

Water Softeners: Fact vs. Fiction

What does Softened Water really mean?

WQA* defines soft water as any water which has been processed in some manner (like a Conditioner) BUT must be able to reduce the total hardness to 1 grain per gallon or less, expressed as calcium carbonate equivalent. The water softener system also needs to be certified S100 by the WQA in order to be a softener. If you are buying a softener, make sure it is WQA-certified S100 or similar standard.

In other words, unless a Water Conditioner actually reduces the total hardness to 1 grain per gallon or less, it cannot be called a Water Softener.

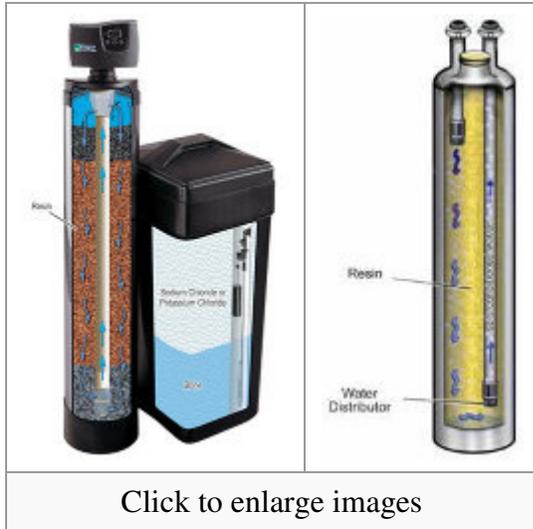
So Conditioned Water can be Soft Water, but not ALL Conditioners are able to Soften Water.

	Water Conditioner?	But is it a Water Softener?
Water Softener	✓Yes	✓Yes
Reverse Osmosis	✓Yes	✓Yes
Carbon Filtration	✓Yes	No
Magnets	✓Yes	No
Electronic wave technology	✓Yes	No
Ceramic media	✓Yes	No
And a host of others	✓Yes	No

Consumers are advised to be certain that they understand exactly what benefits are claimed before they purchase any water conditioner device.

Only a Water Softener or a Reverse Osmosis System can get your water below 1 grain of hardness. Only these two products actually soften hard water. Period.

Automatic System	Exchange Tank
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Water Softeners (Automatic or Portable Exchange)

- Water softeners come in a variety of sizes, flow rates, etc.
- A Water Softener can either be an Automatic System that you can buy or rent. You add salt to it yourself and the system regenerates in your home.
- Or it can be a soft water exchange tank service whereby a technician removes the tank periodically and replaces it with a regenerated tank. Used tanks are regenerated at a regeneration facility.

Reverse Osmosis

- An alternative solution to using a water softener is to filter the water either by distillation or [reverse osmosis](#) to remove the calcium and magnesium.
- This type of filtration would be much more expensive to use for all of the water in your home.
- It is far more cost effective to install a reverse osmosis system under your kitchen sink and connect it to your icemaker and then install a whole house water softener such as an Automatic Softener or Exchange Tank Softener for the remainder of your home's water.

* The International Water Quality Association (WQA), the trade association that represents the water treatment industry, has developed standards and definitions for the water produced by the variety of water treatment devices. These definitions are intended to assist consumers in understanding what each system can do so they purchase the device that will provide the quality of water they desire for the use they intend. Consumers are advised to be certain that they understand exactly what benefits are claimed before they purchase any water conditioner device.