

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

07/23/18

The City of Merkel Water Department to perform Water Quality Maintenance Flushing
“Chlorine Burn Out” from July 20, 2018 – August 20, 2018

From July 20 – August 20, 2018, the City of Merkel will perform a routine chlorine burn out to the water system which will help prevent discoloration, odor and taste in the city’s water. Water customers may experience low water pressure, possible odor or taste during the treatment process.

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 Merkel 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 our 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 flushes fire hydrants to ensure the water we serve is safe and fresh. Water Distribution staff is tasked with ensuring that water in all points of the system is acceptable to our customers. There are times that water is discolored to a yellow, orange or even brownish color due to cast iron or steel water mains, private plumbing or at times, Manganese. Over time Manganese, which is 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. Manganese is not harmful at the levels currently found, but it can be a nuisance by discoloring the water. Over time, Manganese will attach itself to the pipes and release when there are extreme changes in the velocity or pressure similar to when there is a main break or during annual Fire Department testing of the hydrants.

Nitrification, a microbial process that converts ammonia and similar nitrogen compounds into nitrite (NO₂-) and then nitrate (NO₃-), can also occur in water systems that use chloramine for their residual disinfectant. The burn out is a change in the treatment process from chloramines to free chlorine. Free chlorine is the disinfectant of choice when performing a system wide maintenance flush. It will help the city cleanse the lines, stop nitrification and ensure that the water continues to be safe to drink.

Questions? Please contact the City of Merkel Public Works Department: (325)928-4911 Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Steve Campbell (325)928-4911 or steve@merkeltexas.com.