



Businesses, Buildings, and Facilities with Prolonged Closures Encouraged to Flush Water Pipes Before Reopening

Dear Valued Customers:

The Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No.1 (District) encourages all businesses, schools, churches, residences, and other buildings that have been closed recently to flush their water pipes prior to reopening. As we all know, the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and shelter-in-place orders have left many facilities vacant for a prolonged period of time. These and other extended closures, such as summer vacation, can cause the unused water in a building's plumbing system to become stagnant and lose its treated properties. As an important reminder, the District always delivers high-quality water supplies that meet or exceed all state and federal water quality standards. However, various factors beyond the point of metered delivery, including prolonged periods of nonuse, can lead to water quality degradation and potentially harmful conditions.

As businesses, schools, churches, and other facilities begin to reopen, the District encourages all customers who have not used their water service for an extended period of time (such as weeks or months) to flush their lines and restore fresh water to their systems. Please note that every building is unique with its own plumbing configurations, thus customers may wish to consult with a licensed plumber or water treatment specialist for specific flushing practices or requirements. Below are some general steps for flushing common water lines.

General Steps for Flushing Common Water Lines

1. Identify all water taps, sinks, toilets, shower and bathtub fixtures, spigots, refrigerators/freezers with an icemaker and/or water supply, drinking fountains, and any other source of potable water.
2. Remove or otherwise bypass devices like point-of-entry treatment units prior to flushing. Have device(s) serviced prior to reconnection/reinstallation.
3. Take steps to prevent backflow or the siphoning of possible contaminants into the plumbing system (e.g., close valves separating irrigation systems from home plumbing, disconnect hoses attached to faucets, etc.).

4. Turn on and/or open all fixtures and run cold water through the system for at least five minutes. In larger buildings it may take longer for fresh water to flush through all fixtures, and flushing may need to occur in segments based on water pressure.
5. While the fixtures are running, flush every toilet to refresh the water tank and bowl.
6. Discard any ice in the refrigerators/freezers ice maker and continue to discard new ice for several cycles (follow manufacturer's instructions).
7. Flush water through refrigerator and other water dispensers (follow manufacturer's instructions).
8. After cold water flushing, run the hot water at every tap until it is fully hot (ensure water heater is set to at least 140°F). If the water heater has been out of service for a prolonged period, drain and refill the unit prior to flushing (follow manufacturer's instructions).
9. Check all drains to ensure they are functioning properly and remember to check that all water taps have been closed after flushing.

For further information on water system flushing, water use plans, and guidance specific to pools and spas, hotels, healthcare facilities, cooling towers, HVAC systems, water heaters, p-traps, and more, please refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>. The CDC may also be contacted directly at (800) 232-4636.

The District remains committed to providing its customers with safe, reliable, and high-quality water supplies at all times. All sources of the District's water supply are treated and disinfected to levels proven effective in eliminating viruses, bacteria, and other pathogens. For more information about the District, please call (805) 688-6015 or visit our website at www.syrwd.org.