

# WATER QUALITY QUESTIONS ANSWERED

## Taste and/or Odor

If you just moved into your house or have been away for a few weeks, then your water quality may have deteriorated while the water sat in the pipes. To fix this, simply run your faucets for 10-15 minutes to purge the stagnant water from your plumbing and pull in fresh water from the main.

### Earthy/musty

An earthy or musty taste or odor in drinking water could come from algae, specifically MIB or *geosmin*, two stinky but harmless chemicals produced by *cyanobacteria*, or blue-green algae. BJWSA has a vigilant monitoring program to detect and mitigate algae in our reservoirs before the algae blooms. BJWSA sometimes adds powdered activated carbon (PAC) which removes taste and odor causing chemicals.

Some humans have noses that can detect MIB and geosmin at very low levels. If you notice an earthy or musty taste or smell, please give us a call at 843-987-9200.

### Sewer/stinky

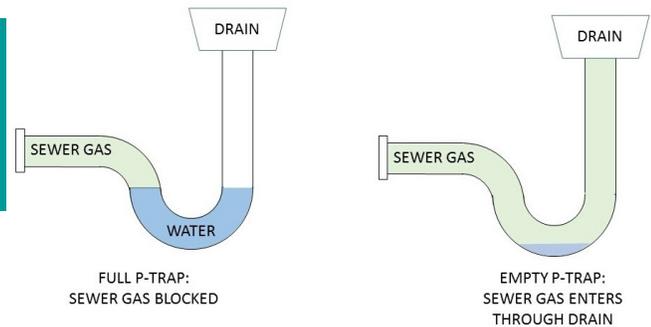
Is there a stinky, sewer smell in your bathroom? Is it the guest bath or a bathroom that isn't used much? The p-trap could be dry. A p-trap uses water to prevent sewer gas from moving up the drain line from a toilet, sink, or shower. If the p-trap dries out because the drain isn't used for a few weeks, then gas from the sewer can enter through a drain. To fix a dry p-trap, simply pour water down the drain! The p-trap will refill, and sewer gas will be blocked. (see illustration above)

### Sulfur

BJWSA's main water source is the Savannah River, but we do have some wells that we use occasionally, particularly in the morning in the summer when demand is high because of irrigation. The three wells in the Bluffton/ Rose Hill area sometimes have a sulfur or rotten egg odor. The sulfur odor is more pronounced in hot water, especially a hot shower. This sulfur is naturally occurring in groundwater and is harmless.

### Chlorine

As part of the treatment process, BJWSA adds a disinfectant to drinking water. This disinfectant, *chloramines*, makes water safe for human consumption. Some customers may notice the smell or taste of chloramines in their water or may notice a change in the flavor of coffee or tea made from a different water source.



**Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority**  
*Inspire trust and enhance public health.*