IMPORTANT FLUSHING REMINDER

As we progress through daily challenges and changes related to COVID-19, we are aware your facility may have been closed or had reduction in staff or use. The water M.U.D. provides in the water mains in the street is fresh and constantly moving. However, when a building is shut down, vacant or has a reduction in usage, the fresh water in the mains is not entering the building. This can cause the water to stagnate and may cause taste and odor problems. The best thing to do is to flush the plumbing to bring in fresh water.

When water in a building is not being used, it may stagnate causing taste and odor problems, or have the potential to grow harmful bacteria.

The best way to treat this is to flush the internal piping. Start with the tap closest to the water meter. Open fully (ensure adequate drainage) and flush for about **20 minutes**. Repeat this step moving away from the meter on every cold-water tap.

Flush all toilets several times and run all drinking fountains for several minutes. Continue until all faucets have been flushed.

Move to the hot-water heater and/or boiler. The water temperature in the hot water system should be temporarily increased to **more than 140° F**. Flush in a similar manner starting with the faucet closest to the water heater. Each hot water faucet should be flushed for a minimum of 30 minutes. **Warning:** reduce the temperature in the heater to **120° F or less** when finished to prevent scalding.

20 minutes for all cold-water fixtures
30 minutes for all hot-water systems

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METROPOLITAN
UTILITIES DISTRICT

Frequently Asked Questions: Returning to a Vacant Building

Q: Why should I be concerned about the water if the building has been vacant for a couple of weeks?

A: The water in the mains in the street is fresh and constantly moving. When a building sits vacant, the fresh water in the mains does not make it into the building. As the water in the building sits unused, it will stagnate causing taste and odor problems as well as have the potential to grow harmful bacteria such as *Legionella* that can cause Legionnaire's Disease.

Q: What should I do when I return to work when the building has been empty for several weeks?

A: The best thing to do is flush the premise (building) plumbing. This will bring fresh water from the main to the building.

Q: How should I flush the water?

A: The best way to flush is directional flushing. Start with the tap closest to the water meter. Open the tap fully (or as far as the drain can take the water) and flush for about 20 minutes. Then repeat this going away from the meter on every cold water tap. Also flush all toilets several times and run all drinking fountains for several minutes. Continue until all faucets have been flushed.

Q: What about the hot water system?

A: The water temperature in the heater should be temporarily increased to 140° F. The hot water should be flushed in a similar manner starting with the faucet closest to the water heater. Each hot water faucet should be flushed for a minimum of 30 minutes**. Warning: reduce the temperature in the heater to 120° F or less to prevent scalding.**

Q: What about water features?

A: Water features should be drained, cleaned and disinfected on all surfaces that have contact with water.

Q: How do I disinfect a hot tub or pool?

A: Please consult your local or state health department or visit https://www.cdc.gov/legionella/downloads/hot-tub-disinfection.pdf for guidelines and regulation about hot tubs and swimming pools.

Q: What is M.U.D. doing to prevent *Legionella*?

A: The treatment that M.U.D. uses has been shown to be effective for control of *Legionella* and other bacteria and viruses. This includes maintaining the appropriate pH and disinfectant (monochloramine, chloramine) residual. Research indicates that a chloramine residual of 1.5 to 3.5 mg/L is optimal for Legionella control. Chloramine is in the range of 2.0-2.5 mg/L in our distribution system. We also operate with the pH of the water in the range of 8.8 to 9.2 which has been shown to inhibit *Legionella*.

We also measure the chloramines throughout the distribution system to ensure the residual remains in the optimal range.

Q: How long does it take for the chloramines to leave the water?

A: Chloramine dissipates from the water at the rate of 0.17 mg/L/day.

For more guidance on maintaining building plumbing, please visit the CDC website:

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

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