



AMERICAN WATER

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## A REMINDER FOR SCHOOLS AND BUSINESSES THAT CLOSED AS A RESULT OF THE CORONAVIRUS

Extended periods of inactivity can cause lead leaching or legionella growth. Taking proper steps can help minimize potential exposure to both these contaminants.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information, customers can contact the US Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791 or visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>

[https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-05/documents/final\\_maintaining\\_building\\_water\\_quality\\_5.6.20-v2.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-05/documents/final_maintaining_building_water_quality_5.6.20-v2.pdf)

[https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-05/documents/final\\_checklist\\_for\\_maintaining\\_building\\_water\\_quality\\_5-6-2020.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-05/documents/final_checklist_for_maintaining_building_water_quality_5-6-2020.pdf)

<https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics/Coronavirus#10681543-shutoffs-and-return-to-service-guidance>

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## HAS YOUR FACILITY BEEN CLOSED FOR WEEKS? FLUSH THE PIPES.

At American Water, we remain committed to keeping you informed as we continue our work to deliver clean, safe and reliable water and wastewater services to you during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

As buildings reopen, businesses, school districts and property management teams will begin the process of restarting building systems that have been dormant for a significant amount of time. Proper reopening procedures help in verifying that water systems and equipment are in safe working order.

Building owners and operators are encouraged to adopt a proactive approach that includes proper flushing procedures, adjustment of hot water temperature, and proper maintenance of building plumbing and heating/cooling systems. Proper flushing of plumbing before reoccupying these buildings is essential to maintain water quality in the internal plumbing system and should be performed biweekly while the building is closed, if possible, and again the days immediately prior to opening.

### WHO SHOULD FLUSH

Facilities, schools or any buildings that have been dormant or closed for extended periods.

### HOW TO FLUSH

The general purpose of flushing is to bring fresh water into all sections of the building. This will require running water through all fixtures long enough to replace stagnant water. The time needed to complete this will be location-specific and may range from a few minutes for smaller buildings to more than 30 minutes for larger or more complex plumbing systems. You should consider the size and layout of your building when thinking about how long is appropriate to flush. Water quality indicators such as temperature change or chlorine smell may be used, where possible, as indicators that fresh water has reached all fixtures within the plumbing system.

When performing a flush, remember to continually monitor the facilities to avoid damage from leaks or flooding. Open fixtures should be monitored and obtain professional help where needed.

In addition to bringing fresh water into the building, it is also important to flush individual fixtures. The following is provided as a general guidance of flush times for water through different types of fixtures:

- **Toilets:** Flush at least twice.
- **Faucets:** Run both hot and cold water at full flow for at least 2 minutes. Longer times may be needed depending on location.
- **Showers:** Run both hot and cold water at full flow for at least 2 minutes. Longer times may be needed depending on location.
- **Other Appliances/Apparatus:** We recommend flushing other appliances and apparatus thoroughly, at full flow, bringing fresh water into the system. If you have an appliance such as a refrigerator or ice maker that has a filter, follow manufacturer's instructions to replace water filters after completion of flushing.

For more information on building flushing, please visit the CDC, EPA and AWWA websites at the links provided on the left side of this document.