

Instructions on Flushing Your Home's Plumbing

Sometimes it is necessary to flush the plumbing in your home. These instructions will help by providing some step-by-step instructions on how to do a complete flush of your plumbing system.

To protect the health and safety of our customers we recommend that you read carefully and follow the steps for flushing. Thank you for your cooperation.

NOTE: After flushing, your water filters need to be replaced. If you have any point of entry water treatment system such as a water softener or filter, please refer to the instruction manual for replacement of the filter and maintenance of the equipment.

At the end of this document, you will find instructions on how to clean your faucet aerators. These instructions should be followed after conducting a house plumbing flush.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Please complete these steps in the order set out below. Finish each step completely before moving on to the next step. Cold water plumbing should be thoroughly flushed before the hot water plumbing is flushed. Avoid running water through endpoint devices (e.g., dish washers, clothes washers, refrigerators, ice machines or other similar devices) until the cold water plumbing has been thoroughly flushed. If the house has a filter, isolate the unit from the water system before beginning the flushing protocol. If faucet or under the sink filters are being used, ensure that the filter is being bypassed.

1. Flush your COLD water, starting at the tap nearest the meter

Begin by running the cold water faucet closest to the meter or where the water enters the house. Progressively, from closest to the point of entry to furthest, open all the other cold water fixtures and allow the water to run for at least 15 minutes or until the water is clear. If you have trouble seeing if the water is clear, fill a light or white colored cup or container to view the water. If the water coming from the tap is not clear after running for 15 minutes, wait 15-30 minutes and check it again. Remove and clean all aerators where possible (see instructions at the end).

In bathrooms, begin by flushing toilets at least once. If the water is colored, flush again until it is clear. If a bathtub has bath tap and shower head, direct flow through the bath tap. After flushing all cold taps, re-direct bathtub tap flow to shower head, if applicable, and flush it.

Flush all external spigots and outside taps for at least 10 minutes.

These steps should remove colored water from the service line and cold water interior plumbing.

2. Flush the HOT water, starting at the tap nearest the hot water heater

Once the cold water pipes have been flushed, run the hot water tap closest to the hot water heater and proceed to simultaneously open all hot water fixtures. For the hot water flush, if a bathtub has bath tap and shower head, direct flow through the shower head first. Allow the water to run for at least 75 minutes and then turn off the faucets. This should drain the colored water from the hot water heater and refill the tank with fresh water. Then direct shower head flow to bathtub tap, if applicable.

These steps should be effective at removing the colored water 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

After flushing the cold water pipes, hot water pipes and the water heater, run a full cycle with your dishwasher and washing machine empty and once on the rinse cycle only.

Replace all water filters (e.g., whole-house filter, refrigerator filter, etc.).

Empty ice from ice maker bin; run ice maker and discard an additional batch of ice.

4. Clean the Aerator on Each Faucet

The aerator on a faucet helps to save water. It does this by mixing air into the water. You can tell if you have an aerator by sticking your finger in the end of the faucet. The aerator will be a fine screen in your faucet. Because of the fine screen size, it will catch any sediment and particles from your piping or water and calcium from the water hardness may build up on the aerator.

To clean a faucet aerator, follow these simple steps:

- To remove the aerator, simply unscrew it. You should be able to do this with your fingers but you might need a wrench if it is really tight. If the aerator is recessed (up in the faucet), you may need a special tool to remove the aerator.
- Water is sometimes all that is needed to rinse off the aerator parts. If there is a buildup (of calcium or lime residue, for example) you might also need to use white vinegar and an old toothbrush.
- Soak the aerator in a glass of vinegar to loosen the minerals. Usually five minutes of soaking will loosen the particles. Use the toothbrush to scrub out the inside of the aerator. Be sure to use this toothbrush for cleaning in the future and not for brushing your teeth!
- If your aerator has several pieces take it apart completely - but make sure you pay attention to the order of the parts. That will help when it's time to put it back together again. Scrub all of the pieces to get them clean.
- Next, rinse everything very well. Run water through the aerator screen, turning it over to rinse from both sides.
- Once the pieces are clean put them back together and reattach the aerator to the faucet.
- Repeat these steps at least once a year. This will help keep the aerator clean and free from buildup of hardness and other particles.