



# CITY OF SHREVEPORT

Department of

## Water & Sewerage

505 Travis, Suite 580, Shreveport, LA 71101

Phone: 318/ 673-7660 • FAX: 318/ 673-7663

[www.shreveportla.gov/dept/water/index.htm](http://www.shreveportla.gov/dept/water/index.htm)

Barbara Featherston P.E., Director

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**Press Release**

**To: News Room**

**For Immediate Release**

**Contact Person: Janet Jackson, 673-7660**

### Changes to Potable Water Disinfection

Beginning January 6, 2014, the City of Shreveport will begin utilizing free chlorine, or a free chlorine burn out, in its water system. This entails feeding free chlorine, instead of chloramines (chlorine combined with ammonia), as the disinfectant at the water treatment plant and its storage tanks. The City will use the free chlorine for 30-45 days to clean the system. As with many other water systems around the state, Shreveport will use this disinfection method in response to the emergency order issued by the Department of Health and Hospitals as a way to ensure that there are no issues in our system with *Naegleria fowleri*, or brain-eating amoeba. While there have been no instances of the parasite in our system nor has our system operated at disinfection levels below the new disinfection levels proposed in the mandatory order, we are performing the free chlorine burn as an additional cautionary step.

Here are some commonly asked questions about free chlorine burn outs and their purpose:

- **Possible Noticeable Effects:** There are no associated health risks to the process. During these efforts to improve water quality, there will be times of lower water pressure, possible odor and taste or small rust particles in the water. The city will attempt to flush the particles, color and odor from the mains with directional flushing; however, there is a possibility that some of the color and odor will get into customer lines.
- **Is my Water Safe to Drink?** Yes, the City of Shreveport is dedicated to making sure the water is safe to drink and will monitor disinfectant levels continually during the burn out. If you experience an odor or taste in your water, it does not mean it is unsafe to drink. Odors are caused by the free chlorine disinfectant cleansing the system. Nuisance issues will go away as the work is completed.
- **Why is this burn out necessary?** Monthly, the City routinely flushes the lines, as well as collects samples and monitors the water quality. Our staff 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 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 of Shreveport.

If there are questions or concerns, please contact the Department of Water and Sewerage at 673-7660.

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