



Water Odor Update

December 15, 2025

As confirmed by the Albany County Department of Health,
Bethlehem's Water Is Safe To Drink

**We've set up a dedicated phone line for water-related concerns:
518-694-4640**

**Please utilize this line to report any issues, and we will make it a
priority to resolve them as quickly as possible.**

Response Updates:

We have continued to see very positive results system wide where the taste and odor have dissipated completely! The Town will continue to monitor the system closely to ensure the positive results are maintained. If you experience taste or odor issues, please contact our office and we will flush the system as necessary.

Update (November 28-December 12)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system
- See below for earlier actions

Flushing Home Plumbing

Once the water mains in **your area** have been flushed, it is recommended that each residence flush their own plumbing. Run a **cold water** faucet in your house for about 15 minutes to bring in fresh water from the water main out in the street. If the musty smell dissipates, then flush hot water tank.

Chlorine Odor

Chlorine odor is normal and different than the musty smell. It has more of a slight chemical smell. Chlorine disinfects the water to ensure safety and is required by law. All chlorine levels are being closely monitored and remain within the regulatory limits set for safe consumption.

Where can I get more information?

Town website www.townofbethlehem.org/ and select the Water Quality tab for Press Release, answers to Frequently Asked Questions, and additional documentation. Subscribe on the Town website to receive water updates on the "Notify Me" link. Enter email address and click on the "Main (Home Page) News" near the bottom.

Who do I contact if I notice a musty smell or have questions?

If you notice continued or an increase in the musty smell or an improvement in your home, please let us know online at www.townofbethlehem.org/forms.aspx?fid=101 or call (518) 439-4955 (x2014) or 518-694-4640, and we can flush your area again. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact:

- Paul Penman, Commissioner of Public Works, ppenman@townofbethlehem.org, (518) 439-4955, option 4
- Max Ferris, Director of the Division of Environmental Health at the Albany County Department of Health at Maxwell.Ferris@albanycountyny.gov or (518) 447-4620

Update (November 21-November 28)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (November 7-November 21)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (October 31-November 7)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (October 24-October 31)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (October 17-October 24)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (October 10-October 17)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (October 3-October 10)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (September 26-October 3)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (September 19-September 26)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (September 12-September 19)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (September 5-September 12)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (August 29-September 5)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (August 22-August 29)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (August 15-August 22)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (August 8-August 15)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system
- Update (August 1-August 8)
- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (July 25-August 1)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (July 18-July 25)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (July 11-July 18)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (July 4-July 11)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (June 27-July 4)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Update (June 20-June 27)

- 1 resident notification received regarding musty smell – our field staff assessed and determined that it was an isolated incident and not related to an algae bloom
- Continued monitoring of the reservoir, and continued treatment to suppress algae – no algae blooms in the reservoir
- Flushing specific areas in response to resident notifications
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (June 13-June 20)

- 2 resident notifications received regarding musty smell – our field staff assessed both and determined that they were isolated incidents and were not related to an algae bloom
- Continued monitoring of the reservoir, and continued treatment to suppress algae – no algae blooms in the reservoir
- Flushing specific areas in response to resident notifications
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (June 6-June 13)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (May 30-June 6)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (May 23-30)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (May 16-23)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (May 2-16)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (April 25-May 2)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (April 18-April 25)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (April 11-April 18)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (April 4-April 11)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (March 28-April 4)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (March 21-March 28)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (March 14-March 21)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (March 7-March 14)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (Feb 28-March 7)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (Feb 22-28)

- No resident notifications received regarding musty smell
- Daily monitoring of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (Feb 16-22)

- Flushing specific areas based on resident notifications
- Daily sampling of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (Feb 9-15)

- Flushing specific areas based on resident notifications
- Daily sampling of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (Feb 2-8)

- Flushing specific areas based on resident notifications
- Completion of flushing areas with persistent challenges

Week Summary (Jan 26-Feb 1)

