

# Toward Tomorrow

CITY OF NORMAN  
Spring 2022 Proposition



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: Groundwater Treatment

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### **Q: Where do Normanites get their water?**

A: So, Norman residents get their water from three sources. Norman has a connection to Lake Thunderbird, we have a groundwater well field, and we buy water from Oklahoma City. -*Geri Wellborn, Water Treatment Manager*

A, Cont'd: The water comes into the distribution system. We're supplying it from these three sources, and you can say predominantly areas are fed – like the southern part of Norman is fed by the lake water, that surface treated water. And I'd say the north-central is probably, and northeast, are predominantly well water fed. And then the northwest is probably predominantly Oklahoma City fed. But at any time we change of how much each source we're bringing into town. So these can vary from time to time, month-to-month; so wherever you go in town, you might see a different mix of water coming to your house. –*Chris Mattingly, Utilities Director*

### **Q: How have drinking water standards changed?**

A: In Oklahoma, we, the state has always allowed groundwater that meets water quality standards to be used without disinfection. What's changed is that Norman is a system that uses groundwater and surface water, and the state is requiring all of the systems that use disinfection to carry that disinfection throughout their distribution system. And Norman right now doesn't do that because our groundwater doesn't have any chlorine in it. What we'd like to do is bring all of that well-water together, disinfect it, and then send it back out to the community, so everywhere in the city you would see that chlorine residual that would give you that disinfection in the distribution system. That just helps keep us safe from microbial organisms that might get into the system. -*Geri Wellborn, Water Treatment Manager*

### **Q: What will disinfecting groundwater do for citizens?**

A: The thing that this disinfection will do for us is add an additional barrier and provide additional safety for the delivery of that water into town. So it's safe as it is now, but this is just a proactive measure that will make it even better.

–*Chris Mattingly, Utilities Director*

**Q: What did Norman learn from the 2021 E. coli outbreak?**

A: I mean, we did learn that Norman collects 90 to 100 samples every month in the distribution system looking for microorganisms and checking chlorine residual. Our community learned that we have a groundwater and a surface water system, and our community learned that we need to improve our disinfection in our distribution system. And that DEQ has been talking with us about it, and our goal now is to communicate with our community that having a disinfection residual in our distribution system will improve our water quality and protect our community better. -*Geri Wellborn, Water Treatment Manager*

A, Cont'd: So if we would have had chlorine residual in our water, that would have helped prevent or fight against this E.coli getting into our water. -*Chris Mattingly, Utilities Director*

**Q: What happens if the vote does not pass?**

A: If the proposition were to fail, Norman would still need water. We would still run our well field. We would still run our water treatment plant. We would still buy water from Oklahoma City. We would not have funding for collecting the groundwater wells to a central place to treat them. And we would either have to cut back on capital projects to fund that sort of work, or we would have to look at how we redistribute our distribution system to move water into different areas to try to make our groundwater and our surface water blend better to come up with a one part per million residual all over town. -*Geri Wellborn, Water Treatment Manager*

**Q: If the vote passes, what happens next?**

A: We see it as a three-year project to get ourselves up and running. It would be a project that would bring groundwater wells together to a central spot. Initially it would be strictly chlorination for disinfection and distribution of that water. So well water would come from a single place and it would all go out and it would be disinfected. -*Geri Wellborn, Water Treatment Manager*

Related Documents & Information:

- [ODEQ Public Water Supply Operation](#)
- [Chloramines in Drinking Water & FAQs](#)