



# Gardening Naturally:

## Is Citified Water Bad for Vegetable Gardens?

BY GARY LOCHTE

**M**any gardeners I know live in suburbs and cities, and rely on "citified: water for their gardens. What do I mean by "citified" water? I mean chlorinated and fluoridated water, among other added contaminants. These products are certainly not good for you, your pets, and your gardens.

Don't tell me about the Dental Assn. recommendation for fluoride. It's bunk. Chemical Fluorine was used in Nazi Germany to drug prisoners. It kept them docile, and it's cheap. It is a waste product. Do not confuse the junk in our water with the naturally occurring fluoride minerals found in nature. They are vastly different.

Likewise, chloride and chloramines are also toxic. No argument about that either. I am blessed to garden in the country with clean well water. There, my gardens almost always are lush and rich. For the first time, I also have a garden in the city. My frustration levels have elevated with my city garden because no matter what knowledge I apply to benefit my city garden plants, they are really struggling. Wilty leaves, weak, thin stems, and the produce tastes bland.

I was visiting with a farmer recently and we discussed the problem. He asked "Do you water with city water, or are you watering from a rain barrel?" He did not need to explain, because the obvious cause of the miserably dilapidated plants hit me like a ton of bricks.... the chlorine, chloramines, flourines ( all bad Halides ) are poisoning my plants. They are miserable!

He then asked, "You aren't drinking that stuff are you?" (meaning "citified" water). I said no, I NEVER drink it. I'm super careful to filter out the chlorine, chloramines, and fluorides, among other nasty components from the water I drink and cook with. He said with a fatherly look, "If you don't drink the stuff, then why are you letting your plants drink it?"

I then thought about the couple of city chickens I am "allowed" to have to produce eggs for me....even they are getting filtered water.

Sometimes the obvious is "hidden in plain view."

Well, I stopped using toxic water on my plants. I started collecting water in a rain barrel, and yes, I even bring clean water from the ranch, hoping to quickly purge my garden of the nasty chemical soup I was formerly applying. I also mixed some "diatomaceous earth" with "calcium bentonite clay" and even added some "charcoal dust" into my soil, knowing that in time, the good additives would help detoxify the soil.

It only took a few weeks to see a noticeable difference in the health of my plants. The tomatoes have become vibrant with lots of lasting bloom-set, and I finally have some good looking fruits beginning to grow. The leaves of my other plants have greened up, and the overall look of the plants appear to indicate good health. In my opinion, plants produce better when watered with rain water over city water. I learned something!

