



WATER TREATMENT IN SAN ANTONIO

HOMEOWNERS GUIDE 2026

What every homeowner should know
about their water.



MEET OUR PRESIDENT, TREVOR TOWNSEND

If you live in San Antonio, your water is different. It moves through limestone aquifers, carrying elevated mineral content. It shifts with drought cycles, seasonal demand, and changing aquifer conditions. While it meets municipal safety standards, that doesn't always mean it's ideal for your home — or your family's long-term comfort.

For years, we've worked inside homes across San Antonio and the Hill Country. We've seen what hard water does over time: mineral buildup, premature appliance wear, plumbing strain, and the subtle effects on daily living. Most of it happens gradually. But it adds up.

This guide was created to give homeowners clarity. Clear information. Straight answers. No pressure.

At Alamo Water Softeners, our role isn't simply installing equipment — it's helping families protect their homes and make confident, long-term decisions about their water.



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SAN ANTONIO'S UNIQUE WATER CHALLENGES



San Antonio has a heavy reliance on the Edwards Aquifer. San Antonio depends on the Edwards Aquifer for roughly half of its drinking water — a massive underground limestone water reservoir that provides high-quality water but is highly sensitive to drought conditions and recharge variability. The aquifer's levels fluctuate based on rainfall and drought and dry years (as the area is now experiencing) can trigger severe restrictions. Because the aquifer is a limestone system it has many cracks and channels and can quickly recharge and lose water during dry periods.

To protect the aquifer and ensure reliable drinking water, San Antonio enforces tiered water restrictions depending on current water levels and drought status. For the past several years San Antonio has been in drought status and has had water restrictions that limit landscape watering, etc.

UNDERSTANDING HARD WATER IN THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY



What “Hard Water” Means

Water hardness refers to the amount of dissolved minerals, mainly calcium and magnesium, in your water. These minerals are picked up naturally as water moves through limestone and rock formations underground.

Because the Texas Hill Country sits on thick limestone, hard water is the norm, not the exception.

How Hard Is Hill Country Water?

Water hardness is commonly measured in grains per gallon (GPG) or parts per million (PPM).

Typical hardness levels in the Texas Hill Country:

- 15–25+ grains per gallon (GPG)
- That is considered very hard to extremely hard water

For comparison:

- 0–3 GPG = soft
- 3–7 GPG = moderately hard
- 7–10 GPG = hard
- 10+ GPG = very hard

Most San Antonio–area homes fall well above the “very hard” range.

WHY HARD WATER IS A “HIDDEN” HOME EXPENSE & HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR HOME AND FAMILY



Hard water damage happens slowly and quietly. Without installing a water softener, your family may experience;

Mineral Buildup (Scale)

Hard water leaves behind white, chalky scale on:

- Faucets and showerheads
- Shower doors and tile
- Inside pipes and water heaters

Over time, scale restricts water flow and reduces efficiency.

Shorter Appliance Life

Appliances that use water work harder with hard water:

- Water heaters
- Dishwashers
- Washing machines

Mineral buildup can shorten appliance lifespan and increase repair or replacement costs.

WHY HARD WATER IS A “HIDDEN” HOME EXPENSE & HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR HOME AND FAMILY



Higher Energy Bills

Scale inside a water heater acts like insulation, meaning:

- The heater uses more energy to heat water
- Energy bills slowly creep up over time

Laundry & Cleaning Issues

Hard water can cause:

- Stiff, scratchy laundry
- Faded clothing
- Soap scum in sinks and tubs
- Needing more soap and detergent to get things clean

Skin & Hair Effects

Many homeowners notice:

- Dry or itchy skin
- Hair that feels dull or hard to manage
- Soap that does not rinse clean

WATER QUALITY MONITORING AND SAFETY



Decades of heavy PFAS or “Forever Chemicals” have contaminated our water, soil and food. According to the Environmental Working Group , PFAS can be found in the blood of 99% of all Americans.

