

Frequently Asked Questions

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Q. What should I do if my normal water pressure decreases?

A. If the problem appears only on kitchen and bathroom sink taps, make sure the faucet screens are free of accumulated hard water deposits or sediment. If all taps are affected, make sure your main shut-off valve is fully opened and your pressure regulating valve, if you have one, is operating properly. If you have a water conditioning system (softener, etc.) verify that it is operating properly. If none of the above problems are evident, contact the Water Dept. Occasionally, system operations such as main line repairs, line flushing, etc. will cause the pressure to drop.

Q. What should I do if my water pressure goes too high?

A. If your plumbing system is equipped with a pressure reducing valve (PRV) you should ensure that it is functioning properly. If it is, high main line pressure should not be a problem. If you do not have a PRV on your plumbing system, call the Water Department. Higher than normal pressure probably indicates a main line PRV failure.

Q. Do I need a pressure regulating valve (PRV) on my plumbing system?

A. The current Uniform Plumbing Code adopted by Bountiful requires homes to have a PRV and strainer if the local water pressure (in the main line supplying your building) exceeds 80 pounds per square inch (80 psi). However, it is highly recommended that all home plumbing systems be equipped with a PRV, even if the local pressure is less than 80 psi. The reason for this is that while the local pressure may be less than 80 psi, that pressure may be a "regulated pressure" or a pressure reduced from a higher level by a main

line PRV. Since mechanical devices such as PRVs are subject to failure, the local pressure could go much higher than normal in the event of such a failure.

Q. What are the requirements to connect a sprinkler system to my water culinary water line?

A. Sprinkler irrigation systems may be tapped off the customer's house lateral if proper precautions are taken to protect the public potable water system from cross connection contamination. These protections include:

1. a dual check valve on the meter setter in the meter pit; and
2. an approved and properly installed backflow prevention device, assembly or system as an integral component of the sprinkler system.

All residential services installed since 1995 should have the dual check valve in the meter pit. Older homes may or may not have the check.. Contact the Water Dept. for information about your dual check valve or backflow prevention equipment.

Q. Why do you let fire hydrants run?

A. From time to time it is necessary to flush some main lines, especially dead ends or low use areas, to freshen the water in them or to expel accumulated sediments that break off from the inside of the pipes. We also will allow one or more fire hydrants to run in order to reduce the line pressure to allow a repair or a new tap to be made without totally shutting off the water to customers.

Q. Why does my water sometimes appear yellow or red?

A. There are certain elements present in a water distribution system which, by their nature, will color the water when dislodged from the inside of iron main lines by higher than normal water velocity. Higher than normal velocities are caused by such events as main line leaks, fire suppression, filling tanks or system flushing from fire hydrants, or reversal of direction of the normal flow of water in the main. The extra velocities created by refilling a line after repair, or flowing a fire hydrant will disturb rust which is present on the inside of pipes so the water will take on a yellow tint, or in more extreme cases a rust color. We take steps to make sure the water is clear after a repair or other disturbance, but sometimes these events will affect an area we are unaware of. When this happens, run the cold (not hot) water in your tub until the water clears. Bathtub faucets typically do not have an aerator, and are not subject to clogging by small particles of rust that may be present in the water. If it does not clear in 15 or 20 minutes please call the Water Department and we will take necessary steps to clear it up. Be aware that this condition is not a health hazard, but is unsightly and in some cases it may stain clothing if it happens while you are doing laundry. If your laundry is so stained, contact the Water Department to obtain a container of stain remover.

Q. Why does my water sometimes smell or taste different than usual?

A. There is a lot going on in a water distribution system. Usually it is related to the residence time of the water in the pipes or chlorination of the water. Chlorine is not only a disinfectant, but it is an oxidizer as well. Water sitting in the pipes for long periods of time will give the chlorine more time to react with iron, calcium and other constituents in a water distribution system and may cause some taste and odor issues. Even water with little or no chlorine is subject to tastes created by the length of time the water is in contact with the pipes, whether the pipe material is steel, cast iron or copper. It is always best to run your water for a couple of minutes after the water has not been used for a long period of time, so you will receive fresh water out of the main line in the street, or you can keep water for drinking in a pitcher in your refrigerator. It is good practice to run your water for a couple of minutes after more than 5 or 6 hours of inactivity to flush out any impurities that may have leached into the water from your plumbing system.

Q. Why is my water so hard?

A. More than half of the water we produce for Bountiful water customers is supplied from deep wells. As ground water travels through the aquifer it dissolves small amounts of the minerals with which it is in contact. You may have noticed the "white flakes" in your glass as the ice cubes melt or deposits left from boiling water. These are those minerals coming out of solution. In most areas the prevalent mineral is calcium carbonate, which makes up 96 to 98 percent of the hardness. The remaining hardness is due to magnesium, iron and traces of other minerals. The hardness of our well water ranges from 25 to 32 grains per gallon. Some of our customers are served by either the Weber Basin Treatment Plant on Davis Blvd and Center St. while others are served by our own Treatment Plant in Mueller Park. These treatment plants treat surface water which tends to be 'softer' than well water but is still considered hard at around 10 grains per gallon. Although these minerals are needful to the human body to function properly, they create issues with plumbing fixtures, laundry and other water related activities, so many people prefer to install softeners or conditioners. We do not endorse any one product, so you will need to contact the experts in this field to find what is right for you. To find the hardness in your area [see map](#).

Q. Do I need additional treatment of my drinking water?

A. The water in Bountiful City meets or exceeds all federal, state, and local requirements as they pertain to the public drinking water. While the complexities of a water distribution system can change how the water tastes from time to time, we have an extremely good record of supplying safe and reliable drinking water to the community. A different taste does not mean the water is bad, it could just mean that we are feeding your home from a different source which doesn't taste exactly the same. There are many products on the market employing filters or other processes which are designed to change the taste and/or remove some of the constituents in the water. There are even point-of-use systems designed to remove everything from the water such as reverse osmosis technology. While

we feel these products are not needed for safety or general aesthetics, home treatment is a personal choice and must be researched and choices made based on personal preference.

Q. How do I store water for emergencies?

A. We have researched ways to store water and have found several sources you can reference. Please refer to the [Emergency Storage](#) web page on this site for details.

Q. What are the requirements to connect a sprinkler system to my culinary water line?

A. Rule update pending

Q. Am I required to maintain a pressure regulating valve (PRV) on my plumbing system?

A. A water system built on a hill requires multiple main line PRVs to maintain safe operating water pressure. We work hard to maintain these pressure regulating valves, but as with any mechanical device they can and will fail from time to time despite our best efforts. Bountiful adheres to the Uniform Plumbing Code which requires homes built after 1972 and subject to a local pressure of 80 psi or more to install a home PRV. We highly suggest that any home, regardless of age or local pressure, should install and maintain a PRV in case of a city owned PRV failure or other unforeseen event which could cause a water pressure spike. High pressure is also hard on appliances, and most manufactures suggest 50 to 70 PSI to preserve the life of those appliances and to help prevent failures due to high water pressure. We cannot be responsible for damage to customer's plumbing systems due to normal operation and maintenance activities. Please protect your property!