

Darienite

News for Darien

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UPDATE: Aquarion Working on 'Earthy' Taste, Smell in Darien Water

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Categories : [Around Town](#), [Business](#), [Healthy Living](#)

Tagged as : [Aquarion Water](#), [Aquarion Water 2015](#), [Aquarion Water Company](#), [Aquarion Water Company 2015](#), [Smelly Water 2015](#)

Date : August 31, 2015

Update 4:58 p.m.:

The water utility serving Darien, Stamford and much of the surrounding area will be testing water samples on Wednesday to try to gauge whether the "musty" taste and odor in some of the water is increasing or decreasing, a spokesman said.

Customers in the southern portion of Darien as well as in parts of Stamford experienced the "musty" taste and odor of tap water in the past two weeks, from the North Stamford Reservoir that provides water to those two areas, said Peter Fazekas, a spokesman for Aquarion Water Co.

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(The northern part of Darien gets its water from a different source in Bridgeport, he said. Areas of Greenwich that experienced a similar problem get their water from the Mianus Reservoir, and the situation has vastly improved there, "to the point where it's almost not an issue," Fazekas said.)

Update, 3:34 p.m.:

The "unpleasant taste and odor" in some Darien and Stamford tap water is caused by a problem in a Stamford reservoir, said Peter Fazekas, a spokesman for Aquarion Water Co.

The water utility, which has an announcement on its website about the problem, says customers experiencing an "earthy" or "musty" taste and smell in the water shouldn't be alarmed for health reasons — the water is perfectly safe — and treatment of the water in the reservoir has started.

A substance called "Methylisoborneol" produced by algae in reservoirs creates the smell, according to the website. When the problem occurs, Aquarion has divers go into the reservoir with a treatment for the algae, and that has taken place at the Stamford reservoir.

The bad news is that "when they treat the algae you actually experience an increase in [bad] taste and odor because the algae die," Fazekas said. "Then it improves."

Bigger problems with the substance sometimes require more than one treatment, he said. Fazekas said he'll have more specific information on the problem when he confirms more details later Monday afternoon.

Original article, 1:27 p.m.:

For more than a week, Darien water for at least some customers has been smelling and tasting "earthy," which is unpleasant but not a health hazard, according to Aquarion Water Company, which says it is working on the problem.

"Darien customers may be experiencing an earthy taste or odor in their water," the company said in an announcement on its website. "This issue is caused by algae in the reservoir. While the earthy taste and odor may be perceived as unpleasant, it does not pose any risk to your health. We are working diligently to remedy this situation."

One Darien water customer said the problem started at least two weeks ago, with the water smelling and tasting "moldy," especially when heated. Aquarion is recommending that customers put drinking water in their refrigerators to reduce the taste and smell.

On its website, Aquarion has posted a nearly identical announcement for [Stamford customers](#), as well as for customers [in Greenwich](#). The website has no similar announcements for any other nearby towns.

[Darienite.com welcomes tips from readers, especially about matters that affect large numbers of people in

town but haven't been announced publicly by officials, or announced on some Web page most people wouldn't see, or only announced through emails or through the mail. Email tips to Dave@Darienite.com.]

Darienite.com is asking Aquarion for more information about the problem. Updates will be added to the top of this article.

Here's [the full announcement](#) on the utility's website:

Taste and Odor in Your Drinking Water – Frequently Asked Questions

What is causing the taste and odor experienced by some customers in their drinking water?

Recent test results are showing an increase in an algae-produced compound* in the reservoir serving your area. Even at very low levels (parts per trillion), this compound can be detected by most people.

Is the safety of the water impacted?

No. While the taste and odor of the water can be unpleasant, it is not toxic or harmful. Aquarion has reservoir management and water treatment plant processes in place to ensure our water meets all health-based water quality standards established by the US Environmental Protection Agency and the Connecticut Department of Public Health.

What is Aquarion doing to remove the taste and odor from the water?

Aquarion is treating the reservoir to eliminate the algae. The algae-produced compound will break down naturally in the reservoir.

Can the taste and odor be reduced at the tap?

The best way to reduce the taste and odor of the water is to chill it in the refrigerator. Refrigerated water is much colder than the water coming from your tap.

*Algae produce Methylisoborneol, a naturally occurring compound found in surface waters like reservoirs, lakes, ponds and rivers. Methylisoborneol produces an earthy or musty type odor or taste in the water