



FACT SHEET

Taste and Odor in Drinking Water

- **In the springtime, certain types of algal blooms can occur in Beaver Lake, resulting in a fishy or muddy taste and odor in the drinking water.** These are usually short-lived algal blooms.
- **In the summertime, conditions in Beaver Lake often promote more rapid growth of algae, which can release organic compounds, such as 2-methylisoborneol (MIB) or Geosmin that can cause unpleasant tastes in drinking water.** Algal growth is spurred by sunlight, heat, and nutrients from watershed runoff.
- **MIB and Geosmin are detectable to people at different levels, but the standard threshold number is 5 parts per trillion.** It's interesting to note that some people may not notice any taste and odor until the levels are much higher. Others may never notice it. To put this in perspective, imagine pouring 2.5 gallons of MIB into Beaver Lake and mixing it up. That's all it takes to reach 5 parts per trillion in the lake. The point is that it doesn't take very much.
- **During the summer, warm surface water and cool bottom water layers are separated in Beaver Lake.**
- **In early fall when the temperatures begin to cool off, the lake experiences turnover, and water mixes from top to bottom.** This causes compounds to rise from the bottom of the lake to the top. Various organic components may then be introduced into the raw water supply and this frequently leads to taste and odor problems. ¹
- **Regardless of any change in taste or smell, the water is safe to drink.**

¹ https://www.usgs.gov/special-topic/water-science-school/science/temperature-and-water?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects

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About Beaver Water District

Beaver Water District supplies drinking water to people and industries in Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, Bentonville and surrounding areas. These cities then resell the water to surrounding towns and communities. The District's mission is to sustainably provide our customers with safe, economical drinking water. For more information, visit www.bwdh2o.org.