

## Illinois American Water Recommends Building Operators and Schools to Flush Pipes to Maintain Water Quality

*Company Remains Committed to Delivering Safe, Reliable Service*

**Woodridge, Ill. – May 4, 2020** – Illinois American Water remains committed to keeping you informed as we continue our work to deliver clean, safe and reliable water and/or wastewater services to you during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Extended periods of inactivity in buildings can cause lead leaching or legionella growth in water pipes and taking proper steps can help minimize potential exposure to both these contaminants. As buildings reopen, businesses, school districts and property management teams will begin the process of restarting building systems that have been dormant for a significant amount of time. Proper reopening procedures help in verifying that water systems and equipment are in safe working order.

The general purpose of flushing is to bring fresh water into all sections of a building. This will require running water through all fixtures long enough to replace stagnant water. The time needed to complete this is location-specific and may range from a few minutes for smaller buildings to more than 30 minutes for larger or more complex plumbing systems.

Illinois American Water encourages large building owners and operators to adopt a proactive approach that includes proper flushing procedures, adjustment of hot water temperature, and proper maintenance of building plumbing and heating/cooling systems. Proper flushing of plumbing before reoccupying these buildings is essential to maintain water quality in the internal plumbing system and should be performed biweekly while the building is closed, if possible, and again the days immediately prior to opening.

Consistent with EPA and industry guidance, Illinois American Water recommends bringing fresh water into the building, and flushing individual fixtures, including:

- Toilets: Flush at least twice.
- Faucets: Run both hot and cold water at full flow for at least 2 minutes. Longer times may be needed depending on location.
- Showers: Run both hot and cold water at full flow for at least 2 minutes. Longer times may be needed depending on location.
- Other Appliances/Apparatus: We recommend flushing other appliances and apparatus thoroughly, at full flow, bringing fresh water into the system. If you have an appliance such as a refrigerator or ice maker that has a filter, follow manufacturer's instructions to replace water filters after completion of flushing.

For additional information on flushing you can go to American Water's [fact sheet](#); the Environmental Protection Agency's [Flushing Best Practices](#); the Center for Disease Control [web page](#); or the [American Water Works Association](#).

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# Press Release



**Illinois American Water**, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest investor-owned water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to approximately 1.3 million people. American Water also operates a customer service center in Alton and a quality control and research laboratory in Belleville. With a history dating back to 1886, American Water is the largest and most geographically diverse U.S. publicly traded water and wastewater utility company. The company employs more than 6,800 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and market-based drinking water, wastewater and other related services to 15 million people in 46 states. American Water provides safe, clean, affordable and reliable water services to our customers to make sure we keep their lives flowing. For more information, visit [amwater.com](http://amwater.com) and follow on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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