

# WATER QUALITY QUESTIONS ANSWERED

## Slime



### Pink Slime

Have you ever noticed a pink residue or film on your bathroom fixtures, tub enclosure, or in your toilet bowl? If so, don't be alarmed. It's not an uncommon occurrence, especially in humid climates. Be assured that it has nothing to do with the safety of your drinking water. Typically, such pink residue (which also can sometimes appear dark gray) is formed by a common airborne mold and bacteria (*Serratia Mancescens*) that thrives on moist surfaces, such as shower heads, toilet bowls, bathroom fixtures, or tiles.

Non-abrasive cleaning solutions with chlorine are the most effective method of eliminating or at least controlling the residue. Wiping dry those surfaces that are frequently exposed to moisture, such as shower stalls, drains or sink fixtures, can help prevent the bacteria from forming or proliferating. Chlorine bleach can help keep the bacteria from growing in your toilet bowl. Periodically, stir three to five tablespoons of chlorine bleach into your toilet bowl and flush. As the tank refills, add a few more tablespoons.

### Black Slime or particles

Some customers find a black mold in their faucets or water. This mold may be stringy, slimy, or particulate. Black mold is not found in the drinking water; rather, it is caused by airborne mold spores that are naturally occurring in our humid climate. Black mold often grows in the aerator that is attached to the end of the faucet. Regular cleaning, by unscrewing the aerator from the faucet and cleaning with a mild bleach solution, is recommended.

Molds are living organisms. Just as all living things need water, so does mold. Mold can grow on almost any surface. Spores can enter your home through open doorways, windows, vents, and heating and air conditioning systems. Mold in the air outside can also attach itself to clothing, shoes, bags and pets, and be carried indoors.

BJWSA has tested homes and water for mold. Molds that have been found in samples taken by BJWSA from customer homes and analyzed by a certified, independent lab include *Cladosporium*, *Paecilomyces*, *Phialophora* and *Aspergillus*. Water samples taken from those homes and from our main water line were analyzed by a certified, independent lab, and showed that the water did not contain mold spores.

Black molds, like other molds, will grow in places where there is moisture, such as around water leaks, windows, drain pipes or where there has been flooding. Black mold grows well on paper products, cardboard, ceiling tiles, and wood products and can grow in dust, paints, wallpaper, insulation, drywall, carpet, fabric and upholstery. Keep mold growth in check:

- Keep humidity levels between 40% and 60%;
- Promptly fix leaky roofs, windows, and pipes;
  - Thoroughly clean and dry after flooding;
- Ventilate shower, laundry, and cooking areas;
- Use a non-abrasive cleaning solution with bleach, such as Soft Scrub, to clean the areas where mold is growing.