



Buzzards Bay Water District
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Buzzards Bay Water District

Hydrant Flushing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why does the Buzzards Bay Water District conduct hydrant flushing?

Hydrant flushing is an important part of maintaining a safe, reliable, and high-quality drinking water system. During flushing operations, District personnel systematically open selected fire hydrants to move large volumes of water through the distribution system. This process helps clean the water mains by removing naturally occurring sediment and mineral deposits that can accumulate over time.

Hydrant flushing also allows the District to verify the operation of hydrants and valves, maintain water quality throughout the system, and assess water flow available for fire protection purposes.

Why is hydrant flushing important?

Routine hydrant flushing helps the District:

- Remove sediment and naturally occurring mineral deposits from water mains.
 - Maintain proper water quality throughout the distribution system.
 - Ensure fire hydrants and valves remain operational.
 - Improve water flow through the system.
 - Verify water availability for firefighting purposes.
 - Reduce stagnant water in low-flow areas of the system.
 - Support the long-term reliability of the District's infrastructure.
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How will I know when flushing is scheduled in my area?

The District will make every effort to notify customers before planned flushing operations.

Notification methods may include:

- Advertisement of Flushing in the Bourne Enterprise will always precede flushing
- The District website
- Facebook

Customers are encouraged to monitor District communications during flushing seasons (Generally Spring and Fall).

What should I expect during hydrant flushing?

During flushing operations, you may observe:

- Water flowing from nearby fire hydrants
- District personnel working in the roadway
- Temporary pooling of water near hydrants
- Slight fluctuations in water pressure
- Brief periods of discolored water

These conditions are normal and temporary.

Will hydrant flushing affect my water service?

Customers may experience temporary discoloration, cloudy water, or a slight reduction in water pressure while flushing is occurring in their neighborhood. These conditions are caused by the increased water velocity stirring up naturally occurring sediment within the water mains and generally resolve once flushing is complete.

Is discolored water safe?

Discolored water is typically caused by naturally occurring minerals and sediment, such as iron and manganese, that have been disturbed during the flushing process. While this discoloration is generally not a health concern, customers should wait until the water runs clear before using it for drinking, cooking, laundry, or other household purposes.

What should I do if my water is dirty or discolored?

If you notice dirty, rusty, cloudy, or discolored water after hydrant flushing:

DO:

- ✓ Run a **cold water faucet** closest to where your water service enters your home.
 - ✓ Allow the cold water to run until it becomes clear. This may take several minutes.
 - ✓ Check the water periodically by filling a clear or white-colored glass.
 - ✓ Once the cold water is clear, your plumbing system should be clear as well.
 - ✓ If the water does not clear after 15 minutes, shut the faucet off, wait 30 minutes, and try again.
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DO NOT:

- ✗ Run hot water until the cold water runs clear.
- ✗ Wash clothes while the water is discolored.
- ✗ Operate dishwashers or ice makers while the water is discolored.
- ✗ Run water through faucet filters, refrigerators, or other filtration devices until the water clears.
- ✗ Fill swimming pools or hot tubs while discolored water is present.

These precautions help prevent sediment from entering your hot water tank, appliances, and filtration equipment.

What if dirty water gets into my hot water tank?

If discolored water enters your hot water heater, allow the cold water to clear first. You may then need to flush the hot water tank according to the manufacturer's instructions to remove any accumulated sediment. Running hot water before the cold water clears can increase the time it takes for your home's plumbing to return to normal.

What if my laundry becomes stained?

In the event that discolored water is inadvertently used for laundry, avoid placing the clothes in a dryer. Rust-removal products specifically designed for laundry are often effective at removing iron-related staining. Follow the product manufacturer's instructions carefully.

Why does my water smell like chlorine?

Chlorine is a disinfectant used to protect the public water supply from harmful bacteria and other microorganisms. At certain times of the year, particularly during seasonal temperature changes, the water in our storage tanks naturally mixes or "turns over" as warmer and cooler layers of water shift. During these periods, the District may increase flushing and chlorination efforts to maintain water quality throughout the system. Customers may also notice a temporary chlorine odor during hydrant flushing activities. While the taste or odor may be more noticeable at these times, it is temporary and helps ensure the continued safety and quality of the drinking water supply

How long does flushing take?

The time required varies depending on the area being flushed. Flushing schedules may change based on system conditions, weather, or operational needs.

Is hydrant flushing a waste of water?

No. Hydrant flushing is a necessary maintenance activity that helps ensure the continued delivery of safe, reliable drinking water. The process improves water quality, verifies system performance, and helps maintain fire protection capabilities throughout the District.

What should I do if my water remains discolored?

If your water remains discolored several hours after flushing has been completed in your area:

1. Verify that flushing operations have ended.
 2. Run a cold water faucet for several minutes.
 3. If the water still does not clear, contact the Buzzards Bay Water District.
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Our Commitment

The Buzzards Bay Water District is committed to providing safe, reliable, and high-quality drinking water to our customers. Hydrant flushing is one of the many preventive maintenance activities performed each year to maintain water quality, improve system reliability, and ensure adequate fire protection throughout the District.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation during hydrant flushing operations.