Black bits

Common causes of black particles and how to eliminate them

- Jug filters can contain activated carbon filters which may leak black particles into the water, usually into the top of the jug as it is being filled. Fill a glass with water from the cold kitchen tap and compare it with water from the jug filter. If the black particles only appear in water from the jug filter then refer to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- If the black particles are large and can be compressed between the fingers then the fragments are likely to be from a disintegrating tap washer. The washers should be examined and replaced as necessary.
- Very occasionally black particles from the lining of the water main which supplies your property may be the source. Check whether your neighbours are experiencing the same problem. If they are, contact our Customer Services team on the number below.
- If the particles are black (or grey) and jelly-like, they are likely to be due to fungal growth. Airborne fungal spores will grow in many moist, warm environments, such as the ends of taps and washing machine powder drawers. The presence of fungal growths is not connected in any way to the quality of the water supply and they pose no risk to health. They can be removed by cleaning with a disinfectant solution.

Sand

Often found in the pipes of new homes and in pipework which has recently had work carried out on it. Running the tap fully open should flush any remaining sand out.

Blocked shower heads or washing machine filters

If possible, collect and examine the material which has caused the blockage. If any white, flake type particles are present they are most likely to be scale (see fact sheet on hardness).

Often, the source of any debris is found to be disintegrating pipe work in the property. If there are small, shiny or metallic silver bits in the blockage material it may be zinc. This is not used in the construction of supply mains. But it is a component of internal pipe work.

Problems arising from mains will also affect your neighbours. If you are the only one affected the source is almost certainly within your property.