



California Water Service

May 2020

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Reopening Buildings after Low or No Water Use

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DDW's COVID-19 page

Community Page

Some businesses or buildings may have shut down temporarily during the COVID-19 crisis. Buildings and large service connections that shut down or significantly reduced water use have an increased risk of Legionella growth and leaching of lead and copper. Such water customers should work with their water provider to address these risks. At a minimum, the water customer should thoroughly flush stagnant water lines prior to restoring full operation.

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/certlic/drinkingwater/covid-19.html



Cal Water's Message

- Link to DDW and CDC web sites
 - State of WA guidelines
- For Low or No Water Use
- Flush both cold, then hot
- Start at location closest to meter
- Use PPE – refer to CDC, NIOSH, and OSHA
- Kept it simple – messaging for all customers
- Provided talking points for CSRs and Operations

Development of web page



Considerations for Flushing

- Point-of-entry (POE) filtration treatment and/or water softener units – remove or bypass prior to flushing and conduct maintenance according to manufacturer instructions (such as back washing)
- Faucet aerators - remove when possible
- Point-of-use (POU) filters – replace all, including refrigerator filter
- Ice makers – remove existing ice and flush line
- Fountains, water dispensers, etc. – follow manufacturer’s maintenance guidelines



Considerations for Flushing con't.

- Hot tubs – follow CDC guidelines
<https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/downloads/hot-tub-disinfection.pdf>
- Water heaters – follow manufacturer's guidelines and ensure temperature is set at appropriate level
- Safety equipment, such as eye wash stations, safety showers, and fire sprinkler systems – may also require assessment and necessary maintenance; follow manufacturer's guidelines
- Cooling towers – follow maintenance plans to ensure disinfection procedure is followed



How To Flush

General Guidelines:

- Flush cold water first, then repeat process with hot water starting at the location closet to the meter.
- Multi-storied buildings – flush first floor first, move up each floor for cold water, then repeat with hot water.
- Follow site-specific *Water Management Plan* for the building



How Long to Flush?

- Until water runs clear and there is a chlorine residual at the furthest location from the meter and/or top floor
- Residential – 10 to 30 minutes
- May need to work with customers
 - Ensure social distancing and PPE guidelines are followed



Discussion topics

- Utility message to customers
- Questions from customers
- Specific messaging for groups of customers
- Measuring residuals
- Conservation vs. water use
- Education about bill impact



References

- CDC

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>

- AWWA

<https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics/Coronavirus#lt-10681543-shutoffs-and-return-to-service-guidance>

- State of WA

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/LegionellaandBuildingWaterSystemClosuresCOVID-19.pdf?%E2%80%94ga=2.86808280.1778946100.1585943145-1886711419.1568850380>



Questions

