WATER FILTRATION FOR YOUR BUSINESS

[EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET STARTED]

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You will learn:

- Why you need a water filter.
- How filtration works.
- Which contaminants are removed.
- How a water filter differs from a softener.
- What models are available.
- How installation works.
- The cost savings.
- Hassle-free maintenance tips.

Click on the link to go directly to the topic: ● Why do I need a water filter? ● How does filtration work? ● What do water filters remove? ● What is the difference between a water filter and softener? ● Model choices. ● Is installation easy? ● What is the average cost? ● How do I care for my water filter?	Terminology: ● Water filter: a carbon or reverse osmosis water treatment system that connects to your water line. ● Contaminants: a general description of the physical, chemical, biological, and radiological substances in solid, liquid or gas format found in water. ● Softener: removes minerals from water using salt. ● Water line: the method through which water is carried from the municipal source to your sink, restrooms, dishwasher, etc. ● POU: Point of Use, uses a bottle-less cooler to dispense filtered water.

Why do I need a water filter?

Did you know it takes over 5000 miles of pipes, 22 tank towers, and 11 stations to transport Cleveland's water from Lake Erie to your business? The mass amount of infrastructure was built between the 1850's and 1950's and traverses nearly 650 square miles.

During the trip from lake to tap, your water encounters sediments, chemicals, microbes, and radiological elements. All of which, affect the appearance, taste, and smell. You can review common problems of the water in your area with these tools for Cleveland and Akron.

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If you have noticed any of the following symptoms from your water source, you may need a water filter:

- Murky or cloudy appearance
- Unpleasant taste
- Foul odors
- Limescale buildup
- Stains in your sinks or toilets
- Discoloration

These are tell-tale signs your water is in need of help. In addition, to transforming questionable H2O into a refreshing and safe source of hydration, water filtration:

- Takes up very little space.
- Offers a limitless supply.
- Is a sustainable solution.
- Is cost effective and hassle-free.

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How does water filtration work?

There are two types of water filtration: carbon and reverse osmosis.

Carbon is the most common. This system uses an activated carbon filter to attract and absorb the elements which cause unsavory water. The process is as follows:

1. A sediment pre-filter screens out solids including dirt, sand, rust and other microscopic particles.
2. A carbon pre-filter reduces elements that cause water to taste and smell unpleasant, including chlorine.
3. A second carbon filter further reduces all of the elements mentioned in step two.

Reverse Osmosis a.k.a. RO (read "What is RO Water" here) uses five stages that operate similarly to the carbon option with the addition of these steps:

1.- 3. same as above

4. The water is forced through a semi-permeable membrane and leaves behind dissolved substances including radium, lead, arsenic, and many others.
5. A final activated carbon filter polishes the water to remove any cloudy or murky appearance.

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Both connect to a water line and work their magic on the municipal supply. Most will dispense chilled and instant hot water. To investigate the differences more deeply check out, "Reverse Osmosis vs Filtration."

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What do water filters remove?

The EPA has defined the contaminants that can be found in drinking water here. The word contaminant sounds scary. For most of us, our local sanitation plant has already eliminated any dangerous elements. Leaving filters to clarify our water, remove chlorine, and improve taste as well as smell. Unfortunately, not everyone is so lucky.

Luckily, filters are also equipped to remove:

- Metals such as arsenic, iron, or copper
- Industrial and pharmaceutical byproducts like pesticides or hormones
- Sediment and other organic troublemakers
- Microplastics
- Radium
- *Lead

Of these, the five most common are discussed further in this discussion, “5 Contaminants Removed by Water Filtration.”

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*Lead is a hazardous metal that has wreaked havoc on many, especially children. Any level of lead consumption can result in severe health issues for the rest of one's life. To learn more about the effects of lead and it’s presence in our water read our article, “Everything You Need to Know About Lead in Water.”

Another great resource is this search tool provided by Cleveland.com. You can type in your address or city to see the likelihood that there is lead in your water.

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What is the difference between a water filter and water softener?

