

HISTORIES OF GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE FOURTH EDITION

12. Chemical fact sheets

12.1 Chemical contaminants in drinking-water

Potassium

History of guideline development

Potassium was first evaluated in the fourth edition of the *Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality*, published in 2011. It was concluded that there was no evidence that potassium levels in municipally treated drinking-water, even water treated with potassium compounds, were likely to pose any risk for the health of consumers, and it was therefore not considered necessary to establish a health-based guideline value for potassium in drinking-water. However, it was noted that individuals in high-risk groups (i.e. individuals with kidney dysfunction or other diseases, such as heart disease, coronary artery disease, hypertension, diabetes, adrenal insufficiency, pre-existing hyperkalaemia; people taking medications that interfere with normal potassium-dependent functions in the body; and older individuals or infants) should seek medical advice to determine whether they should avoid the consumption of water (for drinking or cooking) treated by water softeners using potassium.