

QUALITY AT THE TAP!

SJRA is committed to delivering safe, reliable, and clean surface water that meets or exceeds all State and Federal guidelines.



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Frequently Asked Questions Related To The Quality of SJRA Treated Surface Water

The San Jacinto River Authority's GRP Division began providing treated surface water to a number of cities and utility districts in Montgomery County in the summer of 2015. The purpose of this document is to answer some of the questions that we anticipate retail customers may have when they begin receiving treated surface water as part of their water supply. This document is only intended to address questions related to drinking water quality. If you have other questions about SJRA's GRP program, please visit: www.sjra.net/grp.

1. Who provides my water now and how will that change?

Your water provider is indicated on your water utility bill – this is your Retail Water Provider. Your Retail Water Provider and its responsibilities to you will not change. However, in the near future, your Retail Water Provider will purchase a portion of their water supply from SJRA. SJRA will be a wholesale supplier to your Retail Water Provider.

2. What kind of water have I been receiving? What is treated surface water?

Prior to the summer of 2015, Montgomery County's water supply came from wells drilled deep into the ground and is referred to as groundwater. The groundwater is disinfected prior to being distributed to consumers. Surface water comes from rivers and lakes and receives a high degree of treatment and disinfection prior to being distributed to customers. In Montgomery County, the treated surface water being delivered by SJRA to Retail Water Providers will come from Lake Conroe.



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3. Is everyone in our area or in Montgomery County going to receive treated surface water?

No. Not everyone in Montgomery County joined SJRA's GRP, and not all Participants in SJRA's GRP will receive treated surface water. The following cities and utilities will receive treated surface water:

1. City of Conroe;
2. City of Oak Ridge North;
3. MidSouth Synergy (Montgomery Trace and Woodforest);
4. Rayford Road MUD;
5. Southern Montgomery County MUD; and
6. The Woodlands.

4. Does my home or business require a new connection to this new water source?

No. The treated surface water will be blended with groundwater and served to retail customers through existing connections that are the responsibility of the retail utility.

5. Will there be times when I don't get surface water?

No, everyone connected to one of the 17 designated water receiving facilities will receive a blend of treated surface water and groundwater all year.

6. Will we still be getting groundwater from our existing sources?

Yes. The water delivered to your tap will be a blend of groundwater and treated surface water. The percentage of treated surface water will vary seasonally as water usage patterns change.

7. When will we be receiving treated surface water?

The GRP Division began distributing treated surface water in the summer of 2015.





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8. Was there an interruption in retail service when treated surface water was added to our supplies?

No. The introduction of treated surface water occurred without interruption of water supplies.

9. What steps have SJRA taken to provide safe drinking water to consumers.

SJRA has established the delivery of high quality, safe drinking water supplies as its top priority in developing its surface water treatment and supply systems. There are simply too many strategies involved in meeting this goal to list them all here, but the following list highlights a few of the significant steps taken:

- The source water in Lake Conroe has been monitored as part of the Clean Rivers Program since the 1970's and more robust sampling and testing has been implemented over the past seven years to determine the optimum treatment technologies.
- As part of the pilot plant testing phase, 14 small scale treatment systems were constructed and operated for six months to select the appropriate treatment technology to meet or exceed drinking water standards.
- A very robust treatment process was selected, which includes granulated activated carbon, micro filtration, air stripping, and disinfection.
- A lake water quality monitoring program will alert plant operators in the event that conditions in Lake Conroe should change.
- A comprehensive sampling and testing program will be implemented in cooperation with retail water providers receiving treated surface water in order to maintain compliance with all State and Federal drinking water regulations.

10. Are there more pathogens or bacteria in the treated surface water than in my current groundwater supply?

No. The treated surface water is disinfected to the same standards as groundwater supplies.



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11. Will my pipes corrode as a result of the new water?

The treated surface water chemistry will be adjusted to ensure compatibility with distribution systems and plumbing components.

12. Will the water taste funny or look different? If it tastes bad is there anything that can be done to “fix” it? If it is cloudy or off-color is there anything that can be done to “fix” it?

You should see no difference in the quality of the blended water supplies, though some people may temporarily notice a slight change in taste during a short transition period. Call your Retail Water Provider if you have any concerns.

13. Will the quality of our tap water change at different times of the year?

The blend ratio of groundwater and treated surface will change due to seasonal changes in consumption patterns. However, the quality of the treated surface water (color, taste, clarity, and odor) should remain unchanged throughout the year.

14. If I use a water softener will getting treated surface water change what I need? If I don't have a water softener, will I need to buy a water softener?

Typically treated surface water should not affect the need for a water softener. Surface water supplies typically have a hardness that does not require a water softener, however, each homeowner should make a value judgment on the need for softeners based on their own situation.

15. Who do we call if there are problems or complaints concerning water quality or billing?

If you have any problems or concerns, it is important that you call your Retail Water Provider listed on your water bill. If your Retail Water Provider determines that the problem relates to the treated surface water, they will contact SJRA to determine a comprehensive and joint solution to address the problem.



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16. Can the surface water supply be contaminated by chemicals or spills in the source water? Will the surface water treatment processes remove anything in the lake water that could be there by accident from a spill or leak? Is there wastewater from septic systems or domestic wastewater in the surface water supply?

The water quality in Lake Conroe has been monitored since the 1970's and scrutinized as a source for drinking water supplies for the last seven years. The treatment processes have been selected and designed to provide robust treatment of all known issues. Lake water quality monitoring will continue as long as the lake is used for drinking water purposes. If an unusual, catastrophic event contaminates the water in Lake Conroe, treatment processes and water delivery mechanisms will be adjusted to maintain treated water quality. There are many safeguards in place to prevent the introduction of unacceptable water into the transmission and distribution systems.

17. Lakes in Texas are muddy; can surface water ever be as good as groundwater?

Yes. The chosen treatment processes were specifically selected for Lake Conroe water. Although everyone's tastes are different, many people prefer treated surface water over groundwater.

18. If I will be receiving both treated surface water and groundwater at different times during the year, will we know when that occurs and is there anything we need to do?

You will likely not notice any changes in your water supply throughout the year. There are no anticipated actions you will need to take due to seasonal variations in the water supply.

19. Will fluoride be injected into the surface water at the surface water treatment plant?

No, the GRP allows each Retail Utility to make the choice if they want to fluoridate the finished water at their respective facilities.



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