



ORANGE WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

*A public, non-profit agency providing water, sewer and reclaimed water services
to the Carrboro-Chapel Hill community.*

WHAT CAN CAUSE OUR DRINKING WATER TO HAVE A TASTE OR SMELL?

Taste and odor in our water may result from several factors.

- ◆ **Every fall, the natural process of convection in our lakes** can stir up sediment, etc. and give our water an earthy or musty taste and odor.

When the water at the surface of our lakes cools down in the fall, the surface water mixes with the water from lower depths. This mixing usually causes some taste and odor in our drinking water. When this happens, we may add finely powdered carbon in our treatment process to reduce or minimize the taste and odor.

- ◆ At times of the year such as summer, **algae in our lakes** may cause an earthy or musty taste and odor, which we can treat in our plant with powdered carbon.
- ◆ **In March, we normally use chlorine to disinfect our water.** Some customers may notice a chlorine smell then. In the other 11 months of the year, we disinfect water with a compound of chlorine and ammonia, called "chloramines," which usually have little or no odor.

However, taste and odor conditions do not make our drinking water unhealthy or unsafe to drink.

TO REPORT WATER TASTE OR ODOR, AND FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Please feel free to contact the OWASA Laboratory staff at 919-537-4227, 537-4205 or rmonschein@owasa.org

- ◆ to report taste or odor so we can make any needed adjustments in our treatment process to address taste and odor, and
- ◆ whenever you have any questions about our drinking water or if you want to have our water tested.