

Beware of Water Treatment Scams

Beware of false claims, deceptive sales pitches, inaccurate water quality data, and scare tactics used by some water treatment companies to sell expensive and unnecessary home water treatment units. High-profile investigations of groundwater contamination in Minnesota have resulted in an increase in the number of complaints regarding deceptive sales activities.

If you get your drinking water from a public water system, be sure to contact your water system about water quality data you find on third-party websites. You can learn more about your water quality, including information about Safe Drinking Water Act contaminants detected in the recent past, by reading your water system’s annual report (called a Consumer Confidence Report [CCR]). You can request a report from your water system or [Search for your CCR](https://mnccr.web.health.state.mn.us/index.faces) (<https://mnccr.web.health.state.mn.us/index.faces>) online.

People have a right to decide what is best for themselves and their family, and you may choose to install home water treatment. Most Minnesotans do not need to install home drinking water treatment to protect their health. Learn more about [Home Water Treatment](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html>). You should be cautious when purchasing a water treatment unit.

Guidance for Choosing Home Water Treatment

Water treatment should be installed only if it is actually needed and selected to address a specific water issue. If you are considering the purchase of home water treatment, please visit the Minnesota Department of Health’s (MDH) [Home Water Treatment](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html>) webpage for guidance on selecting, installing and maintaining treatment. In addition, here are some [Recommended Questions to Ask a Water Treatment Professional](https://www.wqa.org/improve-your-water/questions-to-ask) (<https://www.wqa.org/improve-your-water/questions-to-ask>).

Advice Regarding Deceptive Sales Practices

Deceptive Sales Practices <i>While the sales pitch varies, the salesperson may:</i>	Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Advice
Imply or say they are working with the city’s water utility or the state health department.	If you are contacted by a company to test your water and the company claims it is working with your city or a state agency, ask for the name of a contact person at that agency and follow up with that person.
Recite a list of recent groundwater contamination problems across the state, regardless of whether the contamination actually affects the resident or not.	Contact your water supplier, city, or the Minnesota Department of Health (health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us or 651-201-4700) and ask for information about your water quality.
Conduct a series of water quality “tests” that the salesperson claims indicate the presence of contamination, when in fact they may simply indicate the presence of	No water supply is ever completely free of contaminants. It is not unusual to detect contaminants in small amounts. Drinking water standards protect Minnesotans from substances that may be harmful to their health.

BEWARE OF WATER TREATMENT SCAMS

<p>Deceptive Sales Practices <i>While the sales pitch varies, the salesperson may:</i></p>	<p>Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Advice</p>
<p>naturally occurring minerals in the water.</p> <p>Claim that water should have no level of contaminants or that people should only drink “pure H2O”.</p>	<p>Some contaminants, such as arsenic and manganese, occur naturally in our environment. Other contaminant sources, such as fertilizers and personal care products, enter our water supplies as a result of our own behaviors.</p> <p>It is normal for people to want their drinking water to be completely free of all contaminants. However, preventing or removing all contamination may not be economically or technologically feasible or necessary to protect our health. US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and MDH are responsible for determining the levels of contaminants that can remain in water supplies without threatening human health.</p>
<p>Misrepresent state and federal drinking water standards, claiming the resident’s water exceeds those standards and implying the water is unsafe to drink.</p>	<p>All public water systems in Minnesota must meet Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs) set by US EPA. Close to 100 percent of community water systems in Minnesota meet MCLs. To learn about your water quality, contact your water system or Search for your CCR (https://mnccr.web.health.state.mn.us/index.faces) online.</p>
<p>Offer a one-time only offer of a water treatment unit at a greatly reduced price, when in fact the unit is being sold at grossly inflated prices.</p>	<p>Call other water treatment companies to get estimates on water treatment units.</p>
<p>Claim their treatment units are maintenance-free.</p>	<p>All water treatment units require maintenance to work properly. For more information on maintenance, visit Home Water Treatment (https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html) and read “Step 5: Test and maintain water treatment”.</p>

Contacting Authorities

If you believe you have been provided false or misleading information or subjected to unfair or high-pressure tactics during a sales visit, contact the Minnesota Attorney General Office - Consumer Complaints division at 651-296-3353 or 800-657-3787, or online at [Minnesota Attorney General Office - Consumer Complaints](https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Complaint.asp) (https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Complaint.asp).

Minnesota Department of Health
 PO Box 64975
 St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
 651-201-4700
health.drinkingwater@state.mn.us
www.health.state.mn.us

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