

IF THERE IS NICKEL IN YOUR WATER

WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

IS THERE NICKEL IN MY WATER?

Water companies test the drinking water for nickel because it can be present at low levels naturally in the drinking water, it's a statutory requirement and because the Drinking Water Inspectorate advises that nickel can cause skin irritation. If the test shows higher levels than those that happen naturally, then this is usually because nickel maybe present in the internal fittings in your property.

COULD I HAVE FITTINGS COATED WITH OR CONTAINING NICKEL?

Nickel is found in iron-made galvanized pipes, and in zinc coated steel and stainless steel. Your taps and fittings may have nickel coatings or contain nickel, such as the kitchen tap or a water tank. Small amounts of nickel can pass from the fittings into the drinking water when you use it, especially if they are new or the coating is worn or flaking. Copper pipework doesn't contain nickel.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I AM CONCERNED ABOUT NICKEL LEVELS IN MY DRINKING WATER?

If you have experienced any skin irritation, a rash or sensitivity following washing, you should consult your GP. If you suspect nickel is present in your tap water and this is affecting your health call us on [0345 717 1100](tel:03457171100) or go to our website or www.nwl.co.uk and we can arrange a free water sample.

WHAT AFFECTS NICKEL LEVELS IN MY WATER?

The current UK water quality standard for nickel in drinking water is 20(ug/l) micrograms of lead per liter of drinking water. The level in your water will be detailed in the test report we send you after taking a water sample or in the water quality report you can see on our website when you put in your address and postcode.

Higher levels of nickel are often due to:

- The amount of time water is in contact with your plumbing if fittings are coated or contain nickel. For example, overnight or while on holiday – flushing can help reduce this (see ‘flushing advice’ at the end of this booklet).
- The age and amount of wear of your fittings can causing flaking nickel particles when the tap is on - consider tap replacement. Check tanks and consider cleaning and/or replacement. If you have an old, worn or damaged kitchen tap, this may be the source of the nickel.
- How new your fittings are – again some small nickel particles can come off new fittings surfaces when first using them – flushing can help reduce this (see ‘flushing advice’ at the end of this booklet).

When you are replacing a tap or fitting, we recommend that you employ a qualified plumber to carry out any plumbing work and fit an approved tap or tank (see the WaterSafe details below).



WaterSafe is a free online search facility funded by the water industry to help customers find competent and qualified plumbers in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

To find out more about WaterSafe or to search for a plumbing business in your area, visit www.watersafe.org.uk.

I CURRENTLY RENT THE PROPERTY I'M LIVING IN - IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I NEED TO DO?

Please let us know if you need an extra copy of the free water test results so that you can pass this on to your landlord.

FLUSHING ADVICE

- Check where your water is fed from, it could be that before it gets to the tap, it's coming through a galvanized water tank and this may be the source of the nickel. If this is the case, you may need to empty the tank as part of the flushing advice.

If cold water to your kitchen tap is fed directly from the water main then flushing will empty water from your internal pipes and taps and pull fresh water in from the main that has not been in contact with nickel.

- Run the water to flush the cold tap and pipes for five minutes in the morning or after a long period of no use. You can use this water for watering plants or cleaning the car.
- If your stop tap is more than 50 meters (160 feet) from the main in the road run the water a couple of minutes longer.
- Always run the tap before making up bottle feeds for infants.



FURTHER INFORMATION:

The Drinking Water Inspectorate

<https://www.dwi.gov.uk/consumers/learn-more-about-your-water/nickel-in-tap-water/>



Public Health England is now known as the Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (OHID)

<https://www.gov.uk/search/all?keywords=nickel&order=relevance>



Health protection Gov.uk

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nickel-properties-incident-management-and-toxicology>



WRAS approved taps look up

<https://www.wrasapprovals.co.uk/approvals/>

