

Joint Water Commission



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Water Treatment Changes Address Taste and Odor Issues

July 22, 2008

In early June the Joint Water Commission (JWC) announced that its water treatment plant was experiencing a taste and odor event. This event has now lasted well over a month and led to the decision to enact additional operational changes to the plant's treatment train to address the problem.

In mid-June JWC plant operators began adding powdered activated carbon (PAC) just prior to filtration. The plant's existing manual-feed system, however, was unable to add enough PAC to successfully remove all taste/odor agents. JWC has since obtained two automatic PAC injectors, which were installed at the plant and brought online on July 12. This equipment substantially increases the plant's PAC dosage capacity. By moving the PAC injection point to the flash mix ahead of the sedimentation basins, the change has also reduced the load on our filter media. The new PAC feed was brought online slowly, incrementally ramped up from 2 mg/L to the current level of 7.5 mg/L. Dosage will be increased to 10 mg/L before reducing again to a steady 5 mg/L.

Other changes in the raw water coming into the plant have also increased the plant's alum demand in the past week. Plant operators have increased the frequency of their monitoring for finished water alum residual to assure that they are not overdosing.

Throughout this event, water produced by the JWC water treatment plant has continued to meet all federal Safe Drinking Water Act standards, and fluctuations in the plant's finished water have not exceeded our normal range of operations for turbidity, chlorine residual, and other sampling parameters.