

Fire Hydrant Flushing Facts and FAQ



Why do hydrants need to be flushed?

A: The primary purpose of hydrant flushing is to verify the proper operation of the city's approximately 1,750 fire hydrants through annual inspections and preventative maintenance. A pro-active hydrant maintenance program is the key to ensure that the city maintains adequate fire protection throughout Moorhead, and all hydrants, valves, and watermains are in working order.

My water is discolored. What should I do?

A: Wait until flushing has subsided in your area. Allow a few hours for discoloration to dissipate. Next, run the cold water tap in a bath tub or outside faucet until the water clears up. This may take up to several minutes. After that, turn on all other cold water fixtures in the house until clear water appears. If discoloration persists for more than 24 hours, call MPS' Water Distribution Department at 218.477.8080.

Why is my water discolored from hydrant flushing?

A: Sometimes hydrant flushing can make the water temporarily appear cloudy or rust-colored because hydrant flushing stirs up sediment, iron, and manganese mineral deposits in the watermains causing temporary discoloration.

Why is my water discolored, but my neighbor didn't notice any discoloration?

A: If you turned on your water during flushing, the water may be discolored because you are drawing in water as the distribution system flushing is stirring up minerals and iron. If your neighbor returned home in the evening after flushing occurred, then turned on their tap, they most likely will not notice any discoloration.

I was washing clothes and the water discolored my clothes. What can I do?

A: Do not dry your clothes in the dryer. Wait until the water clears up in your home. After the water is clear, rewash the clothes immediately using detergent. If that doesn't seem to help, try a common household rust remover product.

Is the water safe?

A: Discolored water poses no threat to the public's health, but may have an unpleasant taste and may stain laundry.

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My hot water is also discolored.

What can I do?

A: If discolored water got into your hot water heater tank, run the hot water for several minutes. In some cases, you may need to run enough hot water until it changes the tank over with water. If the water is really discolored, the best option may be to drain the hot water heater tank.

What should I do if my water pressure or volume seems low after flushing?

A: Check your faucet and washer screens for trapped debris and clean them out. If this doesn't appear to increase volume, call our Customer Service department at 218.477.8000 to set up an appointment to check your water meter.

What should I do after the flushing?

A: If the tap water is used during flushing, it could come out with sediment and discoloration. If you encounter discolored water, shut the water off and wait several minutes. After waiting, check the clarity by running cold water for a few minutes allowing new water to work its way into your pipes. If not, wait a few more minutes and check again. In some cases, you may experience slight discoloration for a few hours.

For more information and general hydrant flushing questions, contact the Moorhead Public Service Water Distribution department at 218.477.8080.

FACTS:

- It takes about 30 minutes to 60 minutes to flush the water mains on each street.
- Flushing the water mains improves water quality by removing sediment that slowly builds up at the bottom of the watermain over time.
- Flushing uses a small percentage of our annual community use. No more water is used than absolutely necessary.