If you are on a municipal water source, then they are required to monitor the quality of your water. The water you receive from local water treatment facilities must meet specific minimum standards to keep you and your family safe. Regular tests should confirm it is meeting the minimum standards. But is the minimum good enough? Generally, local water municipalities meet these minimum standards, although there have been some local areas where water quality has not met Texas Commission Environmental guidelines or EPA standards. Many municipalities have aging infrastructure and ground water chemical pollution which can lead to cases of contamination. It is not unusual to have several local water sources notify homeowners that contaminants have been found locally in our tap water that exceed these guidelines. To determine if your home one of those You can check the quality of your water here by entering your zip code on below website.

<https://lnkd.in/g-SvaJK>

If your water source has violations that exceed guidelines they recommend filtering your water before drinking to protect you and your family.

HOW HARD WATER BECOMES SOFT – THE ION EXCHANGE PROCESS



In the most basic sense, a water softener in effect “softens” the water by capturing those hard minerals before the water flows through your home to be used. This makes it easier to clean your home and your laundry, while prolonging the life of appliances that use water. Let’s take a look at the science behind how a water softener works.

In order to have an ion exchange, and thus be able to soften our water, there has to be a media or environment that all creates the conditions for that to happen. The media our water softeners use is either ion-exchange resin beads or zeolite, which is a special inorganic mineral that comes in the form of tiny crystals. Each resin bead or zeolite crystal is negatively charged and has space to hold on to positive ions. The fresh media starts by holding on to the positively charged sodium ions. As hard water passes through your water softener tank, the stronger charged calcium or magnesium are pulled to the media like a magnet. Since the hardness minerals have a higher positive charge than the sodium, they will knock the sodium ions off and take their place.

All the hardness minerals stay trapped inside the water softener tank while the H₂O, with a few sodium ions, disperse throughout your home for use. The water that is dispersed throughout your home no longer has all the hard minerals that cause scaly buildup and other problems!

It’s important to remember that soft water is not salt water, as it only contains a small amount of sodium due to the ion exchange process. The trace amount of salt that remains would be less than eating two ounces of cheddar cheese!

WHAT IS A WHOLE-HOME FILTRATION SYSTEM



A whole-home water filtration system treats the water as it enters your home, so every tap, shower, and appliance receives filtered water. This is commonly referred to as a Point of Entry System.

A sink filter or refrigerator filter only treats drinking water at point of use, in one spot, a whole-home system improves all the water you use every day – for drinking, bathing, laundry, and cooking.

How Does a Whole-Home Filtration System Work? The system is installed on the main water line where water first enters your house.

From that point on, all water flowing through your plumbing is filtered before it reaches faucets, showers, and appliances.

Whole-Home Filtration vs. Water Softening

It's important to know:

- Filtration removes contaminants
- Softening removes hardness minerals

There is a huge benefit to having both systems installed.

WHAT IS A REVERSE OSMOSIS (RO) WATER SYSTEM?

A reverse osmosis system is a point-of-use water treatment system that produces high-purity drinking water by removing a wide range of dissolved contaminants.

RO systems are most commonly installed:

- Under the kitchen sink
- At a dedicated drinking water faucet
- Sometimes connected to refrigerators or ice makers

They are designed specifically for drinking and cooking water, not the entire home. Reverse osmosis provides some of the cleanest drinking water available by removing contaminants you cannot see, taste, or smell. It's an excellent solution for homeowners who want the highest level of water purity at the tap.

For complete Water Treatment throughout your home and peace of mind for your family's health, it is usually recommended that you install a Water Softener, Whole Home Filter along with a Reverse Osmosis Drinking System.

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM FOR YOUR HOME



Choosing a water treatment system doesn't have to be confusing. The right solution depends on what's in your water, your home's needs, and your goals for water quality.

Use this step-by-step guide to make an informed decision.

