



# DRINKING WATER QUALITY POLICY

Department of Environmental Health & Safety

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## Policy on Campus Drinking Water Quality

The University community is entitled to safe drinking water on campus. Safe drinking water is defined as meeting the criteria below:

- Water supplied from cold-water faucets or water fountains.
- Water free of offensive tastes to 85% of building occupants.
- Water meeting current EPA Primary and Secondary Drinking Water Regulations (<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/mcl.html>)

Only water supplied from cold-water faucets or water fountains should be consumed. Water taken from hot water faucets should never be consumed.

All complaints concerning unacceptable campus drinking water quality will be promptly investigated by Facilities Management.

The procurement of bottled water with University funds will only be authorized by EHS in the event that building water quality fails to meet EPA standards. The short term flushing (approximately 30 seconds) of cold-water faucets or water fountains immediately prior to consumption is an EPA approved method of achieving acceptable water quality. If building occupants with acceptable water quality desire bottled water, it must be paid for by employees and not with University funds.

Past experiences have indicated that the majority of campus water quality issues are caused by discolored water and most frequently occur after Semester Breaks, Holidays, water system maintenance or repairs or after other periods of low campus water usage. Campus water lines are constructed of ductile iron pipe that naturally rusts. Iron deposits then build up in the water supply system in pipelines, water tanks and water heaters. It is this accumulated iron that causes the most frequently occurring temporary water discoloration.

During periods of extended (> 5 calendar days) low water usage (e.g., Semester Breaks, Holidays, etc.) the following preventative measures will be implemented to proactively eliminate water quality complaints:

1. All water mains supplying campus shall be flushed.
2. After campus water mains are flushed the branch water lines supplying each campus building shall be flushed.
3. In campus Residence Halls:
  - a) Each faucet screen will be removed and cleaned of all accumulated debris and replaced. If the screens are damaged or missing, replacement screens will be immediately installed.

- b) Each domestic hot water heater/tank shall be flushed to remove any accumulated water impurities.
- c) Every sink faucet (hot and cold) and water fountain will be flushed for a period of at least 5 minutes or until any obvious water discoloration is no longer observed.

If water quality problems persist and do not respond to flushing, please contact EHS at (410) 704-2949 or at "[safety@towson.edu](mailto:safety@towson.edu)".