Sun Prairie Utilities partnered with local students in the ACCEL Business Leadership Course to provide water softener awareness in early 2025. The high schoolers did the research, compiled information, and created the following educational material to share with customers who wish to learn more about water softeners.

Six Social Media Posts

Do your appliances look like this?

If your appliances look like this, you might have hard water!

Hard water occurs from a mineral build up in the ground. When hard water is left on appliances and evaporates, it leaves behind traces of the mineral build up on coffee pots, dishwashers, sinks, and other appliances. Hard water doesn't only affect your appliances; it could make your skin and hair feel extra dry and lack moisture as well.

For more information about the water quality in Sun Prairie, visit our website! https://www.sunprairieutilities.com/water-department

Do you have stains like this in your sink?

It's likely caused by hard water!

Hard water is caused by a buildup of minerals, primarily calcium and magnesium, in the water. This happens when the water picks up minerals in the ground as it filters into deep underground aquifers. Using a water softener removes the minerals from the water and replaces them with sodium or potassium, which reduces the effects of hard water on your appliances.

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A water softener is an appliance usually made up of 2 tanks, the brine tank and the resin tank. These tanks are responsible for filtering out calcium and magnesium, among other minerals, in hard water. Softening hard water has many benefits and downsides, so make sure you talk to your local plumber to understand the impacts before you commit.

For more information about water in Sun Prairie visit our website! https://www.sunprairieutilities.com/water-department

Do you know the steps to maintaining your water softener?

First, get familiar with your water softener through either a user manual or by consulting with a professional company of your choice. Make sure to check the current condition of both your resin beads and your brine tank. If needed, you can add water softener salt of your choice, as long as it works with your softener. If you need to replace your resin tank, we suggest you work with a trusted company.

Culligan Water Treatment suggests that you check the brine tank at least once a month, and add salt whenever it's less than half full. Your water softener can prevent mineral buildup on fixtures or appliances like faucets, sinks, dishwashers, toilets, and more. A properly working water softener can also reduce the amount of soap needed to clean, which helps prevent skin and hair quality issues compared to using hard water.

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Culligan Water Treatment suggests checking your salt levels at least once a month to keep your water at an ideal level for everyday use. If you notice an increase in staining or calcium build-up, it may mean that your salt level is low and should be checked as soon as possible. When your salt level is low, fill it back up to the manufacturer recommended level.
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Where does hard water come from?
A.) The sky
B.) Groundwater
C.) Frozen water
D.) Old water
E.) All of the above

The answer is B.) Groundwater
In Sun Prairie, we have hard water. We use wells that draw water from deep in the ground, where the water has sifted and filtered through rocks, picking up minerals that harden the water.

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What does a water softener do?
A.) Improves appliance life span
B.) Prevents build up in pipes
C.) Reduces staining from water
D.) All of the above

The answer is D.) All of the Above
Water softeners can be useful because of the benefits they provide, including increasing the lifespan of appliances, reducing mineral build up in pipes, and reducing the amount of staining from water.

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How often should you check your water softener?
A.) Every 6 months
B.) Every year
C.) Never
D.) Manufacturer recommendation

The answer is D.) Whatever your water softener's manufacturer recommends Some companies or brands of water softeners may differ. It is always a great idea to do individual research on your water softener or contact a professional company that specializes in maintaining water softeners, as they can provide professional advice.

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One Educational Flyer

In additon to six social media posts, the ACCEL Business Leadership students created a water softener awareness educational flyer. The high schoolers did their own research, compiled all of the information, and created the flyer for SPU to share with the Sun Prairie community.

WHAT IS HARD WATER?

- Mineral dense water that typically has excess calcium and magnesium.

NEGATIVES AND BENEFITS OF HARD WATER

- Hard water can cause scaling on appliances and decrease the average household appliances lifespan by 4.4 years.
- Hard water can cause your hair and skin to become irritable and rough.
- Mineral content in hard water can be a consistent source for calcium and magnesium in your diet.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT WATER SOFTENERS

- Water softeners can help appliances last longer by preventing problems hard water cause.
- Check your water softener at least once a year.
- Contact a professional for advice about your recommended salt and resin level.

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