



# Post-Flushing Water Quality

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## What if I still see a sheen or film in my drinking water?

### What causes a sheen or film in tap water?

Sheen, or film forming on the surface of your water, can be caused by organic impurities (bacteria) or contamination (petroleum). Microorganisms are attracted to minerals that are naturally present in drinking water. These microorganisms, when accumulating in drinking water distribution systems, can create a biofilm (a cluster of microorganisms). This type of film often appears in tap water if the water has been stagnant for an extended period. Petroleum (such as jet fuel), if inadvertently introduced into a water distribution system, can create a surface sheen. Biofilms or sheen found in water distribution systems can cause taste, color and odor issues at the tap. These issues in tap water do not necessarily mean the water is unsafe to drink. If water has an oily sheen and fuel-like odor, the water may not be safe to drink without further testing. A sheen or film in tap water does not necessarily mean that the water is unsafe to drink, but it is prudent to further investigate the sheen or film before consuming the water.

### How can minerals affect my water?

High amounts of minerals in water can cause scaling, which can build up on the inside of your pipes. Scaling can harbor and be a nutrient for biofilm. Biofilms can discolor water and cause an unpleasant taste and odor.

### If my tap water has a sheen or film, what should I do?

If you notice a sheen in your water, stir the water.

- If the film breaks into smaller sections, or if you notice a rotten egg smell, the cause of the sheen is likely due to minerals or other organic chemicals in the water. **Running all taps and spigots in the house for 15 minutes may clear the sheen.** If you have continued concern, reach out to the contacts provided below.
- If after stirring, the film quickly forms back together into one, uniform layer, petroleum may be the cause of the sheen. If this occurs, or you notice a fuel-like odor, stop consuming (cooking, drinking) the water immediately. In either case, contact the JBPHH Emergency Operations Center at (808) 449-1979.

*Sheen in tap water does not always mean there is cause for concern. Sheen can be from natural causes that pose no threat to human health.*

*If you have any concerns regarding the water quality at your home, immediately contact the JBPHH Emergency Operations Center at (808) 449-1979.*



Oily Film on Coffee.



Drinking water with high mineral content.

### Resources

For more information, please visit <https://www.cpf.navy.mil/JBPHH-Water-Updates/>. If you have questions, please contact the JBPHH Emergency Operations Center at any of the below numbers: (808) 449-1979, (808) 448-3262, (808) 448-2557, (808) 448-2570, (808) 448-2583.