

Water that tastes or smells bitter, metallic or of disinfectant



We add chlorine at our treatment works to disinfect the water so it's safe to drink.

Chlorine can react with some plastics and rubbers in your plumbing or your kitchen appliances and can sometimes make your water taste bitter, metallic, like medicine, disinfectant or TCP.

This taste isn't harmful but we agree it doesn't taste very nice. The good news is that we can help to solve it.

6 Water Quality Fact Sheet

Quick checklist



- Water tastes or smells bitter, metallic, chemical, of disinfectant or TCP.
- Tastes funny in hot drinks or boiled water.
- Tastes funny in cold drinks.
- Tastes stronger first thing in the morning or in the early evening.
- Tastes better after running the tap for a few minutes.
- The taste has occurred since turning off the water or after having some plumbing work done for example, a new tap.

What can you do?

You can solve the problem quite easily, you just need to track down the source. Follow our troubleshooting guide below to help.

Is the taste only in hot drinks?



If you only notice the taste in hot drinks your kettle is probably the cause. You can easily test this by boiling the water in a saucepan to see if the taste is still noticeable.

Most kettles, even metal ones, have plastic parts. The plastic in a new kettle may cause the taste or smell but should settle down after a little use. But if the taste persists you may like to think about replacing your kettle.

If you only notice this taste in cold drinks please see [Water Quality Factsheet 05](#).

Could the taste be coming from your tap?



If you don't think it's an appliance hose or your kettle causing the problem, it could be one of your tap washers causing the taste.

New tap washers or old worn washers can react with chlorine in the water. Think about changing your tap to something that is suitably approved by WRAS (Water Regulations Advisory Scheme). If the water tastes unpleasant at all your taps, then check the washer on your stop tap.

Could it be your appliances?



Do you have a washing machine, dishwasher or any other plumbed in appliances like a fridge with an ice maker, for example? One of the hoses connecting your pipework and your appliance could be causing the taste.

- First, isolate the supply to your appliance.
- Detach the appliance hose from the plumbing.
- Run the taps to flush through any water that has been in contact with the hoses.
- Leave the hose disconnected for at least a few hours, or overnight if possible.
- Before you reconnect it, see if the taste has gone. If it has then your hose is the cause.

To fix this you'll need a 'check valve' which is a small valve you can screw onto the top of the hose to prevent any water from flowing back into your pipework.

You can buy these valves from most DIY stores or order them free of charge from us on our website or by calling us.

For more information on how to fit a check valve, see our [Water Quality Fact Sheet 07](#).

Get in touch

You can get further information on water quality

Visit anglianwater.co.uk/dwq

Call **03457 145 145**

24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

