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Expensive filters 'not needed'

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Expensive filters only take good out of tap water, experts say.

Water filtration systems can make tap water less good for you, experts have warned.

According to environmental watchdogs the water coming out of your tap should be safe and wholesome and that there is no need for a filtration system.

Some installers of these €2000 water filters claim to be endorsed by the Environmental Protection Agency. But the agency said it does not endorse any of these firms.

A number of businesses are also using a chemical to discolour perfectly safe minerals in the water, making it look dirty.

quality

The EPA advises that anyone approached by a water filter company which claims their household water is not safe should check the quality with their local council.

EPA Programme manager Gerard O'Leary said that they have seen an increase in the number of reports from the public about companies visiting homes and advising that a water filter should be installed.

"Obviously with the heightened public awareness about the issue of drinking water quality, some companies have tried to capitalise on the situation," he said.

"There is no point in buying a filter that removes more iron, salts and minerals if these are not present in the water in high concentrations in the first place."

The chemical quality of water ie the levels of iron salts and minerals is "very good", according to the EPA with 99.3pc of water tests meeting European Union standards.

It is the responsibility of local authorities to provide microbiologically safe drinking water.

They say that water that meets the drinking water standards is safe to drink without having to install a filter system. If testing shows that the water is not safe, there is a legal requirement on the water supplier to inform consumers.

"Some people might think that the only answer to safe water is to install a water filter in your home, but this is not a view shared by the EPA, as water suppliers are required to supply water that is safe and wholesome," said Mr O'Leary.

The water coming out of the taps "contains calcium, iron, magnesium and other minerals that are good for your health", he added. However, reverse osmosis filters leave the water with almost no minerals.

"It might seem strange, but this so-called pure water isn't good for you. Water treated by reverse osmosis should not be used for drinking purposes. Anyone who has reverse osmosis-treated water in their home should also have a tap that brings in regular water for drinking."

Other problems with the filters, according to the EPA, is that 30pc of water channelled through such filters becomes waste water, while filter cartridges and membranes that aren't replaced in time could make the water quality poorer because of the build-up of deposits.