



199 RAYMOND ROAD | P.O. BOX 111  
SUDBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01776

p 978-443-6602 | f 978-443-9587 | e customerservice@sudburywater.com | w sudburywater.com

## 2024 Fall Flushing

Is limited to dead end water mains only.

### What time of the day is flushing conducted?

Flushing is conducted **Monday-Friday from 7:30 am-3 pm** during daylight hours when it is safer for our staff to be working in roadways. Daylight also provides better visibility to see discolored water being flushed out of the system and when water is running clear. *Keep in mind the flushing schedule is subject to change based on the progress of the crew, inclement weather, and other water-related emergencies that take precedence over flushing.*

### How long does it typically take to clean the water mains on each street?

Typically it takes 30 minutes to 60 minutes to flush the water mains on each street.

### How will you be affected?

There may be a slight drop in pressure or noticeable discoloration of the water from the minerals and sediments that are being flushed out. During the flushing operation in your neighborhood, you will be able to see crews flushing the water mains through fire hydrants and ends of water main pipes commonly called blow-offs. Crews will usually direct the water being flushed into appropriate areas to avoid sediment erosion or localized pooling of water, but you may notice water on the street or roadway. In some communities, the fire department may be the crew operating the fire hydrants during the flushing operation.

### Is the discolored water dangerous to ingest?

Mineral sediments are always present in drinking water, and widely considered an aesthetic nuisance. These sediments can sometimes make the water undesirable to use in the home due to staining, and can also give a bitter metallic taste that can make the water unpleasant to drink, **there are no health risks associated with consuming discolored water.**

### What should I do if my water is discolored after flushing of water mains?

Water is often discolored after water main flushing, but this should not last long and typically subsides overnight. In the event you draw discolored water into the home, flush a cold tap for a few minutes, up to 15 minutes. As a precaution, prior to using hot water run the cold water tap to ensure discolored water is not drawn into the hot water tank.

### What if you notice a chlorine smell?

It is normal for there to be an increased amount of chlorine in the water during flushing because the velocity the water is moving through the pipes shortens the travel time from the treatment plant. Systems that normally do not use chlorine **may add it during flushing. Customers can easily remove the chlorine taste and smell** by filling an open container with water and keeping it in the fridge for drinking as chlorine will dissipate.

### What if discolored water gets into the hot water tank?

If you are sure that sediment got into your hot water tank, use the clean out tap at the bottom of the tank to remove any settled material. Follow the instructions which came with the tank to drain the tank and be careful of the hot water.

### What if you don't have a hot water tank – you have an on-demand water heater?

The hot water should run clear when the cold water is clear

**What should I do if my water is Dirty after the designated flushing time?** After flushing hours (7:30 am-3 pm) run a cold water tap closest to your meter (usually found in the basement) or a first-floor sink or bathtub faucet for up to 15 minutes, keep the tap open until the water runs clear. If you have trouble seeing if the water is clear, fill a light or white-colored cup or container to view the water. If the water coming from the tap is not clear after running for 15 minutes, wait 30 minutes and try again.

**Why does my water look Milky after flushing?** A milky appearance to the water is actually air bubbles caused by opening and closing water main valves, run a cold tap to draw out the air or pockets.

**My water pressure is lower since flushing:** If water pressure or volume seems low after flushing has been completed, check your faucet screens and home filters for trapped particles.

---

## WHY WATER MAIN FLUSHING IS IMPORTANT

---

**Removes Sediment:** Loose sediment and other deposits may slowly build up on the inside of the water mains over time causing discolored water. Flushing at the appropriate velocities can remove these sediments and deposits and will improve taste, odor, and color that may be problematic e.g. naturally occurring iron or manganese deposits in the distribution system may affect the color.

**Reduces Biofilm:** Biofilm is a thin layer of microorganisms that can grow on the inside of the distribution piping, a proper scouring velocity must be achieved to effectively minimize biofilm.

**Maintains Proper Distribution System Operation:** Flushing requires the opening and closing of hydrants and valves to ensure that water moves through pipe segments for effective cleaning. This operational practice also provides water operators with the opportunity to identify broken or inoperable valves and hydrants, which is important to ensure that they will work properly in an emergency.

**Improves the Age of the Water in the Distribution System:** Flushing can remove water from areas of the distribution system that have low water use. Older water may no longer have the desired chlorine residual.

**Fire Protection:** Flushing allows the assessment of the flow rate available for firefighting purposes.