



Annual Chlorine Disinfection

Once a year, as required by North Carolina, the town uses chlorine instead of a combination of chlorine and ammonia to disinfect public drinking water. This monthlong disinfection typically occurs in March.

Chlorine disinfection

State regulations require utilities that normally use chloramines — a compound of chlorine and ammonia — for disinfection to use chlorine for one month each year. The annual change helps ensure a high level of disinfection in water mains as chlorine is a more intense disinfectant than chloramines.

During this annual process, the town releases water from fire hydrants and some valves in its water system. This “flushing” of the water mains helps ensure chlorine flows through the entire system.

Effect on customers

Some customers may notice a chlorine taste or odor in Hillsborough’s drinking water during this annual disinfection. The water remains safe to drink.

To remove chlorine taste and odor from water, you can:

- Filter the water with activated carbon. Water pitchers with such filters are sold locally.
- Let the water sit in an open container in the refrigerator for a day or so.
- Boil the water for one minute to evaporate the chlorine.
- Add a few lemon slices to a pitcher of water. The lemon’s ascorbic acid will neutralize the chlorine.



Customers who use Hillsborough water for special purposes or for processes involving careful control of water characteristics are encouraged to seek advice from an appropriate technical source — such as a filter vendor or service company — about whether and how to make adjustments to their use of Hillsborough water during the one-month period of chlorine disinfection.

More information

For more information on the annual disinfection process or characteristics of the town’s drinking water, contact the Water Treatment Plant at 919-296-9640.

For more information on water system flushing, see the Water System Flushing document on the town’s website.