

What is flushing?

Flushing is a process that rapidly removes water from the District's water piping system, similar to the process of flushing a car's radiator. Flushing uses water force to scour out materials that accumulate in the District's pipes. Water pipes are usually flushed by opening fire hydrants, where the discharged water flows off the streets the same as rainwater.

Why are we flushing?

Imagine driving down the road at less than 1-1/2 miles per hour. That's about the rate that water moves through underground pipes. This slow movement causes sediment like rust and mineral particles to build up over time and accumulate along the pipe's bottom. A build-up of bacteria known as "biofilm" can also coat the pipe's inner surface. This combination of sediment and bacteria can restrict water flow in the pipes and contribute to the pipe corroding. Rapid water pressure changes, such as water main breaks and the use of fire hydrants, can stir up the sediment and dislodge deposits lining the pipe, resulting in "discolored water" appearance. Periodically flushing water pipes removes the sediment and biofilm buildup, maintains our District's infrastructure, and assures consistent good quality water.

Isn't flushing a waste of water?

No. Any overall increase in the amount of water used in flushing is a small price to pay in maintaining water quality and the integrity of the piping system.

How will this affect you?

Usually, you will not be aware that flushing is even taking place in your neighborhood. Flushing is generally conducted between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Approximately half of the District's fire hydrants will be opened to flush the water pipes. It takes about 30 minutes to flush each hydrant. While the hydrant is being flushed, the homes on that block may experience discolored water or a drop in water pressure. Your water service should not be interrupted. If you have no water pressure, please notify MDS at 281-290-6500. The only sign that a crew has been in your neighborhood may be standing water in the roadway.

What should you do if you turned on a faucet and the water coming out is discolored?

Should a reddish, yellow, or brown tint to the water appear, do not be alarmed. It is recommended you do not use the water or do laundry for about two hours; this will give the sediment time to settle. After you have waited for this time period, run your faucets for about five minutes to make sure the water is clear. If the water does not clear within a couple of hours, notify MDS at 281-290-6500 24-hours per day.

The District will not be responsible for damages to clothing, etc.