



LIVINGSTON
NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
WATER DIVISION

Hydrant Flushing FAQs

You may notice Water Division employees working at fire hydrants and see water running down the street. Your first thought may be that we are ignoring our own philosophy of conserving water. We're not.

We're actually flushing the hydrants – an important preventive maintenance activity. Although it may appear to waste water, the process is part of a routine maintenance program necessary to maintain the integrity of the water system and allowing us to continue to deliver the highest quality water possible.

As a result of the line flushing process, residents in the immediate vicinity of the work may experience some temporary discoloration of their water. This discoloration consists primarily of harmless silt and air, and doesn't affect the safety of the water.



If you experience **discoloration** in your water after a hydrant has been flushed in your neighborhood, clear the pipes in your home by running **COLD** water through all of your faucets for a few minutes.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: **Why** does the water system need to be routinely flushed?

A: The Township's water distribution system is a complex network of pipes and storage tanks where sediment or deposits may naturally accumulate over time. If not removed, these materials may cause water quality deterioration, taste and odor problems, or discoloration of the water. Water may also stagnate in lesser used parts of the distribution system, resulting in degraded water quality.

Q: **When** does flushing normally occur?

A: Normally, flushing takes place between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. This is done in order to cause fewer disturbances to our residents.

Q: **What** should I do after the hydrant is flushed?

A: If the tap water is used during flushing, it could come out full of sediment and discoloration. 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 to allow fresh water to work its way into your pipes. If the water doesn't clear after a few minutes, turn it off, wait a few more minutes and try running the COLD water again. Although unlikely, there may be cases in which you may experience slight discoloration for a few hours. This discoloration only affects the appearance of the water; it does not affect the taste or water quality.

Livingston's Water Division: Hydrant Flushing FAQs

Q: What should I do if my water pressure or volume seems low after the hydrant flushing?

A: Check your faucet and washer screens for trapped debris.

Q: Why does the water look discolored after hydrant flushing?

A: When a hydrant is opened, there will always be temporary incidences of discolored water containing fine sediment particles. There is no health hazard associated with discolored water. Allow a few hours for discoloration to dissipate. To verify the water has settled, allow your COLD water tap to run a few minutes. If the discoloration persists for more than 24 hours, please contact our Water Division at 973-535-7951.

Q: Is it OK to drink sediment-laden or discolored water during temporary disturbance events such as hydrant flushing?

A: It is recommended that customers wait until the water has cleared before using it for drinking or other purposes.

Q: What is the silt in the water system after flushing?

A: Water naturally contains minerals. These minerals normally and naturally react with the inside of the pipe to produce the silt by-product. The process can occur on the inside of the pipe and eventually cause the water quality to deteriorate, or cause taste or odor problems. Hydrant flushing removes much of this by-product. However, not all of it can always be flushed out. Some may still remain in the water, causing some discoloration until it again settles.

Reminder:



Always run COLD water when clearing discoloration.

Running the hot water tap can result in sediment getting into your water heater and causing significant damage.

Township of Livingston
Department of Public Works
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Livingston Township, NJ

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