



Guidance: After Water is Restored Following Storm/Flood

If you have public water...

Water advisories are issued by the local water company or water authority. You can check on the status of where you live [here](#).

When faucets and showers have been out of use for more than a week, they should be flushed to remove potential sediment or contaminants that may have accumulated during the disruption. The following steps should be taken to flush your plumbing system once you are sure that safe, potable water has been restored:

- **Observe water quality:** If you notice any unusual color, taste or odor in your water, do not consume it and contact your local water authority immediately.
- **Be cautious with appliances:** If your appliances were exposed to floodwater, have them inspected by a professional before using them again, especially those that use water like dishwashers and ice makers. Have your hot water heater and tank inspected by a professional in areas where high levels of sediment in the water were experienced.
 - Remove aerators from faucets if present (typically screwed onto the end of the faucet) before flushing pipes. Once pipes have been flushed, scrub aerators or soak in bleach solution and then replace them on the faucets.
 - Turn on the cold water fully for each tap and let it run for a full five minutes. If your house has multiple levels, start at the lowest level and work your way to the highest floor. Turn off the cold water.
 - Turn on the hot water fully and run it until it starts to feel hot. Turn off the water.
 - Turn on the showers and allow them to run for five minutes with a mixture of hot and cold water.
 - Run enough hot water to drain the water heater tank and pipes.
 - Flush and clean each toilet in the home.
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions to run a cleaning cycle on dishwasher and washing machines. If a sanitizing cycle is available, run that after cleaning.
 - Run the refrigerator water dispenser for five minutes or at least one quart of water. Replace any filters in the dispenser.
 - Ice makers should have been turned off, especially if a boil water notice has been issued. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on cleaning the ice maker, including discarding the first three batches of ice made once water is restored. Clean the ice bin before refilling with ice.

Read more about how to prevent diseases in your household like [Legionnaires' disease](#).

