NORTH TEXAS MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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## Annual System Maintenance Planned March 4 – April 1

***Temporary Change in Water Disinfectant Critical for Safe Drinking Water Year Round***

**WYLIE, TX – Jan. 31, 2019:** The North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD) will temporarily change the disinfectant in its water treatment process from March 4 through April 1, 2019. The annual, routine change is necessary to maintain the regional system and year round water quality.

Disinfection is a critical part of the water treatment process that keeps drinking water free of harmful microorganisms, such as parasites and viruses. Disinfection involves a two-step process that first treats the water at the treatment plant and then chloramine disinfectant (chlorine + ammonia) is added to maintain water quality on its journey through the miles of pipes to homes and businesses. During the temporary change, NTMWD suspends adding ammonia and uses only free chlorine to keep water disinfected as it travels through pipes. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, this temporary conversion is a common practice for as many as 40 percent of water providers using chloramines for disinfection.

"NTMWD has conducted this routine, temporary change in water disinfectant annually for over 10 years, and we have always met safe drinking water standards," said Zeke Campbell, NTMWD Water System Manager. "This common system maintenance practice does not increase the amount of chlorine, and the water remains safe to drink."

Tests conducted by both NTMWD and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) confirm that NTMWD has maintained high water quality each year during its annual disinfectant change. Public concerns about water quality last year were thoroughly evaluated by TCEQ. Independent testing by TCEQ, compiled in a May 2018 report, confirmed water quality met regulatory standards and "would not be expected to cause short- or long-term adverse health effects." NTMWD has earned recognition from TCEQ as a Superior Public Water System.

The absence of ammonia during these few weeks may make the chlorine disinfectant more noticeable. There are simple steps to minimize taste, odor or skin sensitivities, including placing a pitcher of water in the refrigerator overnight or adding a slice of citrus to the water. Adding a crushed 1000 mg Vitamin C tablet to bath water will remove the chlorine.

During the change, the cities and districts served by NTMWD may help move the chlorine-disinfected water through the system by flushing water from fire hydrants. The combination of converting to chlorine disinfectant and flushing the pipes helps maintain the system and safe water year round.

NTMWD conducts over 250,000 tests annually in a state-certified laboratory to ensure water safety. Monthly and annual water quality reports are posted online, including results of tests conducted during the annual system maintenance. The public can view this information at www.NTMWD.com/water-quality-reports. The TCEQ also conducts routine sampling and tests on the NTMWD and city distribution systems through an independent laboratory to confirm water quality compliance with state and federal standards.

NTMWD has posted new resources online, including fact sheets, frequently asked questions, infographics, videos, and guidelines for questions about water quality. NTMWD also recommends that customers review the water quality information posted on their city or utility websites. For more information, visit www.NTMWD.com/safewater and the TCEQ at www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/disinfection/temporary-free-chlorine-conversion.

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**About NTMWD**

*The North Texas Municipal Water District is a regional wholesale provider of water, wastewater and solid waste disposal services for approximately 1.7 million residents across 10 counties – a service territory covering 2,200 square miles.*