

New filters to ensure tap water stays drug-free

by **Casey Newton** - Jun. 4, 2008 04:16 PM
The Arizona Republic

Phoenix will install new filters as part of its effort to ensure that high concentrations of pharmaceuticals don't enter the water supply.

Recent tests showed no drugs in the city's tap water. Still, officials said the installation of granular activated carbon filters would ensure the water stays drug-free.

"Preliminary research studies have shown that GAC is effective at removing many organic constituents from water, including various pharmaceuticals," Water Services Director David Modeer said in a letter to the City Council.

Officials from Water Services told the City Council on Tuesday that the city will participate in studies with research groups and academic organizations as they look into the potential health effects of low doses of drugs in the water supply.

The goal is to ensure a safe, reliable water supply, said David Cavazos, deputy city manager in charge of Water Services.

"We do everything we can to make sure we meet or exceed the standards," Cavazos said.

Modeer told the council that even where pharmaceuticals have been found in city water supplies, the highest concentrations have been 5,000 times smaller than the doses that would be given to patients.

To put that in perspective, Modeer said a

person would need to drink 50,000 8-ounce glasses of water in one day to receive the equivalent dose of the drug.

Phoenix sent samples of its water to a testing facility in April after news reports of drugs in urban water supplies. Last month, the report from MWH Laboratories declared that Phoenix water was drug-free.

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