

## Springdale, NC Water Survey for Aqua

The Springdale HOA received 62 responses to its Aqua water survey out of a possible 104 residences. Since our community was constructed in three separate phases, we divided the responses into each household phase as well as totaling them for the community as a whole. As will happen, some responses were confusing, vague and/or non-existent. The compilers did their best to objectively categorize these responses without prejudice or ill intent and the originals are available for scrutiny should a question arise. The survey was undertaken because complaints about the water were seemingly being received at an increasing rate from our homeowners and we wished to determine if the situation was just a few homeowners looking for something to complain about or if we had a growing problem that we needed to investigate. That concern, along with the growing list of utility accidents occurring across our region and our country incited our inquiry. The survey asked questions that identified potential problems and eliminated others and also suggested possible avenues of recourse.

<u>Question</u>	<u>Phase 1 – 23 Responses</u>	<u>Phase 2 – 25 Responses</u>	<u>Phase 3 – 14 Responses</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Is your water pressure Satisfactory?	11 yes, 12 sometimes or no.	15 yes, 10 sometimes or no.	7 yes, 7 sometimes or no.	33 yes, 29 s'times or no.
Does water have Odor?	9 yes, 14 no	7 yes, 18 no	2 yes, 12 no	18 yes, 44 no
Taste Funny?	11 yes, 12 no	11 yes, 14 no	2 yes, 12 no	24 yes 8 no
Appear Discolored?	19 yes, 4 no	24 yes, 1 no	13 yes, 1 no	56 yes 5 no
Stain Clothing or Fixtures?	16 yes, 7 no	19 yes, 6 no	10 yes, 4 no	45 yes 17 no
Have you ever had Water tested?	5 yes, 18 no	2 yes, 23 no	2 yes, 12 no	9 yes 53 no

Why did you test?	Home Inspection, Curiosity, taste	Discoloration	Tasted, smelled, looked funny	
What were the Results?	OK for household Use; iron & chlorine At safe levels	OK to use; iron and chlorine prevalent	Everything in normal ranges	
Do you have an Inground sprinkler?	23 no	3 yes, 21 no	14 no	3 yes, 58 no
Do you use water Filtration systems?	11 yes, 12 no	12 yes, 13 no	5 yes, 9 no	28 yes, 34 no
What type?	4 – Refrigerator 3 – Pur 1 – Brita 1 – Charcoal	8 - Refrigerator 2 - Pur 1 - Brita 1 – Paper Filter 2 - Whole House	3 - Refrigerator 1 - Pur 2 – Brita	15 - Frig 6 - Pur 4 – Brita

Did you call Aqua w/the problem?	11 yes, 12 no	19 yes, 6 no	8 yes, 6 no	38 yes 24 no
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Were you satisfied With Aqua's Answers/Response?	2 yes, 11 no	2 yes, 11 no	8 yes, 5 no	12 yes 27 no
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Do you receive Notice if Aqua is Performing major Maintenance?	7 yes, 16 no	10 yes, 14 no	7 yes, 7 no	24 yes 37 no
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How often do you Drain your hot Water heater?				
Annually	4	2	5	11
1+ Annually	2	2	1	5
Never	14	20	7	41

Did it once

3

3



## Observations

The question of water pressure seems evenly divided in phases 1 & 3 with a 50% satisfaction rate in both phases. Phase 2 shows a 60% satisfaction rate, which may account for that phase having the only 3 inground sprinkler systems in the community. Perhaps flushing all of the lines more often would have a positive influence on the pressure.

The problem of the water having an odor varies by phase. 40% of phase 1 respondents reported an odor, while that % drops to 25% in phase 2 and to 14% in phase 3. Similar results are evidenced when the water's taste is questioned. Almost 50% of phase 1 respondents advise that the water "tastes funny" with 40% agreeing in phase 2 and 14% agreeing in phase 3. This might indicate that the ages of the piping systems might play a role in the water quality. We are assuming that the water is treated at the well source for smell and taste. Could the water be accruing these taste and smell characteristics from the lines as the lines age?

An overwhelming number of respondents in all 3 phases reported discolored water coming from their taps. Almost 80% of respondents in phase 1 reported discolored water. That number rose to 95% in phase 2 and to 92% in phase 3. One phase 2 respondent sent in pictures, as did 1 phase 3 resident. One phase 2 mother advises that her children cry when told that they have to take a bath in the colored water, a situation echoed verbally by another phase 2 resident. Reports of stained clothing and/or stained fixtures due to discolored water are only marginally less at almost 74% in phase 1, 75% in phase 2 and 70% in phase 3.

Given these results, we were somewhat surprised to find that only 9 respondents - about 14% - have had their water tested by an independent source, especially since a basic testing is offered without charge by most water treatment companies. In all 8 of these tests, the iron and/or chlorine levels were in the acceptable ranges, even when slightly elevated, and the water was deemed safe for household uses.

This be partially explained by the usage of and reliance on some type of filtration system in the homes. Approximately 45% of the respondents advised using some type of filtration system. Only 2 people in the



community reported using a whole house filtration system and both of these respondents also reported discoloration and staining in their water. Refrigerator filtration systems accounted for over 50% of the units in use with Brita and Pur filtration systems accounting for about 30%. One person reported that using a Brita pitcher actually increased the amount of chlorine in the water, according to the independent test results that he had had done. 48% of respondents in phases 1 & 2 used filtration, while only 35% in phase 3 had a filtration system.

When asked if they called Aqua to discuss and/or resolve their water problems, 48% of phase 1 respondents said that they'd called, over 75% of phase 2 respondents had called and approximately 56% in phase 3 had called as well. When asked if they were satisfied with Aqua's responses to their problems, approximately 15% of respondents said they were satisfied, 16% were satisfied in phase 2 and approximately 36% were satisfied in phase 3. Many respondents said that the field workers seemed to be doing everything they could and are very responsive, but the problems keep coming back. Many also said that Aqua management did not seem to care much since the problems keep coming back and that, when one explanation for the problem does not pan out, they just give you another and then put in for another rate increase.

About 30% of phase 1 respondents, 42% of phase 2 and 50% of phase three indicated that they had received sufficient notice when Aqua was flushing the lines or performing other major maintenance.

One of the suggestions that Aqua has advanced to help keep the water clean and odor and taste free is to drain and flush your hot water heater on an annual basis. In phase 1, 4 people said they drained the heater annually, 2 people in phase 2, and 5 people do in phase 3. In phase 1, 2 people advised that they drain it 2 or more times a year, 2 in phase 2, and 2 in phase 3. In phase 1, 14 respondents have never drained their hot water heater, 20 have never drained it in phase 2, and 7 respondents in phase 3 have never done it. Lastly, 3 people in phase 1 said they've drained it once since they've lived in Springdale.

Please note - Percentages quoted are rounded and approximate within 1-2

points. 40% of the community did not respond to the survey and those statistics are not known.