

Chloride (Salt) Reduction Information

The Harmony Grove and Okee Sanitary Districts are initiating a **“Don’t Be So Salty”** campaign to reduce Chlorides at our shared Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). The biggest culprit is water softener backwash water and **YOU CAN** help!

Here are 3 things you need to know:

1. The DNR imposes a limit on the chloride level from the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP)
2. Working together we can avoid DNR fines and/or expensive upgrades to the Treatment Plant
3. We can all SAVE money!

Chlorides discharged from recharging your water softeners end up at the WWTP and need to be treated before returning to our ground water supply. We are capable of removing a small amount of Chlorides at the WWTP, but when levels exceed our capabilities after treatment, the Districts may face significant fines from the State. Once these high levels of chlorides are discharged from the WWTP the chlorides are not absorbed or degraded as they move through the ground so we cannot rely on natural means of reduction either. The WDNR establishes groundwater quality standards to protect our drinking water and our discharge is reaching maximum levels.

Some residents choose to use a water softener because our groundwater has some degree of hardness (typically from the presence of dissolved calcium and magnesium in water). By making sure you set your softener at a reasonable recharge interval for softening or by changing from a time-setting to an on-demand setting softener will reduce our Chlorides by a significant amount, and protect our ground water. We are asking everyone who uses a water softener to cooperate in this initiative.

The following is what needs to be done;

- Homeowners need to review their softener settings. Older and less expensive softeners regenerate on a schedule set by a timer. More efficient softeners (“on-demand”) have flow meters or hardness sensors and regenerate only after the proper amount of water use so they don’t waste salt.
- Check with local water softener professionals to see if simply replacing the head on your older softener can be done to incorporate an “on demand” setting.
- Use settings for a reasonable level of softening, not the maximum, and have the controls calibrated periodically by a professional.
- Turn off your water softener when you’re going to be gone for a week or more.

We will all benefit with:

- **Saving money** on softener salt.
- **Saving money** on energy.
- **Saving money** by avoiding significant State fines.
- **Saving money** by avoiding costly upgrades to our WWTP.
- **Protecting** the quality of our water.

Remember: “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”