
Introduction of Chloramination

In order to comply with current and future disinfection by products (DBP) regulations, the plant is proposing a change in the type of disinfection used by moving from free chlorine to chloramination at certain times of the year. This process involves mixing chlorine with ammonia to form chloramines.

Highland serves water to the communities of Grantfork, Pierron, and St. Jacob. Those communities also receive water from other sources such as Tri-Township and Bond/Madison. Both of those water services utilize the chloramination process.

Chloramines have been used in the U.S. since 1916. They are commonly used in surface water supplies to treat raw water. Chloramines have advantages which include stable and longer lasting residuals, and forming less DBPs such as trihalomethanes (THM) and haloacetic acids (HAA). The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency is expected to tighten regulations on THMs and HAAs in the near future. As with all things in the water treatment process, there are downsides. Since the chloramines last longer, more care must be used to remove the disinfectant at the customer's location when used in kidney dialysis and for water filtration in fish aquariums.

Most customers will not notice any change. The chlorine smell or taste may be reduced. The chloramination process will be used in the months roughly from April to October and free chlorine from November to March. Chloramination is most effective in warmer months. The plant anticipates beginning the use of the chloramination process on April 1.