

# City of Atkins

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## Hydrant Flushing Program

In order to continue to provide the safest and highest-quality water possible, the City of Atkins opens fire hydrants to flush sediments from the mainline pipes. This preventative maintenance practice enhances water quality, and provides an opportunity to inspect hydrants and valves.

### HYDRANT FLUSHING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN CREWS ARE FLUSHING HYDRANTS IN MY AREA?

If you see a crew flushing a hydrant on your street, avoid running your tap water, using the washing machine or the dishwasher until the flushing is complete. If you see hydrant flushing crews working in the area, please drive carefully and treat them like any other construction crew.

#### WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY WATER LOOKS DIRTY?

- Flushing operations may lead to discolored water, which can be drawn into homes and businesses if the water is being used during or immediately following the flushing. Such events should affect customers only briefly. This discoloration is caused by iron (red color) or manganese (black color) mineral particles being dislodged from the water main pipe walls. If discoloration occurs, open the cold water tap nearest the water meter—usually a hose bib or a basement sink—to full flow until the water runs clear. In some situations this may take up to 15 or 20 minutes. Make sure your water is clear before doing laundry or other projects for which discolored water could cause problems. Avoid using hot water during flushing operations to prevent sediment accumulation in your hot water tank.
- If pressure or volume seems low, check your faucet screens for trapped particles.

#### WHY DOES THE CITY FLUSH WATER MAINS?

Flushing helps maintain our high water quality. The water entering distribution mains is of very high quality; however, water quality can deteriorate in distribution mains if the mains are not properly managed. This is why flushing is important. Flushing maintains water quality in several ways:

- Flushing removes sediments from the mains.
- Flushing exposes system issues or equipment problems.
- Flushing utilizes fire hydrants to expel the flushed water. If the hydrant is not operational the city will discover the problem while flushing and repair the hydrant.
- Finally, flushing helps remove “stale” water. Much of our distribution system is designed with “loops” or interconnected grids, which keep water constantly fresh. However, some areas don’t have looping systems where water moves slowly and sits for longer periods of time. Such areas need to be flushed to ensure the presence of fresh water with sufficient dissolved oxygen, disinfectant levels and an acceptable taste/smell.

**IS IT SAFE TO DRINK THE DISCOLORED WATER?** While the discolored water has been treated and distributed to acceptable and healthy standards, it is recommended that water users wait until the water has cleared before using it for potable purposes. If discoloration lasts longer than a few hours, contact the Public Works Department at 319-446-7870.