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It is desirable to have clean water for domestic consumption. But there can be hard water that is supplied to certain homes in the country. Hard water may be a nuisance with scaling and other problems caused by the high amount of dissolved matters in it. Hence, hard water should be softened. This can be achieved by installing water softeners in the home.

Home environment

Hard water in the home makes it difficult for the home occupants to enjoy a good life; some individuals may have sensitive skin which hard water can irritate easily with its higher mineral contents. The wise homeowner would install water softeners if a hard water test proves positive.

Water softeners are used to remove the excessive calcium and magnesium ions to change hard water to soft. A water softener unit can be connected directly onto the home's main water supply to change hard water to soft water.

It is just a simple chemical reaction that water softeners use to soften the water; hard water is forced into a special resin tank where the ion exchange process occurs to transform the hard water to become soft water. When the resin is utilized completely, it would need to be replenished which is automatic when the salt tank is updated regularly. No salt is added into the domestic water system.

Types of water softeners

There are two types of water softeners that can be installed in a home: time clock and metered. The time clock water softener system is quite a basic system that operates on a timer basis. A regeneration of the resin is set through after calculation of the water hardness in the home's water supply, number of users and the type of water softener installed. The softener would regenerate at this set time regardless of how much water is used.

There are pros and cons with time clock softener systems. It can be a waste of salt and water regenerated if there is a lot of unused softened water during the regeneration time as the system is set to regenerate at the specific time. On the other hand, if there is more water used before the regeneration, the amount of softened water would likely be exceeded; the water tends to be hard nearer the end of cycle before regeneration occurs. Hence, consumers who would be away for some time from their homes or property should switch off the time clock softener beforehand.

Metered softeners for water is more economical as it only regenerates when the pre-set amount of softened water is utilized regardless of time of usage. Hence, there is no under- or over-regeneration of the water.

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