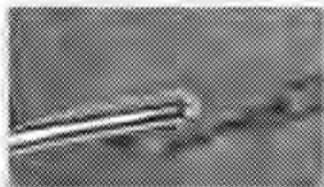


Cleaning aerators

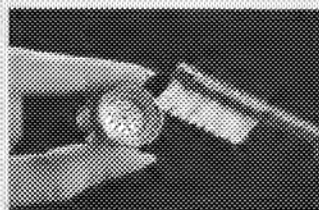
Many taps have an aerator as part of the faucet assembly. Aerator screens are not intended to remove contaminants in water, but may trap sediment or debris as water passes through the faucet. Lead-bearing sediment may end up in drink water from physical corrosion of leaded solder and can build up in the aerator over time.



1. Remove the aerator by twisting off with hands or pliers.



2. One or more parts are contained within the aerator. Note the order and orientation of the parts as you remove them.



3. Rinse the pieces with water and brush off the debris. For deposits that are difficult to remove, soak the parts in water for a few minutes and scrub with a toothbrush. Backwashing aerator components is also an effective cleaning method for many aerator types. Hold the removed aerator upside down under flowing water to backwash screens and mesh filters.



4. Reassemble the aerator, screw it back onto the faucet and hand-tighten. If any parts are cracked or broken, replace them. If the aerator washer has hardened, it should be replaced.

From: Mona Munroe-Younis [mailto:mona.m.younis@gmail.com]

Sent: Saturday, July 11, 2015 5:57 PM

To: deltoral.miguel@epa.gov; edwardsm@vt.edu

Subject: Flint Water Question from a Pregnant Flint Resident

Dear Dr. Edwards and Dr. Del Toral,

Thank you for the work you have already done in my city to protect families from water contaminant exposure. I am a Flint resident, pregnant with my first child, and therefore advised to drink a whopping 10-16 cups of water each day. I am writing to see if you can shed some light or point me to another source for answers regarding water testing and the safest option for staying hydrated.

If your wife or sister or friend were living in Flint and pregnant, what course of action would you recommend she take? Here is my situation:

- A little background: Prior to becoming pregnant, I installed a pur advanced water filter on our kitchen faucet and always use it when drinking from the tap, which I do frequently. (According to the pur website, the filter is said to filter out 70+ chemicals. Recently, I contacted the company to request more information on exactly what chemicals are filtered and up to what level, and am awaiting their reply.) When using the filter, the water is crystal clear, free of the river smell and without the slight yellow tinge that we sometimes have coming out of the tap (unlike in our bathroom sink which I use to brush my teeth...). I was compelled to purchase the filter because my legs began to swell after Flint changed to the river water, and after installing the filter this problem went away. I even tested the difference by drinking filtered water some days (consistently no swelling) and and unfiltered water others (consistent swelling) for a week or two. I understand the swelling to be the result of sodium chloride in our water which is corrosive enough to make GM stop using Flint water in their local plant (http://www.mlive.com/news/flint/index.ssf/2014/10/general_motors_wont_use_flint.html)
- Given your findings of high levels of lead in some residents' water, my husband strongly believes that I should cease drinking all Flint water and drink bottled water instead. However, I have read extensively about safety concerns of plastic-bottled water (chemists who work with plastics avoid drinking it) and this does not seem to be a safer option despite frequent bottled water drives organized by well-meaning activists across Flint.
- I would like to test our house's tap water with and without the kitchen filter using an independent lab, but my husband thinks this will be a futile effort because we have no reliable way of knowing if the results on one day will be consistent with results on other days, such as if the City of Flint were doing some special change to the water treatment procedure. Would testing multiple times across several weeks be sufficient to address this possibility? If so, how many times and at what interval would you recommend testing, and can you recommend a testing lab? If a high level of lead is discovered, who should we contact to determine where the lead is coming from as a next step?
- According to the consultant that Erin Brockovich sent to Flint earlier this year (http://www.mlive.com/news/flint/index.ssf/2015/02/tthm_how_worried_should_flint.html), total trihalomethanes (TTHM) in the water are dangerous to pregnant women through inhalation exposure during hot showers. (And pregnant women tend to appreciate long, hot showers because our backs are constantly aching!) At this point, the lead issues seem more frightening, though we are considering investing in a costly whole-house water filtration system to deal with both. How can we determine the relative risk to pregnant women for lead in the water vs. TTHMs? I suppose that could differ from house to house. What sort of whole-house filtration would you recommend?
- Are there any other considerations that you think I should keep in mind?

Even for those residents who are privileged to be educated and able to afford water filtration devices, the public water issues we are living with are confounding. The information we receive about our public water supply tends to be fragmented and coming from local public officials who have an interest in downplaying public concerns. In the meantime, it is very difficult to make truly informed decisions about our health.

Thank you in advance for any insights you can share and helping to give my baby a good start in life. I understand if you need to respond as a fellow resident of the world and as experts in general rather than as affiliates of the organizations in which you are employed.