

Zone Flushing or Single Building Flushing Guidance for Restaurants

Issued by Alberta Health Services on May 8, 2020. More official guidance is expected in due course.

Facility Operators

During the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many buildings where public facilities are located have had reduced or no water flow through the plumbing water system. Under these conditions, water may stagnate, disinfection residuals may decline, and water temperatures change, creating environments with poor water quality. As a result, each site needs to ensure fresh water replaces the stagnant water in the water lines.

Public Facility Operators Located in Larger Buildings

If a public facility is located within a large building that has been vacant or at significantly reduced occupancy, speak with the building owner/operator to ensure:

- The water feed lines to the premises and the plumbing system and fixtures in common areas of the building have been thoroughly flushed.
- HVAC, humidifiers etc. in the building have been maintained and are operating effectively.
- Any hot water tanks and reservoirs are replenished with fresh water as needed.

After the above is confirmed, flush the facility's water supply. This will refresh the area water supply and disinfectant residual.

1. Flush all water faucets in the premises for 5 minutes. Flush cold-water supply first.
2. Drain the hot water tank if one is present in the facility.
3. Flush all hot water taps for 5 minutes.
4. Run any automatic dishwashers through one cycle. Flush other water equipment. For example, refrigerators with ice makers and ice machines should be flushed and the first batch of ice discarded.
5. At the end of each hot and cold timed flushing process, water temperature should be stable, and water should not be discoloured or have any sediment.
6. Report any observations of discoloured water or problems with the water to the building operator.

Facility Operators in Stand Alone Sites

If the public facility is located within a stand-alone building the following needs to be completed:

1. Flush the feed line to the premises first by opening the closest faucet to the water line coming into the premises. Flush this faucet for at least 10 minutes. Flush the remaining cold water taps for 5 minutes.
2. Drain the hot water tank.

3. After draining the hot water tank, flush all hot water taps for 5 minutes.
4. Run any automatic dishwashers through one cycle. Flush other water equipment. For example, refrigerators with ice makers and ice machines should be flushed and the first batch of ice discarded.
5. At the end of each hot and cold timed flushing process, water temperature should be stable and water should not be discoloured or have any sediment.