



Your Drinking Water

A Publication Of The Missouri Public Service Commission

Water is a limited resource. Although nearly 80 percent of the Earth's surface is covered by water, less than one percent of that water is fresh. Even fresh water must be treated or purified before it can be consumed. The clean water you consume is produced and delivered by your water utility company in a three-step process: **source**, **treatment**, and **distribution**.

Your utility bears the costs of this process, and then passes those costs along to ratepayers like you. The Missouri Public Service Commission regulates the rates and policies of privately held, investor-owned water utilities doing business in our state.

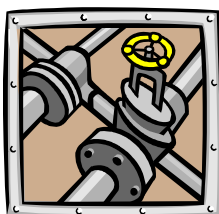


Source

Some utilities obtain their water supply from surface sources, such as lakes or rivers, while others acquire water from groundwater sources such as underground rock and sand formations that store water. Without proper caution, these water sources can become polluted.

Treatment

In its natural state, water is odorless, tasteless, and colorless. Although water from some sources is safe to drink untreated, water also can be unsafe for human consumption. Untreated water may contain naturally occurring organic and inorganic material, as well as contaminants introduced by humans such as pesticides, bacteria, and other pollutants that may be harmful to your health. Your water utility may need to clean and disinfect the water to remove these impurities, sometimes using sophisticated treatment processes. Federal and state government agencies, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR), enforce requirements regarding the production of drinking water. For your safety, water utilities are required to perform numerous tests on the water and meet stringent quality requirements before they can distribute it to customers. **For water quality issues, call DNR at 1-800-361-4827.**



Distribution

Your water utility delivers water from the treatment plant to your home through large pipes called mains. Water mains, which may extend for miles, feed the smaller service line pipes that carry water into your home. Valves control the flow of water, and meters measure the volume of water you consume.

Sources: U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

For more information

Created in 1913, the Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) regulates investor-owned telecommunications, water and sewer, natural gas, electric and steam utilities. The PSC works to ensure that Missouri citizens receive safe, reliable and reasonably priced utility services. If you have an inquiry, billing question or service-related problem that your utility provider cannot answer, please call the PSC at **1-800-392-4211** or visit our website at www.psc.mo.gov