

INFORMATION UPDATE 07/13/24

We at Evansdale Water Works want to update you on the ongoing efforts to improve our water system. First and foremost, we want to assure you that the water is completely safe to drink.

We understand that the water may not be smelling or looking its best at this time. The strong chlorine smell you notice is actually a byproduct of the low free chlorine in the water, which we explain further below. Your safety with the drinking water is our number one priority. Water is tested daily for chlorine levels and tested monthly for any bacteria. These numbers and tests are submitted to the Iowa DNR.

Over the past few months, we have faced significant challenges in our day-to-day operations and the management of our wells. We have been working tirelessly to address these issues, and we are making progress with the testing being conducted.

Evansdale has roughly 250-300 fire hydrants, and each hydrant needs to be maintained by being flushed twice a year. Unfortunately, in the past, over 95% of these hydrants have not been properly maintained, contributing to our current issues. The extensive iron buildup from years of inadequate flushing has made our task more difficult.

Due to the lack of maintenance, there is a large amount of sediment in the water mains. The only way to clean them is to flush the hydrants. Flushing hydrants stirs up the sediment, moving it around the system. The iron sediment that has built up over the years, consumes chlorine at a high rate. This reduces the amount of free chlorine in the system, contributing to the chlorine smell you may have noticed.

An additional challenge we are facing is nitrification. Nitrification is a microbial process where ammonia is converted into nitrite and then into nitrate. This process can occur in water systems, particularly those that use chloramines for disinfection. Nitrification can lead to increased levels of nitrites and nitrates, reduced chlorine residuals, and other water quality issues (TCEQ) (American Water Works Association). This is one of the factors we are addressing in our ongoing maintenance and testing efforts.

We are in regular communication with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to ensure that we are taking the right steps and making efficient and effective use of our time and efforts. This collaboration is crucial as we work to improve our water system.

Currently, we are conducting several tests which include Free Chlorine, Total Chlorine, Nitrite, Nitrate, Free Ammonia, Total Ammonia, and Mono Chloramines. These tests provide a comprehensive picture of our water quality and how it varies across different parts of town. Your calls and messages to Evansdale Water Works are vital, as they help us identify specific areas that need testing and attention.

We appreciate the phone calls and updates on what areas are affected. When reaching out, we kindly request that you be respectful and polite so we can address your concerns efficiently and effectively. Our office staff do not have the authority or means to manage the water supply directly. However, they are here to field your calls and relay your concerns to us. Your cooperation helps us serve you better.

As water board members, we want to remind everyone that we are drinking the same water you are and are experiencing the same issues as everyone else.

We appreciate your patience, your understanding, and your continued support as we work through these challenges. Rest assured, we are committed to providing you with safe and reliable water.

Sincerely,
Evansdale Water Works Board of Trustees