

Is your filter doing what you think?

Bracketed numbers point to the sources at the bottom of the page.

WHAT EACH FILTER TYPE IS DOCUMENTED TO REDUCE

Type	Fluoride	Also documented	Source
Reverse osmosis	Removes most of it when working properly	Arsenic, lead, nitrate, sodium, calcium and magnesium; carbon stages in the system handle chlorine	[1] [2]
Distillation	Removes most of it	Nitrate, sodium, hardness minerals, iron, manganese and heavy metals such as lead; volatile chemicals that boil near water's temperature can carry over	[1] [3]
Activated carbon (many pitcher, faucet and fridge filters)	Most do not remove it	Chlorine and certain organic chemicals	[1] [2]
Activated alumina	Some filters can remove a significant amount	Not covered in these sources; check the product's own data	[1]
Bone char	Some filters can remove a significant amount	Not covered in these sources; check the product's own data	[1]
Water softener	No significant change	Not covered in these sources	[1]
Boiling	Does not remove it	Not covered in these sources	[4]

FIVE QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU BUY

1. Which contaminants is this exact model certified or tested to reduce, and can I see the document?
2. What level was in the water before the test, and what was left after it?
3. How many gallons or months until the media is spent, and what happens to performance near the end?
4. Who ran the test: an independent certifier, an independent lab, or the manufacturer?
5. What does it take out that I might want to keep, like calcium and magnesium, and how much water does it send down the drain?

CONFIRM A CERTIFICATION CLAIM YOURSELF

- NSF certified product listings: info.nsf.org/Certified/DWTU
- Water Quality Association product search: wqa.org/find-products
- IAPMO product listing directory: pld.iapmo.org
- Look up the exact model in the certifier's own listing and confirm the contaminant you care about is on it.
- For reverse osmosis, total dissolved solids reduction is the required NSF/ANSI 58 claim; fluoride reduction is optional. [5]
- No single treatment unit handles every contaminant, and certifying organizations do not certify units for every contaminant. [6]

READING A SPEC SHEET OR LAB REPORT

- Find each contaminant by name. A certification logo on its own does not tell you what was tested.
- mg/L is the same as parts per million; µg/L is parts per billion.
- "Not detected" means below the lab's detection limit, not zero.
- Compare before and after values from the same water on the same day.
- Check the flow rate and the capacity the claim was tested at.
- One sample is one sample. A single lab report is not a certification.

KNOW YOUR WATER FIRST

- City water: read your utility's annual Consumer Confidence Report. [2]
- Private well: test at least once a year for total coliform bacteria, nitrates, total dissolved solids and pH at a state-certified lab, and again if color, taste or smell changes. [7]
- The American Dental Association also suggests testing a private well yearly for fluoride. [1]

We sell Sentry H2O water filtration systems. This checklist makes no claim about our products; it is the test we would want any filter to pass, ours included.

[1] American Dental Association, Fluoridation Facts (2025), Question 16: ebooks.ada.org/fluoridationfacts/45

[2] University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension, NebGuide G1490, Drinking Water Treatment: Reverse Osmosis (2014): extensionpubs.unl.edu/publication/g1490/

[3] University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension, NebGuide G1493, Drinking Water Treatment: Distillation (2013): extensionpubs.unl.edu/publication/g1493/2013/html/view

[4] Idaho Division of Public Health and ATSDR, Health Consultation: Sweet Area Fluoride (2009): www.atsdr.cdc.gov/HAC/pha/SweetMontourFluorideSite/SweetMontourFluorideHC09-09-2009.pdf

[5] NSF, NSF/ANSI 58: Reverse Osmosis Drinking Water Treatment Systems: www.nsf.org/knowledge-library/nsf-ansi-58-reverse-osmosis-drinking-water-treatment-systems

[6] Minnesota Department of Health, Home Water Treatment Facts: www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/factsheet/hometreatment.html

[7] CDC, Guidelines for Testing Well Water: www.cdc.gov/drinking-water/safety/guidelines-for-testing-well-water.html