenerating water softeners.

WHY SHOULD I CARE ABOUT CHLORIDE?

Our freshwater streams and lakes contain low levels of naturally occurring salts, including chloride. These salts are essential to the aquatic organisms that live there. However, high concentrations of Chloride are harmful to aquatic plants and animals.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Soften only water used inside the home. Do not treat the outside hose faucets.

Check the timer. When was it last adjusted? Many of us move into a house or purchase a water softener and never check it again. Children move out or other factors come into play that affects the amount of water we use. If your softener is regulated by a timer, you may be able to increase the interval between regeneration cycles without affecting the water quality. Increase the time by one day and see if there is any effect on dish washing and laundry during the next month.

If you are replacing your old softener, replace it with a softener that regenerates based on a meter or a sensor. The Benefits to you are a substantial cost savings from your salt and water usage reduction, with the added benefit that you are helping to protect our environment right here in the Village of Fairwater.

Together the residents and Village Board can avoid the need to add an expensive sewer treatment plant micro filter and limit future increases to sewer user fees.