

water taste & odor



The effects of Methylisoborneol (MIB) and Geosmin



What are MIB and Geosmin?

MIB and geosmin are two naturally-occurring, harmless compounds produced by cyanobacteria, or blue-green algae. Algae thrive when water is warm and there is abundant sunlight. Thus, taste and odor-producing algae typically bloom in the late summer or fall.

MIB and Geosmin are NOT toxic or harmful to consume.

Is the water safe to drink?

While MIB and geosmin can be detected at very low concentrations by some people, the water supply is still safe to drink. The compounds can cause an earthy, musty taste and odor in the water that is not easily removed by traditional water treatment techniques.

What is being done to control the taste and odor?

The County uses a powdered activated carbon (PAC) system to reduce the levels of MIB and geosmin in the water. While the levels of MIB and geosmin have been reduced in the finished water (water that reaches a customer's home), the powdered activated carbon does not remove all of it.

The County has recently added ozone treatment to the drinking water process, which will greatly improve the ability to treat and remove these compounds.

Where can I learn more about Forsyth County's water treatment process?

The Forsyth County Water & Sewer Department creates an annual water quality report that details what is in our water and how it compares to federal regulations.

View Forsyth County's water quality reports [here](#).

