SODIUM

What is sodium?

Sodium has the symbol "Na", is highly soluble and often found naturally in groundwater. It is present in most rocks and soil and in many foods.

All groundwater contains some sodium, because most rocks and soils contain sodium compounds from which sodium is easily dissolved.

An increase in sodium in groundwater above natural levels may indicate pollution or saltwater intrusion.

What is the guideline for sodium?

An Aesthetic Objective (AO) is set for parameters that can alter the taste, smell, colour of water; or impede the water treatment process.

The Aesthetic Objective for sodium in drinking water is less than or equal to 200 milligrams per litre (mg/L).

In water, sodium has no smell or colour, but can be tasted by most people at concentrations above 200 mg/L.

What are the effects of sodium in drinking water?

Sodium is not harmful at normal levels of intake from combined food and drinking water sources.

However, people on low sodium diets, such as those with hypertension, heart disease, or kidney problems, should consider reducing all sources of sodium, including in their drinking water.

Treatment

Sodium cannot be removed through boiling, chlorination, or pitcher-type filtration. Boiling may increase sodium concentrations.

Effective treatment methods include:

- distillation
- reverse osmosis

Look for devices that have been certified as meeting the appropriate NSF International (NSF)/American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards for the removal of sodium (Na).

Where can I find out more?

To find out more, please visit Environment and Climate Change's website at www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/water.
You can also contact an Environmental Health Officer or Program Manager at the nearest Government Service Centre, NL Health Services, or a water resources official with ECC.

(709) 729-2563 water@gov.nl.ca

https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/waterres/quality/drinkingwater/

Newfoundland Labrador