

# QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE RELATING TO UCLUELET'S WATER



## 1. Sometimes the water from my tap is discoloured.

### What causes this?

- Within our community, discoloured water suddenly coming from the tap is usually a result of a disturbance to the normal flow of water in the main water transmission pipe. This disturbance may be caused by opening or closing a water main valve, flushing the water main, a break in the water main, or opening a fire hydrant (e.g. fire practice). If the water inside the pipe changes speed, direction, and/or both, this variation may cause sediments inside the pipe to lift from the bottom and flow with the water, which may result in discolouration.

### Why does this happen?

- Ground water has naturally occurring iron and manganese that builds up in pipes over time. Surface water contains varying levels of organics and is subject to elevated levels of turbidity due to seasonal events (e.g., rainfall).

### How can this be improved?

- Treatment processes like filtration will help alleviate discolouration in water.



## 2. Are there any health concerns?

No. According to the Guidelines for the Canadian Drinking Water Quality set by the Federal Provincial Territorial Committee and regulated by Island Health, the District of Ucluelet's drinking water does not pose a health risk.



## 3. Will a home filtration system make the water clearer?

Yes, a home water filtration system may improve the taste, smell, or appearance of your drinking water, but they do not necessarily make the water any safer or healthier. Home filtration systems require regular maintenance. If the system is not maintained regularly it can contain high levels of bacteria.



## 4. Will my taxes go up or will programs be cut because of a new filtration system?

Taxes will be used to repay the loan for a filtration system and operational costs will be covered through user fees. As to what may be discontinued, that will be the decision of Council, acting on behalf of electors.



## 5. What are the next steps for the District of Ucluelet?

Implementation of the following short-term measures:

- Pigging along the large transmission water main to remove iron and manganese buildup from the pipe wall at a cost of approximately \$40,000. This is slated to be done in the first half of 2015 and then will be done every 5 years.
- \*Unidirectional flushing to minimize iron and manganese buildup in the pipes will cost approximately \$25,000 to design. Once designed, the flushing will take place twice a year.
- \*Pilot testing to narrow down and confirm filtration or treatment measures. This will cost approximately \$80,000.
- \*Metering Chamber for Mercantile Creek to increase surface water supply at a cost of approximately \$120,000.



Implementation of the following long-term measures:

- \*Water Master Plan, which is a 25-year plan to determine the District’s current and future needs. The plan will cost approximately \$25,000.
- \*Filtration system for Mercantile Creek to reduce turbidity and organics will cost approximately \$3,500,000.
- \*Filtration system for Lost Shoe Creek Aquifer to reduce manganese and iron will cost approximately \$7,000,000.

\* *Subject to Council approval*

## **OTHER FACTORS THAT CAUSE DISCOLOURATION IN WATER**

Ground water has naturally occurring iron and manganese, while surface water carries organics. Both water sources can at times exhibit discolouration in water. The following are additional factors that may increase discolouration in water:

- High demand from businesses, i.e. hotels, fish plants, etc.
- High demand during the tourist season
- Droughts
- Structural fire
- Pipe failures
- Landslides
- Heavy rain and runoff

## **WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MITIGATE DISCOLOURATION FROM YOUR TAP**

Here are few things you can do to mitigate discolouration from your tap:

- Flush residential taps prior to use
- Flush hot water tanks every 6 months
- Residential filtration
- OxiClean and other alternative cleaning supplies

### **Notes:**

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If you have additional questions, please contact the District of Ucluelet at 250-726-7744 or [info@ucluelet.ca](mailto:info@ucluelet.ca), and visit our website at [www.ucluelet.ca](http://www.ucluelet.ca).