1. Start with a Water Test – Before anything else, find out what's actually in your water. Why it matters:

- Water quality varies by neighborhood and source (well, city, aquifer), and knowing your water's makeup tells you what needs to be treated

2. Identify Your Main Concerns

Common homeowner concerns:

- Hard water (scale buildup, appliance wear)
- Bad taste or odor
- Cloudy or discolored water
- Chlorine smell
- Specific contaminants
- Bottled water replacement

UNDERSTAND YOUR TREATMENT OPTIONS

Water Softener

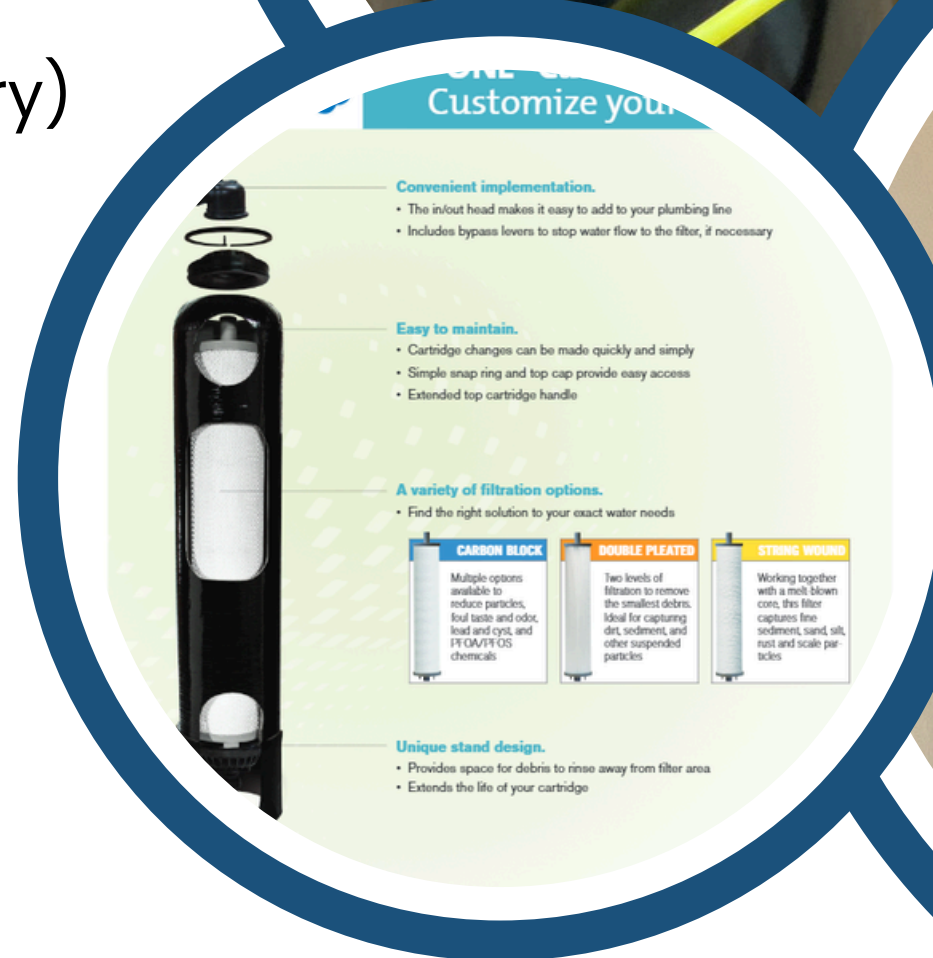
- ✓ Removes hardness minerals
 - ✓ Prevents scale on plumbing and appliances
- Best for: areas with hard water (like San Antonio Hill Country)

Whole-Home Filtration System

- ✓ Treats all water entering the home
 - ✓ Reduces sediment, chlorine, chemicals
- Best for: cleaner water at every faucet

Reverse Osmosis (RO) System

- ✓ Produces very high-purity drinking water
 - ✓ Removes dissolved contaminants
- Best for: drinking/cooking water



**WHY CHOOSE A LOCAL
WATER TREATMENT
PROFESSIONAL LIKE
ALAMO WATER
SOFTENERS**

**NOT JUST A BOX FROM
A BIG-BOX STORE**



YOUR WATER IS UNIQUE – ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL

Water quality varies widely even within a city like San Antonio:
Hardness levels differ from neighborhood to neighborhood

- Some areas may have more iron, others more sediment
- City water chemistry changes over time

A box unit is generic – it's made to sell to everyone everywhere.

