

What To Do After a Water Main Break – Tips for Customers

After repairing a water main break, water mains are flushed and disinfected by the Water Department. In most cases, customers will not notice any changes to the water after a water main break or repair, but there is a chance that customers may experience air in their water service pipes or notice discoloration of the water.

Natural mineral scale from inside of the pipes, and changes in direction of the flow of water (such as during a water main break) often cause scouring of the pipe that may lead to discolored water or particulate matter that appears in sinks or toilets. These mineral compounds pose no health threat. Following a water main break, the Water Department recommends flushing the cold-water lines in homes or businesses to move the particles through the system. Flushing water will only cost the customer a few pennies on the average water bill.

Steps to perform flushing after a water main break:

1. Begin with the highest floor of the home or business, remove the aerator from the sink faucet or bathtub spigot. A bathtub or large faucet is preferred. Turn on the **cold-water only** faucet and let it run until clear, open other faucets one at a time, moving from the highest floor to the lowest floor. If the dwelling is one story, use the fixture closest to where the water service line enters the building.
2. Run for five (5) to fifteen (15) minutes, or until the water is clear and any air in the line is depleted. This may take up to (30) minutes before the water runs clear. Turn off the faucets and tub spigots in the reverse order, from lowest to highest.
3. If the water does not clear, wait thirty (30) minutes and flush the **cold-water only** faucets again.

If discolored water persists or should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the **Water and Sewer Department Office at 860-647-6050** between the hours of 8:00am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday, or our Emergency After-Hours telephone number (after 3:30pm weekends and holidays) at 860-647-3111.

More information:

Following restoration of water service, check your toilets for any leaks. The temporary change in water pressure may cause toilet flappers to seat improperly after water has been restored.

Do not use discolored water for any purposes that require clean water, such as preparing food and beverages, medical and dental procedures, and laundry.

Do not flush the cold water through a faucet or tap that has a filter connected to it (such as a refrigerator water line, or ice maker) - the sediment may clog your filter.

Do not use the hot water tap for flushing. Damage to the hot water tank may occur if sediment is drawn in after a water main break.