



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

We Protect Hoosiers and Our Environment.

100 N. Senate Avenue • Indianapolis, IN 46204
(800) 451-6027 • (317) 232-8603 • www.idem.IN.gov

Eric J. Holcomb
Governor

Bruno Pigott
Commissioner

Re: Actions for Reopening a Public Water Supply
After a Long Shut Down
IN2250019 Fulton County Public Library

Below is a list of IDEM recommendations and requirements for a Public Water Supply system before reopening after being closed for a period of time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Studies show that water will become stagnant after seven to nine days of standing still. *If you have any questions please contact your IDEM Field Inspector Alan Esko at (317) 617-9350.*

Recommended actions:

- Visually inspect system components to be sure all components are intact
- Flush building piping systems thoroughly
- Check if well and pump are operating correctly
- See if all valves, gauges and controls are working properly
- Ensure system is fully pressurized (at least 20 psi) and not leaking
- Make sure all treatment equipment is operating correctly (*if applicable*)
- Inspect/change inline filters, regenerate softeners, chlorine residual, etc. for any treatment that applies
- Make sure storage tanks are sealed, not leaking, and in working order
- Collect a special purpose total coliform sample from the farthest point in the distribution system. Submit the results of the sample to IDEM.
- Optionally chlorinate the well and distribution system

Required action:

- **Collect a routine total coliform sample within seven (7) days of returning to normal operations. Submit the results to IDEM.**
- Please notify the IDEM Compliance Section at dwbmgr@idem.in.gov, so we can adjust your requirements accordingly.

Sincerely,

Drinking Water Branch
Office of Water Quality
IDEM
DWBmgr@idem.in.gov

cc: Alan Esko, Field Inspector



A State that Works



Guidance for Flushing Public Water Systems

Office of Water Quality – Drinking Water Branch

(317) 232-8603 • (800) 451-6027

www.idem.IN.gov

100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204

This document is designed to help public water systems prepare their systems for safe use once they reopen buildings that may have been temporarily closed or used less frequently due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is imperative that operators adhere to the flushing instructions below to ensure their indoor plumbing is receiving fresh water and not stagnant water. The flushing instructions apply to:

- Community water systems such as municipal water supplies, subdivisions, or mobile home parks
- Non-transient non-community water systems such as schools, daycares or factories
- Transient water systems such as churches, restaurants/bars or campgrounds

Issues Caused by Stagnant Water

When water is not used over an extended period, it will become stagnant. Stagnant or standing water can cause conditions that increase the risk for growth and spread of *Legionella* and other harmful biofilm-associated bacteria. When water is stagnant, hot water temperatures can decrease to the *Legionella* growth range (77–108°F, 25–42°C). Stagnant water can also lead to low or undetectable levels of disinfectants such as chlorine and could also cause corrosion issues. It is critical to ensure water systems are safe to use after a prolonged shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaires' and other diseases associated with stagnant water.

How to Remove Stagnant Water

Since stagnant water is a potential health risk and can impact water quality, it is necessary to systematically flush the plumbing. In general, flushing involves opening taps and other fixtures and letting water run to remove any stagnant water within plumbing and fixtures. To protect the health and safety of consumers, IDEM recommends that you carefully read and adhere to the following instructions, which provide a systematic approach for conducting a complete flush.

NOTE: Some buildings have water treatment systems and those treatment devices need to be cleaned, flushed, and maintained as part of the start-up process. After flushing, water filters need to be replaced. If there is a point-of-entry water treatment system such as a water softener or filter, please refer to the instruction manual for information on how to replace the filter.

Flushing Instructions

Please complete these steps in the order set out below. Finish each step completely before moving on to the next step. During the initial flushing, it is a good idea to wear protective respiratory equipment. Discoloration and a lingering odor may occur during flushing; these issues are expected and are not a health issue.

1. Flush ALL cold water taps for at least 5 minutes.

Begin the cold water flushing procedure. Open ALL cold-water fixtures and run them for at least 5 minutes. Shut the water off after 5 minutes. Flush each toilet at least one time. This step includes the water in your refrigerator water dispenser.

Flushing should begin at the water service entrance and proceed through the building to the end points of the plumbing system in the building(s). Depending on flow and pressure, you may need to increase the flushing time to ensure all stagnant water has been flushed.

2. Flush ALL hot water taps for 15 minutes.

Once the cold water lines have been flushed, begin the hot water flushing procedure. Open ALL hot water taps in your bathroom(s) including lavatory (sink) fixtures, hot water bath fixtures, and any other hot water fixtures such as kitchens, wet bars, etc. Run these hot water fixtures for at least 15 minutes. Shut the water off after 15 minutes. Depending on the size of the hot water tank, you may need to flush longer to ensure the water in the tank has drained and fresh water has refilled the tank. These steps should be effective at removing contaminants from the water heater. However, for information on draining and cleaning the water heater, please consult the manufacturer.

3. Flush ALL remaining appliances and faucets for 5 minutes.

Open any remaining fixtures such as hose bibs, external faucets, or fixtures not used for drinking for at least 5 minutes to finish the plumbing system flushing. Take additional steps to remove water from other appliances including:

- Ice Makers
- Dishwashers
- Washing Machines
- Humidifiers
- CPAP Machines
- Oral, Medical, or Health Care Devices
- Baby Formula
- Water Filters
- Water Softeners
- Filters (point of use and whole house)

Remove ice from the ice maker bin and discard 2 additional batches of ice. Run empty dishwasher and washing machine once on rinse cycle.

4. Perform periodic ongoing flushes.

Periodic flushing is important to maintain water quality. Full-building, periodic flushes proceed the same as the initial flush except water tanks do not need to be drained and hot water flushing times are the same as cold water flushing times.

If you have chlorinated water, it is a good idea to measure chlorine residual during periodic flushes.

For additional COVID-19 response information that is more detailed, please visit:

<https://engineering.purdue.edu/PlumbingSafety/project>

Other Resources

- [Guidance for Building Water Systems](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- [Return to Service Guidance](#) (American Water Works Association)

Tobias, Anthony

From: Margaret Pendley <mpendley@fulco.lib.in.us>
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 3:26 PM
To: Tobias, Anthony
Subject: Re: 2250019 Fulton County Public Library

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

**** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email. ****

Anthony,

Thank you for getting back with me so promptly. The Fulton branch library is requesting a waiver for the month of April for its water sample. Our last day open was Saturday, March 14. We will continue to be closed until Governor Holcomb issues a statement that nonessential business may resume. I will send you an email when we reopen. Thank you for your assistance.

On Thursday, April 23, 2020, Tobias, Anthony <ATobias@idem.in.gov> wrote:

Margaret,

Thank you for notifying us that the library is closed. You may not have to sample if the library is closed for this month. If that is the case please email me your statement requesting a waiver for April, date of closure, and expectation to reopen.

Thank you,

Coping with COVID-19:

- **Indiana State Dept. of Health (ISDH) COVID-19 Call Center:** Call 877-826-0011 (open 24/7)
- **Anthem NurseLine:** Call 800-337-4770 or visit the Anthem NurseLine online for a FREE symptom screening. Available to anyone with an Anthem health plan (this includes State of IN employees)
- **Anthem Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Available to ALL state employees and adults in household regardless of health plan participation. Call 800-223-7723 or visit anthemeap.com (enter

State of Indiana) for crisis counseling, help finding child/elder care, legal/financial consultation and much more.

Anthony Tobias

Compliance Section

IDEM-OWQ, Drinking Water Branch

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IDEM values your feedback.

Please take two minutes and complete this brief survey.



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