

Building Flushing Recommendation after Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Occupancy

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, buildings including schools and businesses have been unoccupied for many weeks. The Authority wishes to make building owners aware of the potential deterioration of water quality in the internal plumbing of buildings when water use is not used or is significantly reduced. More specifically, there is the potential for pathogenic bacteria in the water if there is no disinfectant residual. Metals, such as lead, can also leach out of plumbing materials when water is not used for extended periods of time.

As such, the Authority recommends that building owners and/or tenants flush stagnant water from the plumbing in preparation for re-opening and prior to use. Flushing removes the stagnant water within the building plumbing and replaces it with fresh chlorinated water from the municipal water supply.

Many homes have maintained or increased water consumption while residents stayed at and worked from home. These residences do not have to be flushed. The flushing recommendation applies to residences, businesses, or facilities that have been unoccupied or had significantly reduced occupancy over the past weeks or months. Although it is the building owner's responsibility to maintain a building's plumbing and the water in it, the Authority remains committed to keeping customers aware of potential effects from stagnant water. For further information, please refer to NJDEP's Drinking Water Flushing Guidance at:

[NJDEP Drinking Water Flushing Guidance For Restoring Water Quality in Buildings with Low or No Use.pdf](#)