



## White or Cloudy Water

Drinking water is normally clear and bright in appearance but very occasionally it may appear white, cloudy or contain particles.

What causes white or cloudy water?

White or cloudy water is normally caused by tiny air bubbles trapped in the water, usually when the water has been turned off nearby.

This can be easily checked by pouring water into a glass and watching it clear from the bottom up.

Examples of when this might happen include:

- A burst water main
- Reinstatement of a main after work on the network

Cloudy water is normally short lived and should normally clear within 24 hours. If it has been present for a longer period of time, or is persistent but runs clear after a few seconds each time, it may be that your internal plumbing is the cause, for example:

- Cold water pipes can sometimes be warmed by heating or hot water pipes
- The external or internal stop tap may be partially shut
- You may have an aerator fitted to the tap

Contact your water supplier for further advice.

What should I do if I experience white or cloudy water?

If the problem has been present for less than 24 hours, run the tap to help clear the water. If it does not clear, or you notice an unusual smell or taste to the water at the same time, contact your water supplier for further advice.

Is cloudy water harmful to health?

White or cloudy water is likely to be caused by air trapped in the water and is not harmful to health.

If you also experience an unusual taste or odour to the water or your water has been white or cloudy for more than 24 hours and is not clearing, we suggest you contact your water supplier for further advice.

### Further Information

The Drinking Water Inspectorate is the independent regulator of drinking water quality for public water supplies in England and Wales. Visit [www.dwi.gov.uk](http://www.dwi.gov.uk). Contact us at [dwi.enquiries@defra.gov.uk](mailto:dwi.enquiries@defra.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 068 6400.