STUDENT LIFE
HOUSING
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Water Softener Information

What is a water softener?
A water softener is a water treatment system where the calcium and magnesium carbonate (the minerals responsible for the hard water) which are dissolved in the water are replaced with either sodium chloride (salt) or potassium chloride.

Why is there a need for softened water at Munger?
The Munger building has a water softening system that supplies softened water to the entire building. Since Munger has its own domestic and heating water boilers it was deemed necessary to provide softened water to these boilers in order to protect the stainless steel heat exchangers which are an integral part of the Munger mechanical system. An additional benifit to having soft water is improved performance in soap products which react better to soft water. You will use less laundry soap, dishwashing soap, hand soap, etc. The water is more pleasant to wash with, less soap scum. Residents will however notice that soap products "seem" to be less effective but they will still provide the same amount of sanitation.

What has changed at Munger?
When Munger was built, an outside contractor installed it. It was under warranty for one (1) year. Our housing trades staff were hands off of the unit until the warranty expired. It was discovered, by our housing staff, that one of the valves to the water softener was not totally opened. So last year, we were not experiencing the full benefits that the water softener had to offer (<100% softened water). Now that the valve is fully opened (100% softened water), you notice or feel a difference in the water.

Is water safe to drink?
Yes, the water is safe to drink at Munger. The drinking water was just recently tested and affirmed safe by OSEH. Results can be reviewed on the OSEH website (OSEH.umich.edu) link to campus drinking water quality.

Why does skin feel smooth (silky)?
Showering in soft water may give you the sensation that soap and shampoo haven't been rinsed away. When you wash your skin with hard water, there is a layer of soap and minerals that is left on your skin. This is what causes the supposed 'squeaky clean' feeling. With soft water, the soap is completely rinsed away leaving just the natural oils your skin produces. In fact, by removing the dissolved rock from your water, a water softener provides you with water to thoroughly clean your skin and hair, allowing your natural softening and moisturizing agents to do their job. With hard water, skin pores clog with soap residue leaving skin dry and hair dull.