



Water softeners

Water softeners remove minerals from water that generate scale buildup in appliances and plumbing fixtures. Softeners can benefit home water quality, but their salt contaminates the environment.

Salt from softeners passes from your home, into the sewer system, through the treatment plant and eventually into local streams, polluting freshwater with chloride.

To protect freshwater, minimize softener salt use by increasing softener efficiency, softening less water, or both.

madsewer.org/salt-use

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Learn more about salt reduction at
madsewer.org/salt-use

Email our Pollution Prevention team at
pp@madsewer.org

Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District
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Madison Metropolitan
Sewerage District



Reduce softener salt.

Protect freshwater.



Softener efficiency

The more efficiently a water softener operates, the less salt it uses.

Replace inefficient softeners

- 15 years old or more
- Regenerating after a fixed number of days (time-clock models)
- Using more than one bag of salt per month

Be salt smart with softeners

Ask for new softeners with a minimum efficiency of 4,000 grains of hardness removed per pound of salt.

Have a service provider program your softener to its lowest salt dosage and a hardness setting that matches your home's source water hardness.

madsewer.org/hardness-map

Even if it's not yet time to replace your softener, ask a service provider to adjust your softener's settings to ensure it's operating on the lowest possible level of salt.

Softener less water

Soft water isn't necessary in all situations, and the softening level for your home comes down to personal preference. Reducing the water you soften will reduce your salt use.

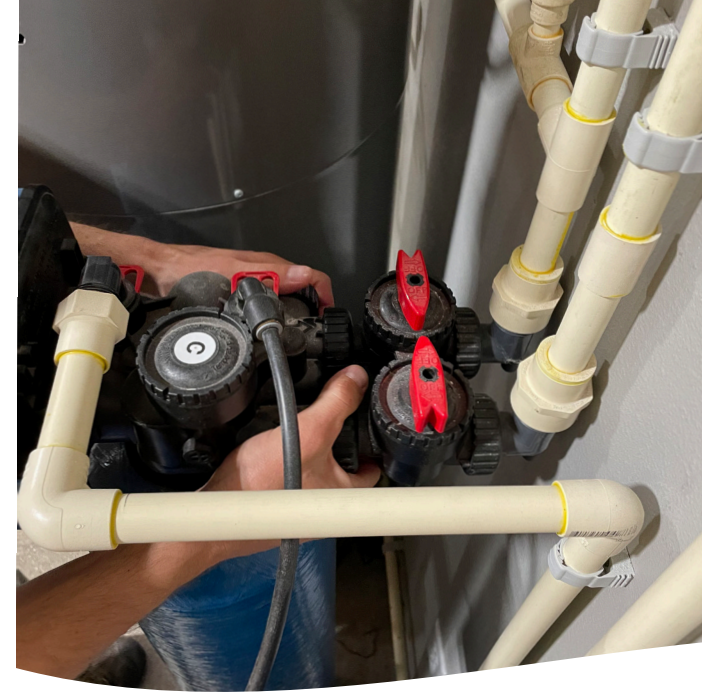
Test fixtures for soft water

The first step in reducing soft water use is to determine which water is softened in your home. Use water hardness test strips to test water sources inside and out.

madsewer.org/test-strips

Don't soften outdoor water

Outdoor spigots, or hose bibbs, do not need softened water. If a hose bibb supplies softened water, have a plumber disconnect it from the softener.



Install a blending valve

Blending valves are simple, inexpensive plumbing devices that are easily added to some new and existing home softeners to regulate the level of hardness in water. Allow a low to moderate amount of hardness in your water to reduce the volume of water you soften, thus reducing your salt use.

madsewer.org/blending-valves

Softener only hot water

Scale buildup from water hardness happens more easily in hot water than in cold water. Connecting only hot water to the water softener will protect your water heater and use significantly less salt. However, you may notice more hardness in your water and scale buildup.

