

Improve your drinking water

Water is the oil that keeps the body's engine running smoothly.

As much as 70 percent of the body is made up of water, so it's important to drink good-tasting, clean water.

Unfortunately, consumer confidence in the quality of our nation's water supply is decreasing with episodes like Milwaukee's municipal water contamination. Not surprisingly, a study conducted by Opinion Research Corp., of Princeton, N.J., found that one out of five Americans believe their water is unacceptable and nearly half of the respondents contended they have little or no control over the quality of water in their homes. Respondents' concerns differed by regions of the country, but usually included contamination, poor taste, color and odor.

Are these concerns over our water supply valid? Yes and no. Municipal water, which is used by 75 percent of Americans, and well water, used by the other 25 percent, is generally quite safe, but it can contain contaminants such as chlorine, nitrates and iron. Also, hard water, a condition caused by magnesium and calcium in the water, is found in 85 percent of American homes.

One common contaminant in water that is causing concern is lead. Lead usually enters the water after it leaves the treatment plant by passing through lead-laden pipes and lead solder.

Homes built before 1930 and new homes with lead solder are the most susceptible to elevated lead levels in the water. Consumption of even low lev-

els of lead during pregnancy can reduce birth weight, cause premature birth and impair physical and mental abilities in children. Adults can experience elevated blood pressure and hearing loss from lead exposure.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently cited 819 public water markets that exceed the agency's lead "action level" of 15 parts per billion (ppb). Reaching or exceeding the action level forces public water systems to reduce lead levels, monitor those levels and keep the public informed of elevated lead levels.

Despite all these causes for worry, individuals concerned about their water supply can improve its quality in a variety of ways depending on the impurities it contains. Filtration systems, distillers and reverse osmosis systems remove various contaminants, odors and tastes, and water softeners remove the minerals that cause hard water.

Filtration systems can significantly reduce lead and eliminate iron and other particles that create unpleasant tastes and odors in water. Reverse osmosis systems use a membrane to screen out lead, sodium, nitrates and offensive tastes and odors.

Distillers purify water by removing up to 98 percent of most pollutants. Distillers vaporize water to separate and reduce impurities such as lead, chlorine and scale-producing minerals, then condense the steam back into 99.9 percent pure water.

Although water softeners don't purify

household water, they do remove calcium and magnesium that can clog pipes and decrease the life of water-using appliances such as dishwashers, washing machines and coffee makers. Soft water maximizes the life of appliances and makes skin and hair feel cleaner and softer. Laundry detergent dissolves better in soft water than in hard water, and clothes last 15 percent longer if washed with soft water.

EcoWater Systems, a Minnesota-based company that has specialized in

residential and commercial water treatment systems for more than 70 years, suggests getting your water tested before purchasing any water treatment system. There are many ways to improve the quality of your water, and determining your exact needs will help in the purchase decision.

For a free educational booklet on water quality problems and solutions, call EcoWater's consumer information line, 800 869 2837, and ask for the booklet "The Water In Your Life."

Hear a talk on the wild side

Olga Stevens, veteran flower arranger and Troy Garden Club member, will use her favorite material, wildflowers, to entertain and inform at a meeting of the garden club noon to 3 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 9, at the Troy Community Center, in the Civic Center complex directly behind City Hall, 500 W. Big Beaver.

Stevens' generous arrangements use flowers she has grown in her own gar-

den and those she has collected far and wide. She will suggest flowers you might want to grow. Refreshments will be served at noon. Guest donation is \$3. For more information, call Barb at (810) 879-1393.

The club is actively seeking new members, men and women, particularly Troy residents but non-Troy gardeners are also welcome to join as space permits.

Master gardeners schedule fair

The Oakland County master gardeners present the fourth annual Fall Garden Fair 1-5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 5, at the Michigan State University Tollgate Education Center, Meadowbrook and 12 Mile in Novi.

Admission and refreshments are free. Call the Tollgate Center at (810) 347-

3860, Ext. 550, for recorded information.

Activities for adults and children will include garden lectures, videos and demonstrations; composting demonstrations; a plant sale; a country store and bake sale; hayrides; a magic show; pumpkin painting and various crafts.

Pumpkin painting planned

Visit McFarland Florist and Garden Shops, 28915 Grand River in Farmington Hills, Saturday, Oct. 19, for its fun-filled, Halloween-inspired Pumpkin Painting Day.

Bring yourself and your friends and family, select a pumpkin from McFarland's pumpkin patch and feel the fun

begin. Wear appropriate clothing.

Sessions are at 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. The \$5 materials fee per participant includes pumpkin, painting lesson, supplies and refreshments.

Space is limited. Groups are welcome. For reservations or other information, call (810) 474-0750.

HURRY!

1 WEEK ONLY!

STAR FURNITURE

SERTA®

QUEEN SIZE MATTRESS SALE!

FREE BED PACK

BONUS #1

0% INTEREST FOR 90 DAYS*

BONUS #2

FREE DELIVERY & Old Mattress Removal

FREE WITH THE PURCHASE OF ANY PERFECT SLEEPER SET LEVEL IV or higher

ORTHO \$89 Twin Ea. Pc. Full Ea. Pc. ...\$129 Queen Set ...\$299 King Set ...\$399	SERTA PERFECT SLEEPER PREMIUM \$119 Twin Ea. Pc. Full Ea. Pc. ...\$169 Queen Set ...\$379 King Set ...\$559	PERFECT SLEEPER LEVEL III \$129 Twin Ea. Pc. Full Ea. Pc. ...\$179 Queen Set ...\$399 King Set ...\$599	SERTA PERFECT SLEEPER LEVEL IV \$159 Twin Ea. Pc. Full Ea. Pc. ...\$229 Queen Set ...\$499 King Set ...\$699	SERTA PERFECT SLEEPER LEVEL VII \$199 Twin Ea. Pc. Full Ea. Pc. ...\$279 Queen Set ...\$599 King Set ...\$799
---	--	--	---	--

*WITH APPROVED CREDIT • MINIMUM \$500 PURCHASE

-FAMILY OWNED-

Star Furniture Galleries

Shop Daily 10-9 • Saturday 10-6 • Sunday 12-5

33500 West 7 Mile
At Farmington Rd. • Livonia
(next to K-Mart)

(810) 442-0120

Discover American Express VISA