

## **NMCL RED FOOD DYE TEST FAQ**

Q: Just what is the “red” food coloring test and why do I have to perform this test on my system?

A: First and most important, the red food dye test is only for the Black Berkey® purification elements and not ceramic or other filter elements. Your Black Berkey® purification elements are powerful enough to remove food coloring from water; this feature allows you to make sure your system is operating properly. Simply fill the upper chamber with water and add a tablespoon of food coloring per gallon capacity of your system. If the food coloring is removed entirely, your purification system is working properly.

Q: At what interval should I conduct the red food color test?

A: We recommend this test be done upon first use, then every 3 to 6 months, before you take your system out of the country, or any time you use your system after drying and storing the elements for an extended period of time.

Q: So, exactly how much food coloring do I add to my water? I’ve heard everything from a few drops to a whole bottle.

A: At a minimum, you should use one teaspoon of red food coloring per gallon of water. We recommend up to one tablespoon of red food coloring per gallon of water, especially if you are going to be taking your elements out of the country for any period of time. We also recommend one tablespoon for extreme conditions.

Further, when comparing other systems to a genuine Berkey® water purification system, one tablespoon of red food coloring tells all.

Q: Why “red” food coloring and not some other color. Is there really a difference?

A: Red food dye/coloring doesn’t have any minerals so the filter recognizes it as a contaminant. While other colors “may” work, we always recommend using “red” food coloring.

Q: What else could be happening if my Black Berkey® elements seem to be allowing red food coloring to pass through them.?

A: There are several things that you can check first.

1. Are the wing nuts too tight? If the wing nuts are on too tight, this could cause stripping which would affect the outcome of the test.

2. Are you using actual red food coloring or another color or type of dye? Red food coloring is what is recommended for the test.

3. Is the washer on the stem at the top tank and the wing nut at the bottom? If the washer is in the bottom with the wing nut, it can bleed red food color.

4. Is the wing nut tight on each element? Check to make sure they are.

5. Are the plugs sealing holes without element, installed tight with a washer on each side? Could the plug be leaking? Check to make sure.

6. Are you retesting an element that you think may have failed the test? If so, did you re-prime it first? If not, the element could have additional red dye in it from the previous test. Please re-prime first. Additionally, make sure you pour any excess water out of the element stem as well as the bottom tank or whatever you are using to catch the water coming out of the element. We recommend running clear water through the did you pour any excess water out of the element and the bottom tank, then rinse. Additionally, if you are using the lower chamber to catch water, rinse the spigot out too.

7. Please apply a paper towel to each stem and see if it has red dye on it.

Q: So, I've done everything I can and it seems like there may be a problem. What do I do now?

A: If you purchased your system through one of our fine distributors, please contact them directly. If you purchased your system through us, please refer to our FAQ regarding our return policy.

[http://www.berkeywater.com/FAQs/10r\\_Returns.html](http://www.berkeywater.com/FAQs/10r_Returns.html)