



From the Tap...

It's Time for Spring Cleaning...

Annual Water Main Flushing Program

Each spring, April through June, Fairfax Water flushes its water mains by opening fire hydrants and allowing them to flow freely for a short period of time. The flushing cleans out sediment and allows routine maintenance of the more than 22,000 fire hydrants in the Fairfax County service area.



The routine change in chlorination will provide a more effective flushing program.

Flushing of the mains normally occurs at night between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m.

Flushing may result in some discoloration and the presence of sediment

in your water. These conditions are not harmful and should be of short duration.

We appreciate your tolerance of this inconvenience.

Inside this issue:

Chlorine Taste and Odor

Rate Increase

Water-Saving Tip #28

Chlorine Taste and Odor

During the spring cleaning, you may notice a chlorine taste and odor in your drinking water. It is the result of a routine change in the form of chlorine used in the treatment process.

Chlorine is added as a disinfectant during the treatment process. Normally, chlorine is chemically bound to ammonia to help stabilize the available chlorine. This bound chlorine is also known as

combined chlorine or chloramines.

During the annual water main flushing program, Fairfax Water uses free, or unbound, chlorine which has a stronger odor than combined chlorine. Free chlorine is a more powerful disinfectant than combined chlorine. It is not harmful, and it is used to ensure that the nearly 3,200 miles of water mains that deliver your drinking water are free of

harmful bacteria.

If you are especially sensitive to the taste and odor of chlorine, try keeping an open container of drinking water in your refrigerator. This will enable the chlorine to dissipate thus reducing the chlorine taste. Remember – drinking water has a shelf life! Change out the water in your refrigerated container weekly.



Rate Increase Effective April 1, 2006

Fairfax Water revised its Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges, to be effective with meter readings taken on or after April 1, 2006.

The revisions include increases in the Water Usage (Commodity) Charge from \$ 1.45 to \$ 1.50 per 1,000 gallons. Increases in the availability and local facilities charges for new connections to the distribution system, turn on/off charges, late payments and the account charge have also been enacted.

The proposed increase in the Water Usage (Commodity) Charge (from \$ 1.45 to \$ 1.50 per 1,000 gallons) will mean an increase of \$ 1.20 per quarter, or \$ 4.80 per year, for an average customer's water bill. Even with these revisions, Fairfax Water rates will remain the lowest in the region.



Water-Saving Tip #28: Check Your Toilets for Leaks

A running toilet can waste a tremendous amount of water. The average toilet will use from 2 to 5 gallons per flush with normal use. However, it is very easy for a toilet to leak hundreds of gallons a month.

A toilet can leak silently, or it may sound as though it flushes itself periodically.

How can I check my toilet for leaks?

Carefully lift the lid from the tank on the back of the toilet. Put a few drops of food coloring into the water in the tank, enough to color the water. Leave the toilet for 15 or 20 minutes, then look into the toilet bowl to see if the color has spilled through.

If the color has come through, then your toilet is leaking. You should consult your local home improvement store for advice or call a plumber.

For more information and other water saving tips, visit <http://www.wateruseitwisely.com/>.



Editor's Note

If you have comments or suggestions about this publication, let us hear from you.

E-mail us at jbailey@fairfaxwater.org or write us at the address below. If you have questions regarding water service, please call Customer Service at (703) 698-5800.

For all other departments, call (703) 698-5600; After-hours emergency, call (703) 698-5613, TTY (703) 698-7025.

Fairfax Water
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031
www.fairfaxwater.org