- Flushing specific areas based on resident notifications
- Flushing areas with persistent challenges
 - North Bethlehem near Albany City Line (The Concourse)
 - Delmar (Fernbank, Hawthorne, Western, Rowland Groesbeck)
- Daily sampling of water throughout distribution system

Week Summary (Jan 19-25)

- Flushing areas with persistent challenges
 - North Bethlehem near Albany City Line (The Concourse, Russell Rd, Front Ave)
 - Hudson Ave, Gardner Terrace, Albright
 - Elm Estates, University, Fairlawn, Marsdale, Barry Ct, and side streets
- Daily sampling of water throughout distribution system
- Flushing specific areas based on resident notifications

Week Summary (Jan 12-18)

- Regional system flushing in Glenmont area:
 - Jefferson, Manor neighborhoods
 - Windham Hill, Oberlin, Bryn Mawr neighborhood
 - Journey Lane neighborhood
 - Milltowne, Huntswood, Brookhaven neighborhood
 - Bender Lane area at Columbine, Fields End neighborhood
- Flushing specific areas based on resident reports

Week Summary (Jan 5-11)

- Regional system flushing in Delmar:
 - Bethlehem Middle School area
 - Fernbank Ave.
 - Elsmere area, Dumbarton and Poplar neighborhoods
 - Area south of Rte 32 bypass to Feura Bush Road: Elsmere Ave, Murray Ave
 - Elm Ave, Fairlawn Dr, University St
 - Hasgate Dover neighborhood
 - Juniper Dr, Park Edge
 - Honeysuckle Way and Summerset Way neighborhoods
 - Brightonwood, Commonwealth, Quincy neighborhoods
 - Jefferson, Manor neighborhoods
- Flushing specific areas based on resident reports

Week Summary (Dec 29-Jan 4)

- Regional system flushing in Delmar:
 - Four Corners neighborhoods
 - Herrick Groesbeck neighborhoods
 - Salisbury Euclid neighborhoods
 - Hamagrael neighborhoods
- Flushing specific areas based on resident reports

Week Summary (Dec 22-28)

- Regional system flushing in Delmar:
 - East of Cherry Ave neighborhoods
 - Town Hall neighborhoods
 - Four Corners neighborhoods
- Flushing specific areas based on resident reports

Week Summary (Dec 15-21)

- Continue flushing the 6-million gallon New Salem tank. Water exiting tank has been odor free for 6 days. Daily monitoring of tank for odor.
- Regional system flushing drawing odor free water to:
 - New Scotland Rd in the vicinity of Fisher Blvd
 - North Bethlehem in the vicinity of Russell Rd
 - Slingerlands area between Delaware Ave and Kenwood Ave
 - Delmar area around Cherry Ave
- Flushing specific areas based on resident reports

Week Summary (Dec 8-14)

- Installed and started up new powdered activated carbon system at the New Salem Water Treatment Plant to remove odors.
- Aggressively flushed the 6-million gallon New Salem tank (which is the tank nearest to the reservoir).
- To push new water into the system and pull out water that may have the musty smell, we have started an aggressive flushing schedule. The flushing will move from New Scotland Road towards the Town lines in North Bethlehem (Guilderland) and from the Town lines in the western part of Town (New Scotland) and work our way into the center of Delmar.

Multi-Week Summary (Nov 1-Dec 7)

- Thanks to just received approvals from the NYS Dept. of Health, we are now adding potassium permanganate at the New Salem Water Treatment Plant. This chemical is very effective for addressing odor issues.
- We are working with the NYS Dept. of Health to get a permit to install a powdered activated carbon system at the new Salem Water Treatment Plant.
- With climate change bringing us warmer falls, we have modified our algae treatment schedule to be based on water temperatures rather than the date (which worked well for decades, but not now).
- We have purchased technology so we can undertake algal monitoring in-house rather than by an outside laboratory. This will allow for quicker responses at the plant if we detect changes in the reservoir water.
- We are investigating additional technologies for treating odor and taste issues in the Water Treatment Plant, such as activated carbon filters.
- We are undertaking a major flushing program to pull fresher smelling water into our 227-miles of water mains as quickly as possible.