

# Water District discontinues use of ammonia gas

## **By Press Release**

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YORK - The York Water District would like to make its customers and the community aware that it is in the process of replacing the Josiah Chase Water Filtration Plant gas ammonia chemical system with a safer alternative. Ammonia is fed to combine with free chlorine to form a more stable, less reactive, form of combined chlorine known as Chloramines.

Chloramines provide many benefits including reduced chlorine taste, reduced odor, and lower disinfection byproduct formation. For decades ammonia gas has been by-far the least costly and most efficient chemical to use with the only significant drawback being it's designation as an extremely hazardous substance (EHS) has required the District to implement multiple safety precautions and formally maintain and exercise a Hazardous Materials Response Plan.

Recently a much safer liquid ammonia alternative has been produced and brought pricing down to a somewhat competitive level. We can now justify the switch to the new liquid ammonia. This project to be completed mid-2016, will eliminate the last extremely hazardous substance (EHS) used at the filtration plant. The use of gas chlorine was discontinued in 2005 for the safer liquid alternative "chlorine bleach." The benefit of use of a safer alternative now outweighs the marginal cost increases in new chemical use and operational costs. Like with all chemicals used in producing drinking water the new liquid ammonia is "NSF" certified for use in drinking water.

The District would like to thank emergency response partners for their continued support; York Fire Departments, York Police Department, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Haz-Mat Team, York County Emergency Management Agency, and many others for collaboration, assistance, and participation over the years as well as the Water District's neighbors who have also been a supportive of our efforts.

Seacoastonline Link: <http://www.seacoastonline.com/news/20160301/water-district-discontinues-use-of-ammonia-gas>