A local professional:

- Tests your actual water
- Identifies what's really in it
- Designs a system that matches your home's specific needs



PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE = BETTER SYSTEM DESIGN

Water treatment isn't just about selling a piece of equipment — it's about solving a problem.

Local professionals understand:

- How regional water sources behave (e.g., Edwards Aquifer, Hill Country wells, Vista Ridge Pipeline)
- Which contaminants are common in this area
- How systems interact with your plumbing

They size and configure systems so they work efficiently and effectively, every day.

A box unit can't do that.



PROPER INSTALLATION MATTERS

Even a high-quality system won't perform well if installed incorrectly.

Professionals ensure:

- ✓ Correct placement
- ✓ Proper connections
- ✓ Optimal flow rates
- ✓ Compliance with local plumbing codes

Incorrect installation can lead to:

- ✗ Poor performance
- ✗ Leaks and damage
- ✗ Voided warranties

You won't get this level of care with a DIY box unit.



ONGOING SUPPORT & MAINTENANCE

Water systems require scheduled care:

- Filter changes
- Salt refills (for softeners)
- Membrane replacements (for RO systems)
- Seasonal checks

A local pro provides:

- ✓ Scheduled service reminders
- ✓ Filter replacement programs
- ✓ Troubleshooting and repairs

With a box unit, you're on your own — and by the time problems appear, the damage may already be done.



TRUE PEACE OF MIND WITH EXPERIENCED LOCAL PROFESSIONALS

AWS has installed over 11,000 systems in the last 5 years, and we are not going anywhere! Choosing a local professional means:

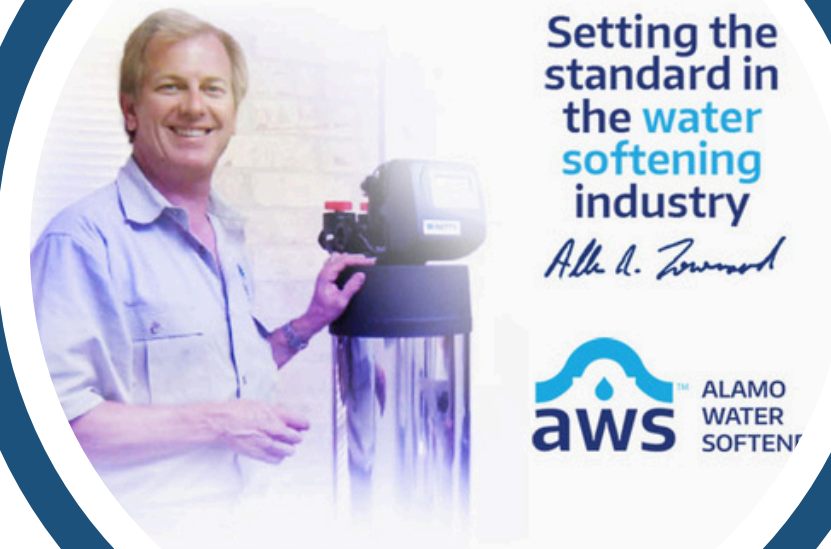
- ✓ You can ask questions and get real answers
- ✓ You get recommendations tailored to your home
- ✓ You have support when you need it
- ✓ Your system is properly backed by warranty and install guarantees

Big-box products usually come with limited warranty support and no personal accountability.

Professionals in San Antonio who understand:

- Local water sources and variability
- Seasonal drought and how it affects water chemistry
- Regional contaminants and treatment priorities

That's expertise you won't find in a generic box.



WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A PROFESSIONAL WATER EVALUATION

Would you like to know more about what is in your water? At Alamo Water Softeners, we can help diagnose your water woes and get to the root of the problem. We live and work in cities across Central & South Texas, and are well-acquainted with common water problems in the area.

