



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

Spring 2025 Water Main Flushing Notification

Overview: The Spring 2025 water main flushing program will be limited to dead-end mains only.

When will flushing take place? Flushing operations will be conducted Monday through Friday, between 7:30 AM and 3:00 PM, during daylight hours for safety reasons. Daylight provides better visibility for both our staff and for detecting discolored water. Please note, the flushing schedule may change due to crew progress, inclement weather, or other water-related emergencies that may take precedence.

Flushing activities will be temporarily suspended April 14-18 (Passover) and May 26 (Memorial Day).

How long will flushing take on each street? The typical duration for flushing water mains on each street is between 30 to 60 minutes.

How might flushing affect consumers? During the flushing process, you may notice a temporary drop in water pressure or discoloration due to the release of minerals and sediments being flushed from the system. Crews will flush the water through fire hydrants or blow-offs at the end of water mains. While they will direct the water to minimize sediment erosion and pooling, some localized water accumulation may occur on streets or roadways. In some communities, the fire department may operate fire hydrants during flushing.

Is discolored water safe to drink? Discolored water may result from the presence of mineral sediments, which are common in drinking water. While these sediments can cause an undesirable taste or staining, they do not pose any health risks. If the water appears discolored, it is generally safe, but it may be unpleasant to drink.

What should I do if I notice discolored water after flushing? Discolored water typically clears up by the following day. If you notice discolored water, flush a cold water tap for up to 15 minutes to clear the pipes. If the water remains discolored, try again after 30 minutes. Before using hot water, run a cold tap to ensure no discolored water enters your hot water tank.

What should I do if I notice a chlorine smell? It is normal for chlorine levels to temporarily increase during flushing, as water moves more quickly through the pipes, reducing the time it takes to reach homes from the treatment plant. If you detect chlorine odor or taste, it can be reduced by storing water in an open container in the fridge, where the chlorine will dissipate.

What if discolored water enters my hot water tank? If you suspect sediment has entered your hot water tank, use the clean-out valve at the bottom of the tank to flush out any accumulated material. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for safely draining the tank. Be cautious of hot water when performing this task.

What if I have an on-demand water heater? If you have an on-demand water heater, your hot water should run clear once the cold water is clear.

What should I do if my water remains dirty after the designated flushing hours? If you notice discolored water after flushing hours (7:30 AM - 3:00 PM), run the cold water tap nearest to your water meter (typically found in the basement) or a first-floor sink or bathtub for up to 15 minutes. If the water is still discolored after 15 minutes, wait for 30 minutes and try again.

Why does my water look milky after flushing? A milky appearance to the water is likely caused by air bubbles, which occur when water main valves are opened and closed. This is harmless and can be cleared by running a cold water tap.

What if my water pressure is lower after flushing? If you experience low water pressure or volume after flushing, check your faucet screens and home filters for trapped particles, which may have been disturbed during the flushing process.

Why is Water Main Flushing Important?

- Removes Sediment:** Over time, loose sediment and other deposits can build up in water mains, leading to discolored water. Flushing at the correct velocities removes these deposits, improving water taste, odor, and color. Naturally occurring minerals, such as iron and manganese, may contribute to these issues.
- Reduces Biofilm:** Biofilm, a thin layer of microorganisms, can develop on the inside of distribution pipes. Flushing at the proper velocities helps minimize the formation of biofilm.
- Maintains System Operation:** Flushing helps ensure that water flows efficiently through pipes, allowing operators to identify and address issues with hydrants and valves. This process is essential for proper system operation, especially in emergency situations.
- Improves Water Quality:** Flushing removes stagnant water from low-use areas of the distribution system, ensuring that water retains its desired chlorine residual.
- Supports Fire Protection:** Flushing also helps assess the flow rate for firefighting purposes, ensuring that hydrants and water distribution are functioning optimally during an emergency.