

#### **WHAT IS CAUSING THIS UNUSUAL ODOR AND TASTE?**

The issues with unusual odor and taste are likely due to the presence of zebra mussels in a raw water pipeline at the Ullrich Water Treatment Plant. The pipeline was put back in service on February 6 after being out of service for repairs over the past two weeks.

#### **WHEN DID THIS ISSUE START?**

Austin Water first received reports on issues with unusual taste and odor on Thursday February 7, 2019.

#### **IS THE WATER SAFE TO DRINK AND USE FOR WASHING CLOTHES? DO I NEED TO BOIL IT FIRST?**

The water provided by Austin Water continues to meet all regulatory standards and is safe to drink and use for washing clothes. You do not need to boil it before use. Austin Water employs a multiple barrier treatment process in our plants using disinfection with chlorine, chemical treatment to remove particles that may entrap pathogens, a filtration step and the necessary contact time with chlorine. The water leaving the plant has a chlorine residual that is present at the customer tap which carries the disinfection process into the system. There are state and federal rules for all these treatment process steps, along with measurement and calculations demonstrated in reports sent to the state. Water from the Ullrich WTP has been in compliance with all these steps before, during and after the taste and odor event, and exceeds the state minimum requirement. Measurements taken by crews flushing the water lines have confirmed that chlorine levels in the distribution system are meeting state standards.

#### **IF I HAVE A SHELLFISH ALLERGY, CAN I STILL USE THE WATER?**

Individuals with specific medical concerns should consult with their physician.

#### **WHAT IS AUSTIN WATER DOING TO CORRECT THIS PROBLEM?**

Austin Water is taking the following steps to respond:

- Adding powdered activated carbon to ease the odor issue. Ullrich Water Treatment Plant has not detected taste and odor issues since the addition of the powdered activated carbon on Friday.
- Flushing targeted water lines in affected areas to help water move more quickly through the system. For a map that shows the areas being flushed, please see <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/odor-and-taste>.
- Dechlorinating the water that is being flushed into the storm drain to prevent environmental concerns.
- To prevent future episodes, Austin Water is investigating applying chemical coatings and treatments to water infrastructure to fight the mussels.

#### **ARE ANY OF AUSTIN WATER'S WHOLESALE CUSTOMERS EXPERIENCING ISSUES?**

Yes. Customers in Sunset Valley, Rollingwood, and WCID #10 have reported issues.

#### **SHOULD I FLUSH THE WATER LINES IN MY HOUSE?**

Customers are not required to flush their lines. However, if you choose to flush your lines please wait until Austin Water has completed flushing in your area. Please reference the interactive map on [austinwater.org](http://austinwater.org) to find your area.

#### **WHO DO I CALL IF I AM STILL HAVING ISSUES?**

If you are still experiencing unusual taste and odor, please call 3-1-1.

**WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ZEBRA MUSSELS?**

Zebra mussels like to attach to hard surfaces. If you use a boat, paddle board, kayak, or other watercraft on any of Austin's lakes, be sure to thoroughly wash it down and let it dry to reduce the risk of spreading the mussels.

For more information and current updates, please visit [austinwater.org](http://austinwater.org). You also can follow Austin Water on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [Twitter](#).