


**NORTHUMBRIAN**  
**WATER** *living water*

# EARTHY, MUSTY OR STALE

This taste is often described as stale, peaty or like compost.

This kind of taste or smell is as a result of naturally occurring harmless microbes which begin to grow if the water has been left standing for some time.



[www.nwl.co.uk](http://www.nwl.co.uk)  
 [@nwater\\_care](https://twitter.com/nwater_care)

The water from my cold tap tastes or smells:

## **EARTHY, MUSTY OR STALE**

Musty or stale tastes and smells can be more noticeable when the weather warms up and the water has been left standing for a long period of time.

If you have a water storage tank in your property, the condition of the tank, and the length of time that water sits in it can have an effect on how the water tastes or smells.

### **DO YOU HAVE A WATER TANK SUPPLYING WATER TO YOUR PROPERTY?**

Run your tap to bring in fresh water from the mains supply. You should notice a change in the water temperature when all of the water has been cleared from your internal system. You can use this water for other tasks such as watering plants or cleaning.

Check the condition of your tank. This should be regularly cleaned and maintained. A registered plumber can help with this.

### **ARE YOUR PIPES SUITABLY LAGGED?**

Hot water pipes and central heating pipes running close to your cold water pipes can raise the temperature of the water. If cold water is left to stand in pipes next to pipes carrying hot water you may notice the water tastes different as the water is warmed. Lag your pipework to make sure that the cold supply does not get warmed by hot water pipes.

### **DOES THE WATER STILL HAVE THE TASTE OR SMELL WHEN YOU MOVE AWAY FROM THE SINK?**

Water and sewage pipes are kept separate. If the taste or smell is only present when you are near the sink then the source is the sink or the overflow, rather than the water.

The sink overflow should be cleaned regularly to prevent bacteria growing. Make sure that the drain pipes from the sink are not blocked with debris, such as food particles. Consider checking that the u-bend and sink trap are working properly and are not blocked by food, debris or other objects as this could cause a smell in itself but can also allow smells from the drains to reach the sink. A registered plumber will be able to help with this.

### **HAS THE PROPERTY BEEN EMPTY FOR A PERIOD OF TIME OR HAVE YOU BEEN AWAY ON HOLIDAY?**

If water is left sitting in pipes for long periods of time it can affect the taste and smell of the water. If you have not used your water supply for some time, run your tap until you notice a change in temperature. You can use this water for other things such as watering plants or cleaning.

### **ARE YOUR NEIGHBOURS EXPERIENCING THE SAME ISSUE?**

In a small number of cases the water can taste different when it is not used as quickly as expected. This generally happens in areas where few people use the water or not much water is used.

Contact us on **0345 717 1100** so that we can help to pinpoint the source of the problem.