



Suburban Property Inspections

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CHROMIUM FACT SHEET

Brief Overview:

Category:	Metals
Acceptable Level:	0.1 mg/L MCL, Primary Drinking Water Standards
Source:	Natural occurring, Industry
Effect:	Short and Long-term Health Effects
Follow up:	Test for Chromium, Hexavalent Chromium and other metals
Treatment:	Coagulation/Filtration, Ion Exchange, Lime Softening, Reverse Osmosis

Details:

Source: Chromium is a metal found in natural deposits as ores containing other elements. The greatest use of chromium is in metal alloys such as stainless steel; protective coatings on metal; magnetic tapes; and pigments for paints, cement, paper, rubber, composition floor covering and other materials. Its soluble forms are used in wood preservatives.

Production of the most water soluble forms of chromium, the chromate and dichromates, was in the range of 250,000 tons in 1992. Though chromium occurs in nature mostly as chrome iron ore and is widely found in soils and plants, it is rare in natural waters. The two largest sources of chromium emission in the atmosphere are from the chemical manufacturing industry and combustion of natural gas, oil, and coal.

From 1987 to 1993, according to the Toxics Release Inventory, chromium compound releases to land and water totalled nearly 200 million pounds. These releases were primarily from industrial organic chemical industries. The largest direct releases to water occurred in Georgia and Pennsylvania.

When released to land, chromium compounds bind to soil and are not likely to migrate to ground water. They are very persistent in water as sediments. There is a high potential for accumulation of chromium in aquatic life.

Effect: Short term: EPA has found chromium to potentially cause the following health effects when people are exposed to it at levels above the MCL for relatively short periods of time: skin irritation or ulceration.

Long term: Chromium has the potential to cause the following effects from a lifetime exposure at levels above the MCL: damage to liver, kidney circulatory and nerve tissues; skin irritation.

Follow up: Test for hexavalent chromium, treat and re-test for metals.

Treatment: Coagulation/Filtration, Ion Exchange, Lime Softening, Reverse Osmosis

Following installation of this system, the consumer should have the treated water tested for chromium to verify chromium reduction is being achieved and the system is functioning properly.

For more information visit the USEPA website.

For further technical assistance, call Suburban Property Inspections at 1-866-866-6700, or call the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.



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