



Media Release

For Immediate Release

City of Port Colborne to begin annual hydrant flushing

Port Colborne, ON (May 1, 2018) – The City of Port Colborne’s Water/Wastewater Division will begin annual hydrant flushing from Monday, May 7 – Friday, June 22, 2018. The work will be carried out between 12 – 8 a.m. in an effort to minimize the disruption of water service and inconvenience to residents.

Did You Know?

- Flushing fire hydrants is one of the most important maintenance practices that can be performed on a water distribution system. The water expelled during flushing is carefully monitored, measured and controlled so that only the least amount of water is used.
- When a Certified Water Operator fully opens a fire hydrant for maintenance flushing they are checking for, and recording: hydrant operation, visible leaks, water pressure and flow. Additionally, they are collecting water samples and measuring: pH, temperature, turbidity (the amount of particles in the water) and free chlorine. pH, temperature and turbidity are aesthetic parameters, meaning that these may affect the taste, smell or colour of the water, but do not cause adverse health effects. Free chlorine is a regulated parameter, and must be maintained above 0.05 mg/L to ensure safe drinking water. The City’s free chlorine target is 0.20 mg/L.
- Maintenance flushing removes corrosion and rust from cast iron or ductile iron watermains. Approximately 45% of the City’s watermains are cast or ductile iron. If ignored, corrosion and rust can cause problems such as: severe rusty water, reduced water pressure or lower chlorine levels.
- Routine hydrant flushing is a recognized best management practice to maintain high quality drinking water. When the City’s water distribution system was constructed nearly 100 years ago the concept of water conservation was not a concern. Port Colborne’s system was designed and constructed to meet the demand for water at that time. Now water conservation is a common practice, and even mandated by the Province, and as our customers are consuming less, this means that the water stays in the watermains longer, and has a greater chance of becoming “stagnant” which can lead to bacteria growth, or to taste and odour problems. To ensure that the water in the mains is of the highest quality and meets the Province’s Drinking Water Quality Standards, the City’s Water Operators annually flush all the hydrants throughout the City. Additionally, during warmer months when the water temperature is higher and the water quality can degrade more quickly, the Operators will flush on an as-needed basis at strategic locations throughout the system to maintain high quality drinking water.
- Fire flow testing is another important activity that the City is required to perform.

- Hydrant flushing protects the drinking water from contamination. When a watermain break occurs, water is left running from a hydrant, or hydrants, in the immediate vicinity while City workers repair the break. By flushing during the repair, this ensures any discoloured water is flushed from the system and minimizes the impact on residents. Once a break is repaired, workers leave the hydrant(s) running to ensure any discoloured water has been completely flushed and that chlorine levels are high enough to disinfect the pipe.

During the period of hydrant flushing residents may notice slight discoloration in the water. If this should occur residents are asked to run their tap for a short period of time, until the water is clear. It is important to note that although you may experience discoloured water during flushing activities, the water remains safe for consumption.

If the discoloured water persists for more than 10 minutes, and you are not aware of flushing activities near your home, please contact the Engineering and Operations Centre at 905-835-5079 to file a Water Quality Complaint.

Port Colborne's understanding and cooperating during the annual Hydrant Flushing is greatly appreciated.

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About City of Port Colborne

Located on the south coast of the scenic Niagara Region, Niagara's Port of Call has found the perfect balance – successful industrial and commercial sectors, comfortable and scenic residential areas, white sand beaches, unique culinary choices, the world class Sugarloaf Marina, fishing, golfing, trails, shopping districts along the historic Welland Canal and an energized festival and entertainment scene that includes live theatre – truly a community that adds to the overall Niagara Experience.

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