

CHECK YOUR WATER TONIGHT – FREE

# The tap water field guide

What's really coming out of your faucet, the **eight signs you can check tonight for free**, and how to read your city's water report like a pro.

02

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

- WHAT'S IN THE WATER
- READ YOUR WATER REPORT
- THE 8-SIGN CHECKLIST
- WHAT A FREE TEST SHOWS

# 01 What's actually in tap water

PFAS are “forever chemicals.” They don't break down — not in water, not in soil, not in you. And they are more common than most people think.

**45%**

At least 45% of U.S. tap water is **estimated** to carry one or more PFAS chemicals.

USGS NATIONAL TAP-WATER STUDY, 2023

**172M+**

Americans on water systems where PFAS has already been **detected**.

EPA UGMR 5 MONITORING · EWG TALLY, 2026

**Be honest about what this means:** detection is **not** the same as danger at your tap. That's exactly the point — a city-wide average tells you nothing about **your** faucet. The only number that matters is yours.

## • The other problem: hard water

Hardness is dissolved rock — calcium and magnesium. It isn't a health issue. It's a **money** issue: it bakes onto anything that heats water. The Water Quality Research Foundation had Battelle (an independent lab) run water heaters on very hard water. Here's what it did:

**2 lb/yr**

Scale packed into electric water heaters each equivalent year on unsoftened water — vs. nearly zero on softened.

WQRF / BATTELLE SOFTENED-WATER STUDY

**80 → 72%**

Tankless heater efficiency drop on unsoftened water — needing a de-liming at just 1.6 equivalent years.

WQRF / BATTELLE · GAS STORAGE FELL 70.4 → 67.4%

Caveat that honest companies state up front: the test water was very hard (26.2 grains per gallon) under an accelerated lab protocol. Buildup scales with hardness — softer water, slower damage. Which is why you measure before you buy anything.

HARDNESS (GRAINS PER GALLON)	WHAT IT'S CALLED	WHAT YOU'LL NOTICE
0 - 3.5 gpg	Soft	Nothing. You're fine.
3.5 - 7 gpg	Moderate	Some spotting, some soap fight
7 - 10.5 gpg	Hard	Crust, spots, dry skin, stiff laundry
10.5+ gpg	Very hard	Appliances aging fast

Your city report may list hardness in mg/L. Divide by 17.1 to get grains per gallon.



**RULE OF THUMB**

If your shower glass needs a squeegee to stay clear, your water heater needs a look. **Same minerals, same crust** — one you can see, one can't.

## 02 Read your city's water report

Every water utility publishes a Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) once a year. It's public, it's free, and almost nobody reads it. Ten minutes gets you further than any sales pitch:

### 1 Find it

Search “[your city] water quality report” or “[your city] CCR.” It's a PDF on your utility's site.

### 2 Find the hardness number

Often listed in mg/L or ppm. Divide by 17.1 for grains per gallon, then check it against the table on page 2.

### 3 Check the disinfectant

Chlorine or chloramine residual. It's doing its job at the plant — but it's also what you taste and smell at the tap.

### 4 Scan for violations and PFAS rows

Look for anything marked as exceeding an “action level” (lead, copper), and for PFAS results — newer reports include them.

### 5 Remember what a CCR is

A **system-wide average**. Not your street. Not your pipes. Not your house. It's the starting point, not the answer.

## 03 The 8-sign checklist — tonight, free

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>White crust</b> on faucets or the showerhead        | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Stiff laundry</b> ; colors fading fast                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Spots on glasses</b> straight out of the dishwasher | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Soap won't lather</b> without a fight                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Pool smell</b> (chlorine) at the kitchen tap        | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Glass test</b> : fill, sit 30 min — cloudy, or settles  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Dry skin or dull hair</b> after showers             | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Water heater pops or rumbles</b> (scale on the element) |

**Score it:** **0-1 checked** — relax, you're likely fine. **2-3** — worth measuring. **4+** — hard water is near certain. Get real numbers **before** you buy anything from anyone.

#### ● BRING THIS PAGE TO THE TEST

Any tech worth letting inside should explain **every box you checked** — in plain English, at your kitchen counter. If they can't, that's your answer too.

# 04 What a free water test measures

A proper in-home test takes minutes and turns guesses into numbers:

MEASUREMENT	WHAT IT TELLS YOU
<b>Hardness (gpg)</b>	The scale risk to your water heater, dishwasher, and pipes — the money number
<b>TDS</b>	Total dissolved solids — how much “stuff” is riding along in your water
<b>Chlorine</b>	What you're tasting and smelling — and what a carbon filter fixes
<b>Iron</b>	The source of orange staining on tubs and laundry
<b>pH</b>	Whether your water is corroding your plumbing from the inside

Straight answer: a home test kit can't see PFAS — that takes a certified lab. But it tells you in minutes whether hardness is quietly eating your appliances, which is the most common (and most fixable) problem.

**Before anyone sells you anything, make them follow this order:**

- Numbers first.** Nobody should quote a system without measuring your water.
- Match the fix to the problem.** Softener for hardness. Carbon for chlorine taste. Reverse osmosis at the sink for drinking water. Not everything for everyone.
- Results shown to you** — not “we'll send a report.” You watch the test happen.

THE TRIPLE CROWN GUARANTEE

## The See-It-First Guarantee

Our in-home water test is **free**, results shown to you on the spot, zero obligation. If your water's fine, we say **“your water's fine”** — and leave.

WANT YOUR NUMBERS?

## Book your free water test

Triple Crown measures hardness, TDS, chlorine, iron, and pH at your tap — in minutes, while you watch. **The See-It-First Guarantee applies to every visit.**

[GOTTRIPLE.COM/QUOTE](https://gottriple.com/quote)

SOURCES — USGS national tap-water study (2023, 716 sites; “at least 45%... estimated”) · EPA UCMR 5 monitoring, tallied by EWG (2026) · WQRF/Battelle Softened Water Benefits Study (26.2 gpg test water, accelerated protocol). This guide is free — share it with anyone it helps.