



FIRE HYDRANT FLUSHING - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Why is hydrant flushing necessary?

Fire hydrant flushing is necessary to ensure that adequate flow and pressure is available and removes sediment from the distribution pipes to maintain water clarity and quality.

How does hydrant flushing work?

Running hydrants will increase water flow through the system. This increase in flow stirs up any minerals and deposits in the pipes and clears them out.

When does hydrant flushing occur?

The City of Merrill Utilities Department performs fire hydrant flushing as part of its regular, annual distribution optimization program to ensure the best water quality for customers. Flushing can also occur to clear out pipes after routine or unscheduled pump repairs or main repairs.

Can I still use water during the flushing process?

Flushing will not interrupt your water service; however, it is common to see a drop in water pressure. If pressure seems low after flushing is finished, check your faucet and washer screens for trapped debris.

Why does my water look rusty or cloudy after hydrant flushing?

When a hydrant is opened, the water in the mainline flows out at a high velocity. This creates a scouring action in the pipe and dislodges fine sediment particles that have accumulated in the pipe. The fine sediment mixes with the water, turning the water a cloudy or rusty brown color. There is no health hazard associated with discolored water.

Is my water safe to drink after hydrants have been flushed in my area?

Water can become discolored after flushing; however, it is safe to drink. If this happens, run your cold water tap for a few minutes until the water is clear. If it is not clear the first time, wait a few minutes and repeat this process.

Avoid washing clothes until the water clears. If your laundry does become stained, do not put it in the dryer. Rewash clothes with detergent and a rust removing agent. Rust remover can also remove stained fixtures.

What if discoloration persists after flushing?

Discoloration may linger for a few hours. Discoloration only affects the appearance of the water and does not affect water quality. There is no health concerns associated with discolored water from hydrant flushing.

I see my local fire department flushing hydrants as well - does The City of Merrill coordinate with them?

The Utilities Department does coordinate with the fire department to avoid performing a hydrant flush on a hydrant that has recently been inspected by a local fire house.