

CITY OF FOREST GROVE PUBLIC WORKS

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Hydrant Flushing Program



Each year, Public Works staff open fire hydrants around the City and allow the water to flow through the pipes. Our hydrant flushing program is very important to our water system. It is an integral part of our ongoing effort to deliver the safest and highest quality water possible. It serves the following purposes:

- It flushes sediments from mainline pipes (which enhances water quality)
- It verifies the proper operation of fire hydrants and valves
- It helps us find weaknesses in our water system
- It checks for closed valves and weak flows in the mainlines

We schedule our flushing program during the wetter months when water supplies are more plentiful. We flush from larger mains first, then move to smaller mains. The flushing route is carefully planned, and valves are opened and closed to control the direction of the water.

Hydrant Flushing Frequently Asked Questions

WHY IS HYDRANT FLUSHING NECESSARY?

Hydrant flushing enhances water quality by flushing sediment from the mainline pipes, verifies the proper operation of hydrants and valves, and maintains firefighting capability.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN THE CITY CREWS ARE FLUSHING HYDRANTS IN MY AREA?

If you see a crew flushing a hydrant on your street, avoid running tap water and using the washing machine or the dishwasher until the flushing is done. If you see hydrant flushing crews working in the area, please drive carefully and treat them like any other road construction crew.

WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER HYDRANT FLUSHING?

- If tap water is used during flushing, it could come out full of sediment that causes discoloration. If you encounter discolored water, shut the water off and wait several minutes. After waiting, check the clarity by running cold water for a few minutes allowing new water to work its way into your pipes. If the water is clear it's OK to use. If not, wait a few more minutes and check again. In some cases, there may be slight discoloration for a few hours. This discoloration only affects the appearance of the water; it does not affect the taste or water quality.
- Avoid washing laundry during scheduled flushing times. Wait until the water runs clear at the tap, then wash a load of dark clothes first.
- If pressure or volume seems low, check your faucet screens for trapped particles.

WHY DOES MY WATER LOOK FUNNY AFTER HYDRANT FLUSHING?

When a hydrant is opened, there will be temporary incidences of discolored water while fine sediment particles are flushed out. There is no health hazard associated with the discolored water. Allow a few hours for discoloration to dissipate. To verify water is clear, run your cold-water tap for a few minutes.