

REPORT YOUR SYMPTOMS

If you live in the CWD and believe you have water-related symptoms, PCAC recommends you take the following steps:

- Talk to your doctor or care provider(s), and be sure to tell them you think your symptoms may be related to the water. Because there are no human health studies, doctors won't find chloramine in their medical texts, and may hesitate to make a diagnosis. If you are using inhalers, steroid creams, or other "allergy"-type medications for the first time or more often, it may be the water causing your symptoms.
- Contact the Vermont Department of Health at 800-640-4374. The VDH has not reviewed or endorsed this brochure. However, the VDH is concerned for the health of all Vermonters.
- Contact PCAC at 802-651-8753 or by email at vtccac@yahoo.com. We are compiling reports of symptoms to look for patterns and answers.

LIMIT YOUR EXPOSURE

There is no easy way to effectively filter out chloramine from household water. Be wary of advertiser's claims. Some people have found that whole house filters provide some relief, but they are expensive and require maintenance.

By limiting exposure – taking shorter, cooler showers, showering elsewhere, using spring water for bathing, cooking and cleaning – almost all who suffer from symptoms see fast relief. Contact PCAC for other suggestions on how to cut back on your contact with the water.

Chloramine =
CHLORINE + AMMONIA

February 2009

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Call PCAC and document your story.
2. Tell your doctor and express your concern.
3. **Tell decision-makers your concerns:**
 - **Your legislators** State House # 800-322-5616
 - **CWD Gen. Manager Jim Fay** 864-7454
 - **Your town's CWD/Water Commissioner**
4. Help spread the word! Talk it up. Call Becca (862-4153) to help pass out flyers.

Water is life. We choose what foods we buy and what chemicals we then ingest – we should have the same choice about the chemicals in our water.

ABOUT PCAC

People Concerned About Chloramine (PCAC) is a citizen organization whose mission is to raise the public's awareness about chloramine and its health effects when used as a water disinfectant. PCAC is committed to getting chloramine out of our water.

To report symptoms, get answers to questions, or arrange a presentation for a group or organization, contact PCAC:
(802) 651-8753 vtccac@yahoo.com
www.vce.org/chloramine
www.chloramine.org

PCAC is supported by a grant from NEGEF and by Vermonters for a Clean Environment.

Citizens Concerned About Chloramine, based in the San Francisco Bay area, generously allowed PCAC to use their logo and language from their website.

Is Your Tap Water Making You Sick?



- **Breathing troubles, asthma-like symptoms**
- **Skin irritations, rashes, and lesions**
- **Cramps, stomach aches, and digestive issues**

If you live in Shelburne, Williston, South Burlington, Winooski, Essex, Essex Junction, Jericho Village, parts of Milton, Mallets Bay Water Co., Colchester Town, and Colchester Fire Districts #1 and #3 ...

...you may have been impacted by chloramine disinfection. To find out more, read on!

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Water Additive Leads to Symptoms

On April 2006, the Champlain Water District (CWD) added chloramine, a new secondary disinfectant that is a combination of chlorine and ammonia, to our water supply. Since that time, PCAC has heard from over 300 CWD customers complaining of health problems.

The following symptoms have been reported here and are common in other areas of the country using chloraminated water.

Respiratory Symptoms

- sinus and nasal congestion, sneezing
- coughing and choking, wheezing
- dry throat, swollen throat, difficulty swallowing
- asthma-like symptoms, shortness of breath
- dry mouth, bad breath, furry-coating on tongue

Skin Symptoms

- rashes and red burning skin, intense itching
- dry, chapping, flaking, cracking skin, bleeding
- dry, itchy scalp, dandruff

Eye Symptoms

- dry, stinging, or burning eyes
- tearing, red, bleary eyes
- blurry vision

Digestive Symptoms

- diarrhea, flatulence
- stomach ache
- irritable bowel-type symptoms

Other Symptoms

- dizziness, fatigue

The CWD says that chloramine is “safe”. Yet the CDC acknowledges there are no studies on humans of skin or respiratory effects of chloramine, and that the few studies on cancer are inadequate for assessment.

Why Chloramine?

EPA rules require public water systems by 2012 to have lower amounts of THMs and HAAs, chemical disinfectant byproducts that are created when chlorine combines with organic material in the water such as algae. Even though very little is known about the impacts of chloramine on people, systems such as the CWD are now using chloramine because it is cheap and lowers levels of THMs and HAAs. The CWD was in compliance with EPA standards in effect through 2011 before they added chloramine.

Coping with Chloramine

- The greatest exposures to chloramine are through showering and bathing, and breathing vapors indoors.
- You can reduce your exposure by taking shorter showers, less often, and in cool water. Use an exhaust fan and leave the door open to vent the steam. Avoid baths, and consider showering elsewhere.
- Because humidifiers vaporize water, it’s good to fill them with bottled spring water, so that you’re not breathing in chloramine.
- Drinking, bathing, and cooking with bottled spring water also reduces your exposure.
- Pets may have symptoms similar to humans. Do not use chloraminated water in your fish tank – consult an area pet store for instructions.
- Unlike chlorine, chloramine can’t be boiled off, distilled or removed when water stands uncovered.
- Unlike chlorine, chloramine cannot be easily or cheaply filtered out. No filters have been proven to remove all chloramine, and we urge caution when considering claims of effectiveness.

Chloramine Facts

- According to the World Health Organization, chloramine is a less effective disinfectant than chlorine and may not kill pathogens such as E. coli and certain viruses nearly as effectively.
- Not everyone who is impacted by chloramine will show symptoms right away, but after exposure for months or years, symptoms may start to show.
- Chloramine is corrosive. Systems that use chloramine have reported problems with increased lead levels, corrosion of copper pipes, problems with rubber fittings, etc.
- The Champlain Water District is the only district in Vermont to use chloramine.
- Chloraminated water may pose a greater risk to infants, elders, dialysis patients, and people with suppressed immune systems, such as HIV/AIDS patients and those going through chemotherapy.
- Other methods of disinfection instead of chloramination, such as ultraviolet and micro-filtration, can be used to meet EPA regulations
- Chloramine entering streams, ponds, or Lake Champlain from watering lawns, washing cars, runoff, water main breaks, hydrant flushing, etc., and can kill or damage fish, amphibians, and marine invertebrates. Fish kills from water main breaks have been reported in other states.

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