



MEDIA RELEASE

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WATER TASTE TO BECOME MORE CONSISTENT

The taste of local water is set to become more consistent thanks to a Hunter Water program to gradually increase chlorine disinfection of the water supply. The changes are the result of a decade long study into the consistency of local water which regularly changes in taste and odour, especially in the warmer months of the year.

Hunter Water uses chlorine to disinfect drinking water before it enters the system to destroy disease-causing bacteria, viruses and parasites. Chlorine is an effective disinfectant and residual levels can be maintained throughout the water distribution system to guard against contamination. It is the most popular and widely used method of water disinfection in Australia.

For over a decade, Hunter Water has been monitoring and working with NSW Health to better understand what happens to chlorine in the Lower Hunter's water supply. This work has shown that some Hunter Water customers receive water with chlorine residual at low levels, particularly during summer.

As a result, Hunter Water will gradually increase chlorine dosing over summer at the Grahamstown, Gresford, Lemon Tree Passage, and Nelson Bay Water Treatment Plants. As the temperature drops in autumn and winter, chlorine dosing will be gradually reduced to maintain the same residual throughout the system and overcome seasonal fluctuations, which will provide a more consistent water quality.

Chief Operating Officer Darren Cleary said that Hunter Water is continually working towards improving the taste and smell of its drinking water.

"In the past a small number of customers noticed a change in the smell and taste of their water even though chlorine dosing had remained consistent.

"By increasing and decreasing chlorine dosing at our Water Treatment Plants gradually as the weather changes, Hunter Water can better ensure that customers will receive a more consistent tasting water throughout the year.

"Because of the wealth of data available from years of monitoring local water quality Hunter Water is confident that it can accurately forecast what happens to chlorine in the local water system and therefore create a consistent water quality all year round," said Mr Cleary.

Hunter Water monitors water quality, including chlorine levels, at all Water Treatment Plants and at 68 locations throughout the distribution system.

Hunter Water is required by NSW Health to disinfect its water to prevent the growth of bacteria and other disease-causing organisms which could threaten public health.

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