Water quality changes over time, so periodic testing is important. We offer free, no-obligation water testing and will walk you through the results so you understand what's in your water and what solutions are best for your home. Test results will include

- TDS – Total Dissolved Solids
- Hardness level
- Chlorine level
- Iron Content
- PH Level



FAQ'S

Water Sources & Testing

- **Do you install water softeners for well water or city water?**

Yes. Alamo Water Softeners installs water treatment systems for both well water and municipal (city) water. Because well water can vary widely in quality, we recommend starting with a lab analysis or on-site testing. Our team provides both services to ensure the system is properly designed for your specific water conditions.
- **Can you test my water?**

Yes. Water quality changes over time, so periodic testing is important. We offer free, no-obligation water testing and will walk you through the results so you understand what's in your water and what solutions are best for your home.
- **How can I find out what's in my municipal water?**

If you are on city water, your provider publishes an annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) outlining detected contaminants. Independent resources such as the Environmental Working Group (EWG) database can also provide insight. EWG Tap Water Database We help interpret this data during your evaluation and verify results with on-site testing when needed.

FAQ'S

Installation & Plumbing

● **What plumbing is required to install a water softener?**

A water softener requires access to the main water line, a drain for regeneration discharge, and a nearby electrical outlet. If your home is not pre-plumbed, we can professionally add a softener loop or modify the plumbing as needed. Roughly half of the homes we service were not pre-plumbed prior to installation.

● **Can you install a water softener if my home isn't pre-plumbed?**

Yes. We routinely install systems in homes that are not pre-plumbed. Our technicians evaluate the best installation location and handle all necessary plumbing modifications as part of the process.

● **What does a water softener loop look like?**

A softener loop is a section of plumbing that allows water to be routed through the water softener before entering the home. During your evaluation, we'll show you where the loop would be installed and explain how it integrates with your existing plumbing.

● **Is trenching ever required?**

Most installations do not require trenching. Trenching is only needed when the main water line or drain access is located far from the installation area, such as in detached garages or exterior wall setups. If trenching is required, we review scope and cost with you upfront before any work begins.

● **How does watering plants and landscaping work after a water softener is installed?**

Outdoor hose bibs are typically left on unsoftened (hard) water, which is ideal for plants and landscaping. Water softeners are designed to treat indoor household water only, preserving naturally occurring minerals for irrigation and ensuring landscaping is not affected by softened water.

● **How much space is needed for a water softener system?**

Most water softener systems require approximately a 3' x 3' area to accommodate both the resin tank and the brine tank, along with proper plumbing connections and service access. Systems are commonly installed in garages, utility rooms, or designated plumbing areas. If space is limited, Alamo Water Softeners can recommend alternative system configurations to fit tighter installation areas or shed options without sacrificing performance.

● **How long does installation take?**

Most installations are completed in one day. Timing depends on plumbing requirements and system type, all of which are reviewed during your evaluation.

FAQ'S

Water Pressure & Performance

- **Is water pressure important for a water softener?**
Yes. Proper water pressure is critical for system performance and longevity. Ideal household pressure is between 60–80 PSI. Pressure that is too high can reduce treatment effectiveness and damage equipment. We check pressure during installation and recommend regulation if needed.
- **Does a water softener use more water?**
Water softeners use water during regeneration, but modern systems are designed to be highly efficient. In many homes, reduced scale buildup can actually improve overall plumbing efficiency over time.

Salt & Maintenance

- **How difficult is it to add salt?**
Adding salt is simple and requires no tools. During installation, our technicians show you exactly how to add salt and how to monitor.
- **How much does water softener salt cost, and do you offer delivery?**
Water softener salt costs vary by retailer and type but is generally affordable and widely available at home improvement stores and retailers. To make ownership even easier, Alamo Water Softeners offers a convenient salt delivery program, so you don't have to go to the store or store heavy bags. Delivery options are customized based on your household's usage and water conditions.
- **What type of salt should I use?**
We recommend solar crystal salt because it dissolves cleanly and supports optimal system performance. Pelletized salt which it contains binding agents that can contribute to buildup over time.

