

Flushing Your Home Plumbing When Water Service is Restored

When your water service to your home is turned back on after being shut off for a period of time, it is recommended that you flush sinks, faucets, showers, tubs and other plumbing components by running your water for a period of time and in a specific order. By following the step by step instructions provided below, you can help ensure any old water in your home's water pipes is flushed out and replaced with fresh water. If you need help with these instructions, please contact a licensed plumber or your public water utility.

Discoloration may occur during flushing. If the discoloration persists for more than 30 minutes, repeat the flushing protocol. If it continues to persist, contact a licensed plumber.

Instructions

- 1) Make sure all faucets in the building flow to a drain. If there are any water filters in the home, remove or bypass them.
- 2) Remove aerators and screens from every faucet.
- 3) Using the cold water handles, turn on all faucets – including kitchen and bathroom sinks, utility and mop sinks, bathtub and shower, etc. - and allow them to run during the entirety of the flushing process.
 - a) Start with the lowest floor of the home. If the home has a basement, start there.
 - b) Move to the next highest floor and turn on all faucets.
 - c) Continue until all faucets are turned on on all of the floors.
- 4) At the end of this process, water should be flowing from all the faucets in the building at the same time.
- 5) Let water run until the water is clear and the temperature has stopped changing at the last faucet turned on. If you do not have a thermometer, flush for at least 30 minutes. Larger homes may need to flush for a longer period of time.
- 6) Turn off the first faucet you turned on (lowest floor) and continue turning off faucets in the order they were turned on.
- 7) Repeat steps 3-5 using the hot water taps. *
- 8) Clean and reattach aerators to the faucets.
- 9) Flush, or run a cycle of, any appliance (ice maker, dishwasher, coffeemaker, laundry, etc.) for 10 minutes each.
- 10) Replace any filters and return equipment to service, if applicable.

Cleaning Aerators

- 1) Separate the parts of the aerator (screen, gasket, screw-threaded housing, etc.) and place them in a small container.
- 2) Soak the pieces in vinegar and/or water to help loosen dirt/particles.
- 3) Scrub the aerator pieces with a toothbrush or other small brush.
- 4) Rinse everything well, reassemble, and reattach the aerator to the faucet.

This guidance can be modified to fit the needs of larger structures, including office buildings, schools and hospitals. Please refer to the Ohio EPA document titled: Guidance for Premise Plumbing Water Service Restoration for more information on how to improve water quality or contact your water supply utility.

*Follow manufacturer's instructions for flushing water heaters.

To restore hot water service, refer to the water heater owner's manual and contactor the property owner, if applicable.