

WATER TREATMENT – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Where does our drinking water come from?

PWSA draws water from the Allegheny River, this called our “source water.” The Allegheny River is a very clean source of raw water. It is taken into the treatment plant and goes through several processes before it comes out of your tap.

How many steps does the water have to go through before it is ready to drink?

The water goes through six treatment processes before leaving the plant to be consumed by the customer. All chemicals that are used during these steps are NSF (National Sanitation Foundation) approved.

- **Coagulation** – (*Ferric Chloride, Potassium Permanganate, Carbon, Catatonic Polymer*) These chemicals produce positive charges that allow the particles to stick together, making them easier to remove.
- **Sedimentation** – In sedimentation, additional time is provided for particles to form and settle out of the water.
- **Filtration** – A dual media filter – anthracite coal and sand – allows water to pass through at a slow rate to remove any remaining particles.
- **Disinfection** – (*Sodium Hypochlorite*) This chemical is added after filtration in a clearwell, or water storage tank, to ensure the disinfectant has enough contact with the water to remove microbial particles.
- **Corrosion Control** (*Soda Ash, Lime or “Calcium Carbonate”*)
- **Fluoride** – (*Hydrofluosilicic Acid or “silly acid”*) PWSA adds fluoride to our water at the level recommended by the CDC.

How long does the process take, from start to finish?

Due to the large capacity of our water plant, it takes approximately 2.5 to 3 days for the water to pass through the plant after it has been taken in from the Allegheny River.

How much water does the Aspinwall Treatment Plant produce in a day?

The treatment plant produces 65-75 million gallons of water a day, on average.

How much water is in reserve in an emergency situation?

PWSA’s water system holds two days’ worth of water in case of emergencies.



What do the water reservoirs do?

PWSA's system of reservoirs store treated potable water and allows for water to flow downhill. Water is pumped to the reservoirs and gravity creates pressure to push water through the system.

For more information on water quality or to request a free lead test, please call the PWSA lab at 412.782.7554 between the hours of 7:30 am and 4:00 pm Monday-Friday.

Lead tests can also be requested by e-mail at servicelines@pgh2o.com.
Please include your name, address, and phone number.

Any customer who needs additional information should call:
PWSA Emergency Dispatch 24/7 at 412.255.2423