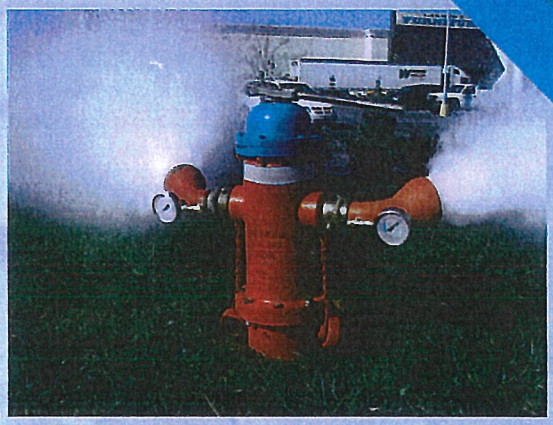
Water Main Flushing

Tidewater Utilities, Inc. (TUI) is Performing Water Main Flushing in your neighborhood. The information below explains and provides details on why this is being done.

What is Water Main Flushing?

Water main flushing is part of an ongoing program to clean the distribution pipes that carry water to customers' homes. Flushing is done by systematically opening hydrants and letting the water rush out in a controlled manner.



Why Does TUI Flush Water Mains?

Flushing helps maintain water quality. The water entering distribution mains is of very high quality and meets all standards; however, water quality can deteriorate in distribution mains if the mains are not properly managed. This is why flushing is important. Flushing maintains water quality in several ways.

- Flushing removes sediments from the mains. These sediments mostly include iron and manganese. Iron sediment results from corrosion of iron pipes and valves used in the distribution system. Other iron sediments result from the change of dissolved iron, which occurs naturally in our water, into sediment form. This occurs in the presence of chlorine and oxygen under certain low flow conditions. Dissolved manganese also occurs naturally in our water and it can be changed into sediment as with iron. Although iron and manganese do not pose health concerns, they can degrade the "acceptability" of the water through affecting the taste, clarity, and color of the water.
- Hydrant flushing also improves fire protection by testing the operation of our hydrants.

What Will I Notice in My Neighborhood?

For a few minutes following flushing, some sediment might get into your home's plumbing. If this happens, please be patient and allow your cold water to run for a few minutes at full velocity. During this time, you may experience low water pressure and should avoid using hot water to prevent sediment accumulation in your hot water tank. Remember that flushing is aimed at maintaining long-term water quality, but it could result in some short-term deterioration (in case all of the sediment is not removed). If you know about or see flushing operations in your neighborhood, you would be well advised to not use any water during the flushing period.

How Often Should Water Mains Be Flushed?

TUI has a three-tier flushing program and the frequency depends on your location and the natural water quality in your area.

Where Does The Flushed Water Go?

Depending on the location, the water may be handled via several different methods. At times the water could be released onto surface streets that have storm drains connected to retention/detention facilities, or where available, the water could be discharged to wooded areas or open fields as well as roadside ditches and/or storm drains.

TUI tries to angle flows to prevent washouts, however the varying grades of land within certain developments make this challenging, and wet driveways and yards at times are unavoidable. Regardless of what method is used, TUI is determined to dispose of the flushed water in a method that is environmentally sound.

How Much Water is Used to Flush Mains?

The amount of water used to flush a particular section of pipe depends on a lot of factors, such as water main size, system pressure, the amount of accumulated sediment in the main and the ability to safely dispose of the water. In general, TUI tries to exchange the water in the main at least three times and at a high enough velocity to remove any accumulated sediment. Water that is discharged doesn't have any effect on your bill.

How Does Flushing Fit in with Water Conservation Goals?

TUI is dedicated to water conservation. Water is a precious resource that must be carefully managed, however, since flushing is critical to maintaining high-quality drinking water, an efficient flushing program is also essential. The flushing program is monitored to ensure that the least amount of water is used. Additionally, TUI continually analyzes system-wide performance practices to minimize water use, including on-going efforts to identify and repair leaks.

TIDEWATER UTILITIES, INC.

A Middlesex Water Company Affiliate

For more information call: (877) 720-9272