Water filters and softeners differ in the symptoms they are attempting to remedy and the method in which they do so. As we have learned, water filters use carbon to attract and dispel unpleasant elements in water. The goal is to improve the overall taste, quality, and appearance.

Water softeners use polar attraction too but, it is done with salt. Water softening becomes necessary if you notice:

- Stiff laundry
- Dry hair and skin
- Mineral spots on dishes, appliances, and fixtures
- Poor tasting water

Using a salt-filled softener reduces hard minerals such as calcium and magnesium that cause these issues. If you are wondering whether you need a water softener, our blog post, "Do I Need a Water Softener" can help you decide.

Keep in mind water softeners do not remove contaminants other than hard metals.

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Are there different models to choose from?

Water filtration systems come in many shapes and sizes. Most of which are classified as "point of use" or POU. A point of use filter connects to a water line and uses a bottle-less cooler to dispense chilled or instant hot H2O. This is a popular option for offices, manufacturing, and health care facilities for both employees and guests.

Point of use water filters can be tailored to meet the needs of most commercial settings. The options are as follows:

Under the sink model

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With this option, the water filter housings and storage tank mount below your sink. The finished product dispenses through a stylish spout installed on your kitchen counter. The technician will need to drill a silver dollar size size hole into your counter. If you have a granite countertop, another option might suit you better.

Countertop model

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Countertop water filters offer a compact design that allows the unit to fit under standard height cabinets. These models are great for break rooms and usually offer both cold and hot water for drinking as well as coffee, tea, or hot cocoa. If you already have limited counter space, a stand-alone machine may be better.

Stand-alone floor model

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A water cooler type of design is the most popular choice for filtration. These freestanding units also offer cold and hot water. They are sleek in design and attractive enough for a modern office. You will only need about a square foot of space for this POU but, it does require electricity (as do all of the models). Therefore, it will need to be placed near an outlet as well as access to a water line.

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How difficult is installation?

It depends, there are several factors involved. We would not recommend attempting the process yourself (unless you happen to be a plumber). Water leaks can cause a great deal of damage. Use a professional installer instead. Generally, when you rent or purchase a water filter, the service will be provided.

The best spot for a water filter is as close to a water line as possible. Finding a water line is easy, look for a sink, washing machine, dishwasher, ice dispenser, etc. Anything that is drawing water. Although a water line is necessary, there is no need to worry; technicians are masters at locating hidden entry points and creatively using them as a source for your water filter.

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Cost

You must first decide if your business is better suited for renting or owning a water filter. A rental agreement will come with perks that take maintenance and troubleshooting out of your hands. You will be able to set it and forget it while enjoying the ease of one consistent charge each month. Our rental units, for example, come with free filters, and service call. A competitive price for this sort of design is around $35.00-$50.00 per month.

Photo credit: Adobe Photo Stock

To own a water filter, you must first of course purchase the unit itself. It is impossible to estimate a cost as there are many levels of available features. Basically, you get what you pay for. A word of warning– don't go cheap– invest in a high-quality unit with a standard set of features, and you will be happy for the long term.

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Care and maintenance

Water filters require very little upkeep. There are only two chores that you will need to mark on your calendar (unless you rent, in that case, this step is handled for you):

- Clean the body (read this article, "How to Clean a Filtered Water Dispenser")
- Change the filters (instructions can be found here, "How Often do Water Filters Need to be Replaced?")

You should plan to address both of these tasks every six months. In addition, it is a good idea to wipe the spigots periodically with antibacterial soap to prevent the spread of germs.

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Your employees consider filtered water a perk. The investment in their health and wellness is nominal, the upkeep is nearly none, and the finished product can be enjoyed by everyone. Water filtration is an excellent choice for healthy hydration. The process can seem daunting and filled with jargon. We hope that this guide has helped to dispel that notion.

Cheers 💧!

Distillata has been solving the water needs of Northeast Ohio businesses for over a century!

1608 East 24th St., Cleveland, Oh 44114/ (800)999-2906/ distillata.com