



NORTH  
TEXAS  
MUNICIPAL  
WATER  
DISTRICT

North Texas Municipal Water District

# PURPOSE OF FLUSHING

REGIONAL SERVICE THROUGH UNITY...MEETING OUR REGION'S NEEDS TODAY AND TOMORROW

## North Texas Municipal Water District

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[www.NTMWD.com](http://www.NTMWD.com)

### FAST FACTS:

80  
COMMUNITIES  
SERVED

SERVICE AREA:  
2,220  
SQUARE MILES IN  
10 COUNTIES

1.8 MILLION  
POPULATION  
SERVED



WATER



WASTEWATER



SOLID WASTE

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) ABOUT WATER HYDRANT FLUSHING

### Why is my city flushing water out of open fire hydrants?

Although it may appear to waste water, "flushing" the hydrants is an important part of a routine maintenance program necessary to maintain the integrity of the water system and ensure high quality water is delivered to our customers. Flushing hydrants or dead-end water lines is a State of Texas requirement by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

Water lines are flushed for these main reasons:

- **To maintain water quality**

The disinfectant, chloramine, becomes less effective as water collects and becomes older. This process is exacerbated in warmer months as rising temperatures can accelerate the degradation of disinfection in the water. If tests indicate that water quality may be affected, cities often flush the lines and dead-end mains so that fresher water with a higher level of disinfectant is present.

- **To clean water mains**

Over time, small particles can build up inside the water distribution pipes and can have an impact of water quality. Water professionals use flushing to pull water at high velocity through pipes to a discharge point. The rapid flow of water scours the insides of the pipes.

- **To conduct fire flow tests**

Fire hydrants are tested periodically to ensure and document proper functioning so they are ready for an emergency.

- **During annual temporary change in disinfectant  
(also known as chlorine maintenance)**

Each spring for one month, NTMWD temporarily suspends the use of ammonia and uses free chlorine as the secondary disinfectant to maintain water quality year-round. Local water providers (cities or utility districts) who receive NTMWD water may help move the chlorine-disinfected water through the system faster by flushing water out of fire hydrants. Frequent flushing helps maintain the system, ensure high water quality and reduce the chlorine odor and taste. Performing system flushing in the spring also helps save valuable water during the summer months. Learn more about this temporary change at [NTMWD.com/SafeWater](http://NTMWD.com/SafeWater).



## HYDRANT FLUSHING FAQ

(CONTINUED)

### How does water line flushing maintain water quality?

Flushing maintains water quality by removing sediments and circulating the water. Flushing also helps remove stale water and ensures the presence of fresh water with sufficient dissolved oxygen, disinfectant levels, and an acceptable taste and smell.

### Why can't we just turn on our lawn sprinklers instead?

In order to effectively flush water mains and scour the lines, water providers must achieve a targeted scouring velocity of 5 feet per second. Most home sprinkler and irrigation systems simply do not have the power to do this in an effective way.

### Will I be impacted by the flushing?

Given the scouring velocities involved, flushing operations may result in discolored water, which can be drawn into homes and businesses if the water is being used during, or immediately following, the flushing. Such events should affect customers for only a brief time. The discoloration is caused by iron (red color) or manganese (black color) particles being dislodged from the water main. If discoloration occurs, open the cold tap nearest the water meter, like sink or an outside spigot, to full flow until the water runs clear.

NTMWD is dedicated to conserving water. However, water pipeline flushing is also critical to maintaining high-quality drinking water. Flushing programs are continually monitored to ensure that water is used in the most efficient way possible.



For more information, watch this video from the City of Plano: <http://bit.ly/planoflushing>.