



## Residential Water Treatment Systems: Pros and Cons

If your well water results exceed recommended standards, the Health Department recommends treating the water to reduce the contaminant. Each method of treatment has advantages and disadvantages which are summarized below. “Demand Initiated Regeneration” softeners and point-of-use reverse osmosis reduce the negative effects of water treatment.

Treatment system	Advantages	Disadvantages
Softener	<p>Commonly used</p> <p>Simple system</p> <p>Provides softer water</p> <p>Effective for removing iron and manganese</p>	<p>Requires adding salt to the system regularly</p> <p>Water can taste salty if not operated properly</p> <p>Elevates sodium in drinking water, consult your physician if you are on a sodium restricted diet</p> <p>Requires disposal of backwash water. Connection to a “BAT” nitrogen reducing septic tank voids the manufacturer’s warranty.</p> <p>Disposal of backwash into the ground may further increase total dissolved solids and dissolved metals in the groundwater.</p>
Reverse Osmosis	<p>Removes most chemicals</p>	<p>Can increase water usage in the residence by 50% or more of the amount treated. The additional water usage could overload the septic system.</p> <p>Membranes need to be replaced periodically.</p> <p>Water treated by Reverse Osmosis can corrode plumbing.</p>
Carbon Filtration	<p>Removes most chemicals</p>	<p>Carbon requires regular replacement.</p> <p>Requires the use of ultraviolet light or chlorine before the carbon filter.</p>

*Healthy People. Healthy Community. Healthy Future.*

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES .....410-996-5550  
 ALCOHOL & DRUG RECOVERY CENTER .....410-996-5106  
 OFFICE OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.....410-996-5113  
 COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES.....410-996-5130  
 DISEASE CONTROL .....410-996-5100

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES .....410-996-5160  
 HEALTH PROMOTION .....410-996-5168  
 SPECIAL POPULATIONS MENTAL HEALTH C.S.A. ....410-996-5112  
 TTY USERS FOR DISABLED: MARYLAND RELAY .....800-201-7165  
 EN ESPAÑOL.....410-996-5550 EXT. 468

HEALTH DEPARTMENT TOLL FREE . . . 877-334-9985