

City of Humboldt's Semi-Annual Hydrant Flushing Program

The Humboldt Water Department flushes the fire hydrants throughout the City every spring and fall. The hydrant flushing program is very important to the maintenance of the City's water distribution system. During this process, it is not uncommon for a yellow, brown, or reddish tint to appear in the water. Harmless mineral deposits settle in the water mains, and flushing the system stirs the deposits causing the discoloration. Flushing removes the sediments from the mains and also serves the following purposes:

- Improves water quality in the distribution system.
- Verifies the proper operation of fire hydrants and valves.
 - Helps find weaknesses in the water system.
- Checks for closed valves and weak flows in the water mains.
 - Verifies adequate fire flows for fire fighting.

Typically the City advertises the program two weeks prior to starting. You can check the following notification of when flushing will occur:

- Humboldt City Hall
- People Service, Inc
- The City of Humboldt's webpage: www.cityofhumboldt.org

What should I do when the City is flushing in my neighborhood?

If you see the Public Works crew flushing a hydrant on your street, avoid running tap water and using the washing machine or the dishwasher until the flushing is completed. Please drive carefully if you see the flushing crew working in the area.

What could I expect before and after flushing?

- If tap water is used during flushing, it could come out discolored and containing sediment. 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 the water is clear it is OK to use. If not, wait a few more minutes and check again. In some cases, there may be a slight discoloration for a few hours. This discoloration only affects the appearance of the water; it does not affect the taste or water quality.
- The water may also have a milky appearance. This is due to tiny air bubbles and will dissipate. This is not harmful.
- Avoid washing laundry during scheduled flushing times. Wait until the water runs clear at the tap, then wash a load of dark clothes first. Hot water tanks can hold discolored water for some time after the cold water runs clear.
- If pressure or volume seems low, check your faucet screens for trapped particles. There may be a temporary drop in water pressure.
 - Flush your hot water tanks, by running the hot water tap for a few minutes after the cold water clears.
- You may notice a more pronounced chlorine taste or odor in the water during springtime flushing. This is because free chlorine has a more noticeable chlorine taste and odor. This will dissipate when water is left in an open container in the refrigerator. Letting water in a glass sit for a moment will also take care of air bubbles that are stirred up during flushing and cause a milky appearance.

For additional information about the flushing program contact City Hall at 332-3435 or People Service Inc. at 332-7949.