



# Home Water Treatment Devices

## **WHY WOULD I NEED TO USE A POINT-OF-USE (POU) OR POINT-OF-ENTRY (POE) WATER TREATMENT DEVICE?**

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission's provided tap water is safe to drink and meets or surpasses the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) standards. However, some people may prefer using a water treatment device if they are concerned about old plumbing in their residence, for personal preference to improve the taste of the water, or for personal health reasons. If you are concerned, you should seek advice from your health care provider about drinking water.

## **WHAT IS A POU WATER TREATMENT DEVICE?**

POU water treatment devices include water filter pitchers, and can be installed on faucets, showerheads, or other fixtures to treat the water just before it is used. Certain POU devices can treat contaminants from old plumbing and/or remove tastes and odors from chlorine-based disinfectants that are used to maintain water quality.



## **WHAT IS A POE WATER TREATMENT DEVICE?**

POE water treatment devices are installed in the plumbing lines entering a building and provide water treatment for an entire building (i.e., single home, business, school, or facility). POE devices are typically used when a public utility has difficulty meeting federal and state water quality standards. This is not a concern with SFPUC provided tap water.

## WHAT TYPES OF TREATMENT ARE EMPLOYED BY HOME WATER TREATMENT DEVICES?

POU and POE water treatment devices use the same treatment technologies used in centralized drinking water treatment plants - water treatment technologies include filtration, distillation, activated carbon, ion exchange, ultraviolet radiation, and reverse osmosis. POU and POE water treatment devices use these methods alone or in combination with each other depending on the type of treatment that is desired. It is important to follow the manufacturer's replacement instructions to ensure the treatment devices are performing as intended.

## HOW CAN I TELL IF A POU OR POE TREATMENT DEVICE WILL DO WHAT IT PROMISES TO DO?

When a POU and POE water treatment device contains health and safety benefit claims, the manufacturer is required to register the device with the California Water Treatment Device Registration Program. A list of registered Water Treatment Devices for specific contaminants such as arsenic, chromium, lead, and nitrate, can be found at the following link: [waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/device/watertreatmentdevices.shtml](http://waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/device/watertreatmentdevices.shtml).

POU and POE water treatment devices that are not making a health and safety claim, such as those that are intended to remove chlorine or improve taste, are not required to register; however these should have a seal noting that they are certified for [National Sanitation Foundation \(NSF\)/American National Standards Institute \(ANSI\) Standard 42](#) and accepted by the State of California Water Treatment Device Registration Program.

### CONSUMER RESOURCES: REGULATION/HEALTH

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Household Water Treatment  
[cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/public/water\\_treatment.html](http://cdc.gov/healthywater/drinking/public/water_treatment.html)
- State Water Resources Control Board: Residential Water Treatment Devices  
[waterboards.ca.gov/drinking\\_water/certlic/device/watertreatmentdevices.html](http://waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/device/watertreatmentdevices.html)
- USEPA: Point-of-Use or Point-of-Entry Treatment Options for Small Drinking Water Systems  
[epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/guide\\_smallsystems\\_pou-poe\\_june6-2006.pdf](http://epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/guide_smallsystems_pou-poe_june6-2006.pdf)

### NSF, WATER TREATMENT PRODUCTS COMPLYING WITH NSF61:

- Search at: [nsf.org/Certified/DWTU/](http://nsf.org/Certified/DWTU/)

**We're Committed to Quality:** Our highly trained chemists, technicians and inspectors consistently monitor the water we serve—throughout our system, every day of the year. For additional information and materials, please visit [sfpuc.org/waterquality](http://sfpuc.org/waterquality). For questions about YOUR water, please call 311. You can also visit [311.org](http://311.org).