

1 Particles in Water

Our water is high quality but occasionally you may notice small particles in the water. This could be caused by a number of factors and here we explain what they may be and what you can do to remedy them.

Black bits

Common causes of black particles and how to eliminate them:

- **Jug filters** can contain activated carbon filters which may leak black particles into the water, usually into the top of the jug as it is being filled. Fill a glass with water from the cold kitchen tap and compare it with water from the jug filter. If the black particles only appear in water from the jug filter then refer to the manufacturer's instructions.
- If the black particles are large and can be compressed between the fingers then the fragments are likely to be from a **disintegrating tap washer**. The washers should be examined and replaced as necessary.
- Very occasionally black particles from the **lining of the water main** which supplies your property may be the source. Check whether your neighbours are experiencing the same problem. If they are, contact our Customer Services team on the number below.
- If the particles are black (or grey) and jelly-like, they are likely to be due to **fungal growth**. Airborne fungal spores will grow in many moist, warm environments, such as the ends of taps and washing machine

powder drawers. The presence of fungal growths is not connected in any way to the quality of the water supply and they pose no risk to health. They can be removed by cleaning with a disinfectant solution.

Brown or orange particles

Brown and orange debris is likely to consist of iron. More information on iron particles can be found in our **Discoloured Water factsheet**.

Flat, smooth flakes

If any flake type particles are present they are most likely to be scale. White particles can also form in **Ice Cubes**, when the naturally occurring calcium in the water becomes solid. More information on these types of particles may be found in our **Water Hardness and Scale factsheet**.

Grit and sand

Within water mains and pipework, particles which often resemble grit and sand, can appear when there has been some disturbance, for example after a burst water main or when a water meter is fitted.

Sand can also often be left in the pipes of new homes during construction.

Fully opening the cold kitchen tap should help to flush out any grit and sand type particles present in pipework.

Round Spheres

These types of particles often originate from in-line water filters or softeners, fitted within properties on the pipework leading to the tap.

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Small, shiny or metallic particles

The source of this type of debris is often found to be **disintegrating pipework** in the property. If they are present they are likely to consist of copper or zinc. These materials are not used in the construction of water distribution supply mains, but can be components of customers' own pipework.

What can you do?

Identify the cause by comparing the water from your cold kitchen tap (mains fed) with water from a neighbour's cold kitchen tap. If the particles are isolated to your tap it may be an internal plumbing issue. If your neighbour is also affected it may be the supplying main.

In either case, run the affected tap for a few minutes. If the problem persists contact our Customer Service team for further advice.

For further advice and top tips check out the water industry guide 'Looking after water in your home'. Download at: www.seswater.co.uk/WaterInYourHome