

Water Main Flushing

Maintaining water quality

What are water mains?

Water mains are underground pipes that carry water from pumping stations to your street.

Why do you flush water mains?

Flushing the mains helps preserve the quality of water as it passes from our drinking water treatment plant to your taps.

How do you flush water mains?

We force water through the water mains at a high speed and discharge it through hydrants into sewers. The fast moving water scours and flushes the mains. We leave the hydrants open until the water runs clear.

When do you flush the water mains?

We flush water mains in different areas of the city every year. Crews work 7 days a week, from 8 a.m. to as late as 11 p.m.

Why do you flush water mains on weekends and holidays?

Water Services crews work every day of the year except Christmas Day. As well as flushing the water mains, they repair water main breaks, inspect and maintain fire hydrants, and replace water meters.

How long will it take to flush the water mains on each street?

It takes about 30 minutes to one hour to flush the water mains on each street.

What if I accidentally use the water when you are flushing the water mains on my street?

You will notice a drop in water pressure. The water pressure will soon return to normal. The water may contain sediment and may be discoloured.

How will I know when you are flushing the water main on my street?

To find out when we expect to flush the main on your street, check our schedule at winnipeg.ca/wmc or contact 311.

Can I request to be called before crews start flushing on my street?

Upon request only, our staff can contact you by phone just before we are about to start flushing. We will let you know approximately when the work will begin and how long we expect the work to take. To request this service, contact 311.

Will I notice anything about my water after you have flushed the water main?

Immediately after flushing, the water may be discoloured, cloudy or smell of chlorine.

- **Discoloured water**

Water is sometimes discoloured after water main flushing, but this should not last long

- **Cloudy water**

Water is cloudy when air gets in it and makes tiny bubbles. These bubbles are harmless and will disappear if you let the water sit for a few minutes.

- **Chlorine smell**

We add enough chlorine to the water to keep it safe. You can easily get rid of the chlorine taste and smell by filling a container with water and keeping it in the fridge for drinking – much of the chlorine will leave the water overnight.

Can I use discoloured water?

Do not use discoloured water for any purposes that require flush water (e.g., preparing food and beverages, laundry). This recommendation is because discoloured water does not taste, smell or look pleasant, and it can stain clothes. Health officials do not believe that drinking discoloured water would pose a health risk.

Are you monitoring the water quality during water main flushing?

Yes, our laboratory staff will randomly collect samples and test water quality from hydrants during water main flushing.

Where can I get more information?

For more details on the program, water quality, or to find out when we expect to flush water mains on your street:

- visit winnipeg.ca/wmc
- Call 311