

# Anniston officials have water treatment down cold

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Keeping Anniston's drinking water clean takes expertise and constant oversight, but having a natural spring helps too.

"I'd like to say it was all us," Ed Turner, general manager for Anniston Water Works and Sewer Board, said with a smile. "But the good Lord blessed us with a water source I think any community would be envious of."

Anniston's water supply is fed by Coldwater Springs. On average, 32 million gallons of crystal-clear water flows through the spring every day. Still, the spring alone can't account for the multiple quality, safety and taste awards the Krebs Water Treatment Plant in Anniston has received in recent years. It's a long and complex process water must go through before it's fit to flow from residents' faucets.

The water starts its journey by coming out of the ground naturally and then flowing into a series of filters. A large filter is set up outside in the spring, while three micro filters, used to collect small dirt and moss particles, are inside the treatment plant.

After being filtered, water is pumped to the top of two towers at the plant.

"The water then falls through a column of air ... the air strips out more impurities," said Randy Huckaby, chief plant operator. "And right before the water goes into a basin, we shoot chlorine gas into it."

Between 160 and 170 pound of chlorine are used at the plant each day. Water must stay in the basin with the chlorine for 70 minutes.

Then the water is released and gravity takes it to the plant's main service pumps. The large blue pumps, which are so loud it's difficult to hear anything else when standing in the room with them, distribute the water to customers.

Before the water is pumped away, liquid fluoride is added to the water to protect customers' teeth, Turner said.



## Complex machinery

Clean, healthful drinking water is the end result of a constant process at the Krebs Water Treatment Plant at Coldwater.

“Then like blood vessels, the water goes to every customer’s house,” said Barry Junior, plant operator.

Besides the city of Anniston, the water works’ customers include Cleburne County, Honda Manufacturing of Alabama in Talladega, Haralson County in Georgia, Kronospan in Bynum, Anniston Army Depot, the Calhoun County Water Authority, the city of Weaver, the city of Jacksonville and the town of Hobson City.

Junior, a 33-year veteran at the plant, spends much of his day monitoring the treatment system with a computer. He must also test water quality periodically.

“Every hour, we physically get up and make the rounds to look at the system and the chlorine,” Junior said. “Every four hours we run tests on the water to make sure the machines are working well.”