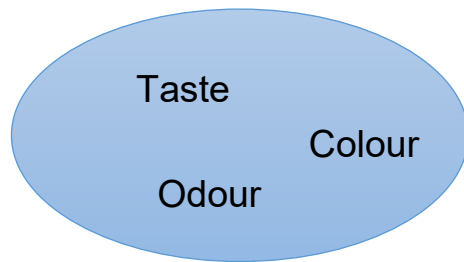


Reporting

# Municipal Water Quality Concerns



A Guide for  
Loyalist Township  
Water Customers



Loyalist Township operates two drinking water systems Bath and Fairfield\*.

We are committed to comply with all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements relating to drinking water quality, to supply our customers with safe drinking water.

Provincial law requires that we test our drinking water for a broad spectrum of substances, at different frequencies throughout the year. These include E. coli, total coliforms, general bacteria count, chlorine residual, pH, nitrite, nitrate, sodium, and a wide variety of other organics and inorganics.

Some of these parameters are significant for public health. These parameters are tested regularly, both at the water treatment plants and throughout the water distribution system. Testing is done by Utilities staff and by an independent certified laboratory.

Other parameters, such as taste, odour, and colour are classified as aesthetic parameters.

Because public health is at stake, all water quality concerns are of vital importance to us.

\*The Fairfield water system consists of Amherstview, Odessa, and the Harewood and Brooklands subdivisions.

## Reporting Your Concerns

To report a water quality concern, please call the Administrative Assistant at 613-386-7351, ext. 103.

Quality concerns such as taste, odour and colour can often be solved over the phone.

When you call, our staff will make every effort to help identify the source of concern. To do so, they will ask you a number of questions, such as:

- Your name, address, and phone number
- What is the nature of the concern?
- When did you notice it?
- Is it happening with both your cold and hot water?
- Are you having the same results at all the water fixtures in your house?
- Do you have a private inline treatment system?
- Do you know if your neighbours are having a similar problem?

These questions are important to help our staff identify the source of the quality concern and help find a solution.

At times, staff may not be able to resolve the issues by phone. If not, an appointment can be made to have Utilities staff visit your home. There is no charge to residents when an appointment is arranged during business hours.



## Colour Concerns

During the warmer months of the year, Utilities staff undertake a program of flushing all watermains in the Township's distribution systems. Flushing the watermain can stir up sediments that normally occur in water pipes. Sometimes this can result in a brown or yellow tinge to your water.

The same effect can be caused by a watermain break; firefighting that increases velocity flows through the mains due to increased demand; or any time that Utilities staff have to close a valve or reroute the typical flow of water throughout the distribution system. The discoloration is not a safety concern.

If you have a brownish or yellow tinge to your water, please turn on your cold water taps and allow them to run until the water turns clear. If it doesn't clear within 20 minutes, please call the Administrative Assistant at 613-386-7351, ext. 103.

Another common colour concern is the appearance of whitish or "milky" water. Often this appearance is the result of many tiny air bubbles created by a faucet's aerator fixture. You can test this by filling a clear glass with tap water, and then setting it on your counter for approximately ten to twenty minutes. If the white colour has been caused by the aerator, it will have cleared within that time. Another possible cause of air bubbles in the water is a hot water tank that is set above 140°F (60°C) or has a faulty thermostat.

## Taste & Odour Concerns

The source of Loyalist Township's municipal water, for both the Bath and Fairfield systems, is Lake Ontario. Surface water undergoes a variety of changes throughout the year as the temperature rises and falls, and vegetation such as algae grows and decays in the water.

One summertime complaint is a "musty" taste to the water. This occurs most often in mid to late summer, when the water temperature in the deeper areas of the lake rises to within a few degrees of the temperature of the upper levels of water. When this happens, the lake "turns over", and the algae that typically resides in the lower, colder water and the compounds it produces rise to the upper levels of the lake. This results in an increased level of odour and taste-causing compounds in the "raw" (untreated) water coming into the water treatment plant. While filtration removes many physical, chemical, and biological

impurities from the water, and chlorine inactivates disease-causing microorganisms, a trace amount of taste and odour compounds can sometimes remain.

Another common summer issue is stronger than normal chlorine smell. This is usually a result of warmer lake water temperatures. While the residual chlorine level in the water may not be different, the chlorine taste and smell in water is much more noticeable when the water is warmer. Filling a jug with tap water and placing it in the fridge to chill should help reduce your perception of the chlorine.

Sometimes changes to our municipal infrastructure, such as watermain replacement, can change how your water tastes. Removing old ductile iron watermains and replacing them with new PVC mains significantly reduces incidents of coloured water, but may also change the taste of the water that comes out of your tap. Whether the change in taste is perceived as pleasant or unpleasant, will depend entirely on the individual drinking the water.

You can find more information on Loyalist Township's drinking water systems in our annual drinking water reports. Visit [www.loyalist.ca/drinkingwater](http://www.loyalist.ca/drinkingwater).

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This document can be made available  
in other formats, upon request.