

Hydrant Flushing Facts & Frequently Asked Questions

Why does the Village perform hydrant flushing?

Hydrant flushing is the quick release of water from fire hydrants. It's a controlled procedure that is vital to the general maintenance of the Village's water distribution system. It ensures adequate water flow is available to fire fighters, residents and businesses. It also improves water quality by clearing iron and other mineral deposits from the water mains.

What are the effects of hydrant flushing?

Hydrant flushing helps ensure water quality and helps avoid random bouts of rusty water if there is a high demand for water, caused by a major firefighting effort or water main break.

During the flushing of a hydrant, some customers may notice reduced water pressure and flow.

Why is my water cloudy / rust-colored from the hydrant flushing? Is the water safe?

Sometimes hydrant flushing can make the water temporarily appear cloudy or rust-colored because the iron and other mineral deposits in the water mains get stirred up. There is no health hazard associated with discolored water. Water is safe to use and consume during hydrant flushing, however it may stain laundry.

Does the Village test the water regularly? Is the testing done at various sites?

Village of Pawnee tests the water both entering the Village water system and throughout the water system regularly, following U.S. and IL Environmental Protection Agency protocols.

I live on the west side and the Village is flushing hydrants on the east side. How come my water is discolored?

Sometimes residents who live beyond the limits of the area where hydrant flushing is currently being performed, may notice rust-colored water. This can occur because the opening of a hydrant can cause water run in the opposite direction than normal. Water Department personnel use techniques intended to minimize these impacts.

How come my water is discolored, but my neighbor didn't notice my discoloration?

If the water inside a home or business is turned on while hydrant flushing is going on, discolored water may enter your plumbing. If a neighbor did not use water during the day, they most likely will not notice any discoloration.

My water is discolored. What should I do?

Wait until flushing has subsided in your area then run a cold water tap until the water runs clear.

Do not do any laundry until your water runs clear. Although rust colored water is safe, it may stain laundry. If this happens, keep clothes wet and treat them with stain remover.

How often is hydrant flushing done?

Hydrant flushing is performed annually.