













Physical Quality: pH

pH Range	DRINKING		FOOD PREPARATION	BATHING	LAUNDRY
	(Health) 	(Aesthetic) 			
<3	Acid burns	Extremely sour taste	Acid burns	Burns skin and eyes	Extremely corrosive
3-3.5	Severe irritation of mucous membranes	Extremely sour taste	Severe irritation of mucous membranes	Burns skin and eyes	Very corrosive
3.5-4	Severe irritation of mucous membranes	Very sour taste	Severe irritation of mucous membranes	Burns skin and eyes	Very corrosive
4-4.5	Irritation of mucous membranes	Sour taste	Irritation of mucous membranes	Slight skin/eye sensitivity	Very corrosive
4.5-5	Mild irritation of mucous membranes	Sour taste	Mild irritation of mucous membranes	Mild skin/eye sensitivity	Corrosive in some instances
5-6	No health effects	Slightly sour taste	No effects	Insignificant effect	Possible corrosion
6-9	No health effects	No aesthetic effects	No effects	No effects	No effects

9-9.5	No health effects	Slightly soapy	No effects	Insignificant effect	No effects
9.5-10	Mild irritation of mucous membranes	Soapy taste	Mild irritation of mucous membranes	Mild skin/eye sensitivity	Mild rinsing problems
10-10.5	Irritation of mucous membranes	Very soapy taste	Irritation of mucous membranes	Marked skin/eye sensitivity	Rinsing problems
10.5-11	Severe irritation of mucous membranes	Extremely soapy taste	Severe irritation of mucous membranes	Burns skin/eyes	Increasing rinsing problems
>11	Alkali burns	Extremely soapy taste	Acid burns	Burns skin/eyes	Severe rinsing problems

	Blue - Ideal		Green - Good		Yellow - Marginal
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	Red - Poor		Purple – Completely unacceptable*
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*Not to be used without treatment

DWAF (1998). Quality of domestic water supplies. Volume 1: Assessment Guide. WRC No. TT 101/98, p. 53.