



WATERLINES

*South Martin Regional Utility
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SMRU's Drinking Water and Home Water Treatment Systems Part 1 - Introduction

The quality and safety of the water we drink is important to us all. The staff at South Martin Regional Utility (SMRU) takes great pride that the potable water being produced by its two water treatment plants is of excellent quality that meets and exceeds all regulatory requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. However, SMRU understands that public concern about the quality of their water continues to lead many water customers to install and utilize home water treatment systems. SMRU does not advocate or oppose the use of home water treatment systems but believes the customer should be informed about the benefits and drawbacks of these systems.

This four part series of articles will provide an overview of more popular home treatment systems. This first article will provide an explanation of why a home treatment system may be needed and the potential concerns in using these systems. Later articles will discuss the most common home water treatment systems that include water softeners, activated carbon filters, and the reverse osmosis membrane system as it relates to the water being produced by the SMRU water system.

Why A Home Treatment System?

Traditionally, home water treatment devices are used to improve the aesthetic qualities of the water. Aesthetic qualities include water hardness (scale formation), taste, and odor. SMRU drinking water meets all regulatory requirements; however, some customers have elected to further enhance the aesthetic qualities of the water which they find undesirable. A number of customers have water softeners or reverse osmosis systems to remove hardness to discourage the formation of scale on appliances, household fixtures and plumbing. Some customers use activated carbon filters to remove the chlorine taste and odor. The sensitivity to these aesthetic qualities varies from person to person. Typically, the aesthetic qualities are more a personal preference and depend on what the person is accustomed to. Using a home treatment system is strictly the homeowner's choice.

If you decide to purchase a home water system, you should research and compare the different products on the market, looking closely at cost, efficiency, company reputation, and service records. You should also know where to find replacement parts and who will service the unit if there is a problem.

What Are The Concerns?

No single home system can treat for all water quality concerns. Home water treatment systems can be viable solutions to personal preference needs, but only with proper selection, installation, and maintenance. Not only can these systems be quite expensive, but if not properly monitored

and maintained, they can actually degrade the quality of water as well. These issues will be discussed in subsequent articles for the more common treatment systems.

Next, Part 2 – Water Softeners

REFERENCES

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