

What is a Water Softener?

It seems a little strange that water is soft or hard. However, these are two recognized types of water. A water softener is a machine that removes certain elements from hard water, thus softening it and making it a little better to use.

Hard water is water that has high amounts of calcium and magnesium. These elements can create stains on sinks and in tubs. It can also damage hair and leave skin feeling dried out and itchy. Not only can hard water be inconvenient in small ways, the buildup as a result of the calcium and magnesium deposits can actually clog pipes. A water softener can reduce the problems associated with hard water.

A water softener removes the calcium and magnesium from water. Some water softeners also remove iron. The water softener is a machine that, when connected to the water supply, actually "softens" hard water. Most water softeners require an amount of salt for their proper functioning. Because elements are removed from the water, they build up in the softener rather than pipes. This means that the water softener requires regular maintenance.

There are different sizes and types of water softeners. The more water used by a household, the bigger the water softener needs to be. There are also three different types of water softener: manual, semi-automatic and automatic. The automatic merely requires regular maintenance. The other two types require a more active role in the removal of calcium and magnesium from the household water supply.

While soft water is great for washing and bathing, hard water is more pleasant to the taste. As a result, many people find that it is nice to have one faucet in the home that provides hard water for drinking and cooking.

A water softener decreases the overall need for strenuous pipe maintenance due to buildup. It can also provide a more pleasant way to use water to bathe, as well as preserve the quality of clothes washed in a washing machine.

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About the Author

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