FAQ'S

Resin & Regeneration

- **What is resin and how does it work?**
Resin is the filtration media inside the water softener that removes hardness minerals like calcium and magnesium through an ion-exchange process. It is essential to producing soft water throughout your home.
- **How long does resin last?**
Resin typically lasts 10–15 years, depending on water quality, chlorine levels, and maintenance. Homes with high chlorine or iron may require replacement sooner.
- **What is regeneration and why does it happen at night?**
Regeneration is the self-cleaning cycle of a water softener where the system flushes accumulated hardness minerals from the resin using a salt brine solution, restoring the resin's ability to soften water. This process is typically scheduled overnight because household water usage is lowest at that time, minimizing disruption and ensuring soft water is available during peak daytime hours.
- **Can we use water while the system regenerates?**
Yes. During regeneration, single-tank systems temporarily provide unsoftened water, while dual-tank systems continue delivering soft water without interruption.

FAQ'S

RO & Filtration Systems

- **What is the difference between reverse osmosis and whole-house filtration?**
Reverse osmosis (RO) provides extremely high-purity water at a specific point of use, usually the kitchen sink. Whole-house filtration treats water throughout the home and may include carbon filtration, softening, or other media. Each serves a different purpose and many homes benefit from both.
- **If we have a water softener, do we also need filtration?**
Yes. A water softener removes hardness minerals but does not remove chemicals like chlorine or other contaminants. Filtration systems address these additional concerns.
- **If we install whole-house filtration, do we still need RO?**
Many homeowners still choose RO for drinking water because it provides an additional level of purification at the point of use.
- **How often do RO filters need to be replaced?**
Most RO filters are replaced annually, depending on water quality and usage. Filter replacement schedules and costs are reviewed during installation.
- **Will installing RO require drilling my countertop?**
In most cases, yes, a small hole is drilled for a dedicated RO faucet. We discuss placement and options prior to installation.
- **Can RO water be connected to my refrigerator?**
Yes. RO systems can be plumbed to supply refrigerators for ice and drinking water.
- **During a boil notice, do I still need to boil water if I have RO?**
Yes. During a boil notice, all drinking water should be boiled regardless of filtration or RO systems.

FAQ'S

System Longevity, Repairs & Ownership

- **How long do water softeners last?**
Water softeners do not last forever, but many systems last 20 years or more with proper maintenance. Longevity depends on water quality, usage, and upkeep.
- **Can you service or repair my existing system?**
Yes. We offer system evaluations to determine whether repair or replacement makes the most sense based on performance and condition.
- **When does repair versus replacement make sense?**
If a system is older, inefficient, or experiencing repeated failures, replacement may be more cost-effective long term. We provide honest recommendations after evaluating your system.
- **What are signs my system needs maintenance?**
Common signs include spotting on fixtures, dry skin or hair, soap not lathering well, or scale buildup returning. Any noticeable change in water quality warrants a system check.
- **What happens to my system if we move?**
Systems can often be removed and relocated. If left with the home, warranty transferability depends on system type and agreement terms.

Purchasing, Financing & Warranty

- **Do you offer financing options?**
Yes. We offer financing options that can be reviewed during your appointment to help fit your budget.
- **Do you offer rental systems?**
Yes. Rental options are available and pricing is based on household size and water needs. Contact us for a free evaluation.
- **Do your systems come with warranties?**
Yes. All systems include warranties, which is one reason many customers choose Alamo Water Softeners. Warranty details vary by system and are reviewed during your consultation.

Why should we choose Alamo Water Softeners?

Our customers choose us for three reasons:

- Our People – Service and care are part of our DNA**
- Our Products – Systems selected specifically for Texas water**
- Our Value – High-quality solutions at a fair, competitive price**

We don't just install systems – we support customers long after installation.

Alamo Water Softeners,
Turning Houses Into Homes



MEET YOUR AWS TEAM






**ALAMO WATER
SOFTENERS**

THANK YOU

 210 274-6122

 3823 Thousand Oaks
San Antonio, Texas 78217

 alamowatersofteners.com

