Sodium

Recommended Safety Standards
NC groundwater: N/A
EPA drinking water: N/A

Clean Water for North Carolina

❖ What is sodium?

Sodium is an essential mineral for human health and is most often found in the form of table salt (sodium chloride) as an added ingredient to foods. Sodium is a chemical element and bonds with chloride in water.

❖ How does sodium get into my well water?

Sodium is naturally-occurring in groundwater. Other factors correlated with high sodium levels are natural underground salt deposits, fertilizers, septic system pollution, and water softeners.

❖ What are the health effects of sodium?

High sodium levels can interfere with taste and can increase water corrosivity, damaging household plumbing. Only about 1% of your daily sodium intake comes from water, while the remainder is from food. Too much sodium can cause kidney damage and hypertension. If you are salt-sensitive due to pre-existing health conditions, an excess of salt can cause cardiovascular issues, such as heart attacks. For further reading on the health effects of sodium, please visit https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2014-09/documents/support_cc1_sodium_dwreport.pdf.

❖ Who is most affected by sodium?

Individuals on low sodium diets are most affected. Although the EPA does not have a standard for sodium in water, for individuals on “no salt diets,” the water sodium level should be a maximum of 20 mg/L.

❖ How do I know if my well water is contaminated with sodium?

If your well was installed before July 2008, call your local environmental health office and ask for the well program or contact Clean Water for North Carolina if you are unsure of the appropriate point of contact for your area.

Still have questions or concerns?

Call Clean Water for North Carolina.

Asheville office: 1-800-929-4480, katie@cwfnc.org

Durham office: 919-401-9600, hope@cwfnc.org

Website: http://www.cwfnc.org