



Frequently Asked Questions about the City of Kyle's water

1. Where does the City of Kyle get its drinking water?

We have three unique sources of drinking water to supply our city's needs:

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority/GBRA (Surface water) — Water is treated at the San Marcos Water Treatment Plant and piped to us and other entities along IH35.

The source water is Canyon Lake and it makes up the majority of Kyle's water supply.

Barton Springs / Edwards Aquifer (Groundwater source) — One well in the BSEACD supplies water to the northern part of town. This is the second largest component of our water supply.

Edwards Aquifer (Groundwater source) — Numerous high capacity wells provided the entire water supply for Kyle for many years. Currently an active part of our water portfolio, though the smallest.

Kyle also has an emergency water supply agreement with the City of San Marcos that can be used if our normal supply is interrupted.

The City of Kyle also entered an agreement with the Hays Caldwell Public Utility Authority (HCPUA) to begin long-term water planning. See #4 below for more information.

2. Do I need a water softener?

Deciding on the use of a water softener is entirely a personal choice. While it is true that water hardness, which stems from naturally occurring calcium, can leave deposits on glasses, dishes and various other surfaces, it does not represent a health hazard.

Some people choose to install a softener to address aesthetics of the water. The hardness of water varies according to time of year and which sources are being used most. In general, however, our total hardness is around 300 mg/L CaCO₃ on the upper end of the range and 250 mg/L CaCO₃ on the lower end.

Please note: Kyle city staff cannot recommend any softeners for customers.

3. Do I need a water filter?

Our water supply and distribution system meets or exceeds all state and federal guidelines for safety and health. A filter is not needed to ensure safe water in your home. Filters may be used to remove some taste and odors from water, particularly chlorine odors. Filters that remove chlorine odor also remove chlorine from the water. Chlorine is a disinfectant, which keeps the water safe from bacterial contamination. Routine filter service is required to prevent them from degrading the quality of water to the home.

4. How is the City planning for future water needs?

More than a decade ago, the City became a founding member of the Hays Caldwell Public Utility Agency (HCPUA). The goal of this conglomeration of entities was to provide for future water needs in our region. Currently, HCPUA is in final design for the first parts of the infrastructure needed for the project. Learn more at <http://hcpua.org>.

5. How much water does the Kyle use per day?

On average, we use around 2.5 million gallons of water daily to serve all of our customers and city facilities. This is about half of the total water we have access to each day.

6. What is the “water sharing” I have heard about between Kyle and Buda? Simply put, the cities of Kyle and San Marcos are sharing some of their currently uncommitted water reserves with Buda. The GBRA is also assisting in this effort. This sharing was contemplated as part of our long-term partnership in the HCUPA in order to push back the date of the project, which defers costs for all the partners until the customer bases are large enough to support funding the project. Buda is paying for the cost of the water and the transportation. This provides for sharing partners to recoup the costs incurred for the water, but not to make a profit from another partner’s need.

7. Some people think the water tastes bad. Why is that?

First, we should probably couch that question to say that what smells or taste bad to one person doesn’t necessarily smell or taste bad to someone else. That said, taste and odor compounds in water are not at all uncommon. In water supply’s where surface waters are used, taste and odor compounds come from algae in lakes and rivers in most cases. These algae grow and die as any plant would, but their life cycle produces various taste and odor compounds that permeate the water. They are not harmful to humans or any other creatures. There are a few treatment technologies that can remove these compounds, however, they are extremely expensive to operate and would increase the cost of water service considerably.

8. Why do I smell bleach in the water?

We use chlorine as the disinfectant in our water supply. Chlorine has a strong odor, even in very low concentrations. State and federal laws require that we maintain a chlorine residual at all times in our entire water system, so we have to use enough in the process to ensure that residual lasts through out the distribution system. Additionally, the chlorine is what protects the water supply from pathogenic contamination in the event of a sudden loss of pressure, or potential contamination event. While it might not be very pleasant to smell or taste, its benefits to the safety of our system cannot be overstated.

9. I've read the water isn't safe. Why doesn't the city make sure it is?

We do. First, let’s dispel the myth that our water supply isn’t safe. It is ABSOLUTELY safe. We continuously monitor disinfection in the system. We perform dozens of water quality tests every day. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality independently monitors our water quality throughout the year. In house, we perform nearly 400 bacteriological samples every year on the system. Additionally, our water is very stable, in no small part to the hardness and calcium present. This means that the likelihood of risk to human health from lead or copper that might be present in their home plumbing is extremely low. We are doing everything we can to ensure your water supply and safe. You can read our annual Customer Confidence Report on Water Quality on our website at www.cityofkyle.com/publicworks. Reports for the prior year come out in July.