

Common Water Quality & Odor Issues

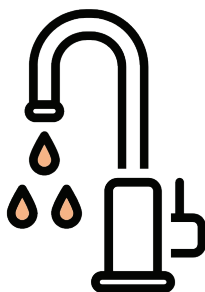
Hilton Head PSD's tap water has a longstanding track record of meeting or exceeding all state and federal water quality standards. The majority of the PSD's tap water is produced in its state-of-the-art Reverse Osmosis Drinking Water Treatment Facility, which uses the same treatment technique as many brand-name bottled waters and beverages.

Some customers may experience odor issues related to their home or businesses' internal plumbing. Some customers may have aesthetic sensitivities to tap water treatment techniques.

This sheet goes over some common water issues and recommended solutions.

Discolored Water

Mineral deposits can accumulate inside water mains. While usually harmless, changes in water pressure — often due to construction or fire hydrant use — can dislodge these deposits, causing water discoloration.



What to Do:

- Run your faucet until the water clears.
- If discoloration persists, call us at 843-681-5525.
- Our crews may flush nearby hydrants to resolve the issue.

Chloramines in Drinking Water

Chloramines treatment is a proven, longstanding tap water treatment technique used throughout the world. It is added during water treatment to kill pathogens that can be harmful to humans.

Customer Sensitivity:

- Some customers may notice a taste or odor.

Solutions:

- Let tap water sit in an open pitcher before refrigerating.
- Use a commercial water filter to reduce chlorine taste and smell.*



**Please remember that in-home water treatment/filtration devices require routine maintenance to ensure proper functioning and to prevent excessive accumulation of biological growth that can occur as a result of the removal of chlorine residual. Customers should consult product information for all such devices.*



Rotten Egg Odor in Water

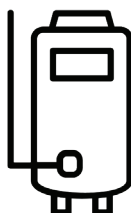
This odor is typically caused by hydrogen sulfide gas, which smells like rotten eggs. It can originate from several sources:

Water Heater Issues

Cause: Sulfate-reducing bacteria or a chemical reaction with the anode rod.

Solutions:

- Flush the water heater.
- Adjust the temperature to discourage bacterial growth.
- Replace or upgrade the anode rod.
- Consult the owner's manual or a licensed plumber.

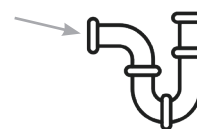


Unused Sinks or Bathrooms

Cause: A dried-out P-trap allows sewer gas to enter the home.

Solutions:

- Run water in the sink or shower.
- Pour a bucket of water down the drain to refill the trap.



Kitchen Sink Disposal

Cause: Decaying food in the drain.

Solutions:

- Clean the disposal.
- Pour household bleach down the drain and let it sit before flushing.

Vacant Properties

Water in unused homes or businesses can become stagnant, leading to hydrogen sulfide production and odor.

Solution:

- Regularly flush plumbing systems to prevent odor buildup.

'Black slime' and 'pink stuff' in bathrooms and kitchens

You may have noticed “black slime” or “pink stuff” growing around areas of your home that are often exposed to water, such as the faucet, sink, shower, or toilet. These microbes are airborne mold, bacteria, and/or fungal spores that are nearly ubiquitous in the very moist, subtropical Lowcountry climate. They grow in areas where they are frequently exposed to moisture — such as sinks and toilets and faucets. These microbes are NOT contained in the drinking water, but when they land in a place that is exposed to water they can grow quickly.

If you moved to the Lowcountry from a different climate, you might not have experienced these airborne spores before. Microbial growth in your household fixtures is a common issue, but can be solved with a little elbow grease!

There are many different strategies for eliminating the manifestation of these microbes, including:

- Clean affected areas with a bleach solution. Be careful not to scratch any smooth surfaces as this makes it easier for microbes to attach.
- Eliminate leaks that provide a constant source of water.
- Make sure that susceptible areas are dry after use.
- Maintain good ventilation.
- Clean away any lime scale on vulnerable surfaces.
- Thoroughly clean aerators and replace ones that are old or rusty.
- Spray areas with white vinegar and let soak before rinsing.
- Look into purchasing antimicrobial sink fixtures.
- Keeping humidity levels between 40% and 60%. If you are experiencing frequent problems with mold formation in your home, it may be a great idea to start using a dehumidifier in your home.
- Promptly fixing leaky roofs, windows, and pipes.
- Thoroughly cleaning and drying after flooding.
- Ventilating shower, laundry, and cooking areas.
- Using a non-abrasive cleaning solution with bleach, such as Soft Scrub, to clean the areas where mold is growing.



Thoroughly cleaning aerators can help.

Quick Fix Summary

ISSUE	CAUSE	SOLUTION
Discolored Water	Mineral deposits	Run faucet(s). If issue persists, call the PSD's 24-Hour Hotline at (843) 681-5525.
Rotten Egg Odor (Hot Water)	Water heater bacteria or anode rod	Flush heater, adjust temp, replace rod
Rotten Egg Odor (Unused Sink)	Dried P-trap	Run water or pour water into drain
Rotten Egg Odor (Kitchen)	Food in disposal	Clean disposal, use bleach
Chloramine Taste/Odor	Water treatment disinfectant	Let water sit in an open pitcher before refrigerating, use a commercially available filter
Black slime or pink stuff in kitchens and bathrooms	Airborne microbes	Cleaning, proper ventilation, dehumidifying, eliminating leaks