



Recommendations for Oregon Public Drinking Water Systems Experiencing Chemical Supply Shortages

Drinking Water Services (DWS)
June 17, 2021

DWS has learned that a major producer of chlorine-based disinfectants used in utility systems has notified its customers that it may be unable to fulfill orders because of damage to its facility that is causing ongoing interruption of disinfectant production. Below are recommendations for public water suppliers to extend existing chlorine supplies and contingency measures if chlorine resources are exhausted.

- If your system is experiencing chemical supply shortages, refer to your emergency response plan for information on treatment disruptions and check with alternate chemical suppliers.
- Contact your regulatory agency if you are unable to maintain normal operations due to chemical shortage issues and if there are potential disinfection or treatment changes.
- Contact your [local emergency manager](#) and mutual aid partners such as [ORWARN](#) to provide & receive assistance from member utilities.
- If changing chlorine disinfection or other treatment process is needed:
 - Contact your regulatory agency if there are changes to (or plans to change) treatment, disinfection practices, or operations.
 - Consider switching from chlorine gas to sodium hypochlorite, calcium hypochlorite (dry or liquid) or other disinfectant.
 - Ensure the chemicals being used are NSF 60 and equipment is NSF 61 certified for drinking water use.
 - Adjust chemical dosing rate and be aware of range limitations of your feed pumps.
 - Discontinue pre-chlorination to extend chlorine supply.
 - Consider additional coliform sampling and be aware of the potential for increased biofilm growth including taste and odor complaints.

- For systems discontinuing residual maintenance, consider increased flushing to minimize water stagnation in the distribution system and review sampling practices to assess water quality changes.
 - Surface water systems that achieve excess chlorine contact time may consider reducing chlorine dose rate to extend chlorine supply. Residual must be “detectable” at ends of distribution system.
 - Groundwater systems with no confirmed *E. coli* sources may consider discontinuing chlorination as an interim measure.
 - Consider and have plans for water curtailment options.
- Notify customers of treatment changes. Include contact information to address questions.
 - If water suppliers using surface water, groundwater under the influence of surface water, or groundwater *E. coli* confirmed, exhaust chlorine supplies a boil water advisory is needed.

Please note that not all the above recommendations will work for all water systems. Each water system will need to evaluate based on individual water quality, needs and operations.

If you have questions, contact Drinking Water Services 971-673-0405 or email info.drinkingwater@dhsosha.state.or.us.