

# WaterWatch



## Water System Flushing

Orem's drinking water system has been the victim of the drought! Although, we have had an adequate supply of water, some maintenance issues have been compromised due to efforts to support neighboring cities that truly have had water shortages.

An important maintenance issue that has been neglected is the annual water system flushing via fire hydrants.

Flushing has not occurred in Orem for the past four years. The quality of water and the functionality of fire hydrants could be at risk if we don't resume our flushing program. This program is essential in maintaining and delivering clean water.

This year the City of Orem Water Section will flush the water system beginning approximately April 25th and plans to complete this endeavor in a two-week period. During this time you will see Water Section personnel in your neighborhoods flowing fire hydrants. This may cause temporary inconveniences with low water



pressure or discolored water as sediment in the water lines is disturbed. Again, these inconveniences are only temporary and will be restored to normal operation before personnel leave your area.

When you see fire hydrants being flushed on your street, we recommend that you not use water inside your home. If you detect discolored water, do not drink the water or wash your laundry. While discolored water is not harmful to your health, it can stain laundry. After we have left the area, turn on one of the cold water taps in your home for a few minutes to flush out the system.

Please help us in this effort by allowing full access to fire hydrants that may be in front of your home. This can be done by moving parked vehicles to give our personnel plenty of room to maneuver in front of the fire hydrants. You can help by keeping children from playing in the water as it flows down the street. Work-

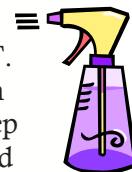
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## Household Hazardous Waste: Common Household Cleaners

Household cleaners can contain a wide variety of chemicals. Some chemicals of concern include: ammonia, chlorinated trisodium phosphate, dichloro (or trichloro) isocyanurate, glycol ethers, phenols, sodium carbonate, sodium hypochlorite, sodium metasilicate. Exposure to these chemicals can cause irritation to skin, eyes, nose and throat. They are corrosive if swallowed.

### Use and Storage

DO NOT MIX AMMONIA-BASED CLEANERS WITH BLEACH-BASED CLEANERS. HAZARDOUS FUMES WILL RESULT. Wear gloves and use with adequate ventilation. Keep container lid tightly closed when cleaner is not in use. Store in secure area.



### Disposal

Best: use up or give away. Dispose of empty container in the garbage.

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*If you wouldn't drink it, don't dump it!*

City of Orem Public Works  
955 N 900 West  
Orem, UT 84057

Phone: 801-229-7500  
Fax: 801-229-7599

We're on the Web!  
[www.orem.org](http://www.orem.org)

## Household Cleaners

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2nd best: if your home is connected to a city sewer system, flush small amounts of liquid cleaners down an inside drain (toilet is preferable) with plenty of water. Place small amounts of powdered or solid cleaner in a heavy duty plastic bag and dispose of in the garbage.

3rd best: Salt Lake County provides a household hazardous waste facility. For details see: <http://www.slvhealth.org/eh/html/hhw.html>

### Alternatives:

As an alternative all-purpose cleaner, mix 1 quart warm water, 1 teaspoon liquid soap, 1 teaspoon borax and ¼ cup vinegar. Use for many cleaning jobs including countertops, floors, walls, rugs and upholstery.

Source: Idaho Division of Environmental Quality, *Eliminating Household Hazardous Waste.*

## Water System Flushing

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ing together, we can mitigate safety concerns.

Listed below are some of the reasons why our system must be flushed and the positive results of flushing for water quality purposes:

1. **Corrosion control** – Flushing introduces higher than normal water velocities which literally scours or scrubs the inside of water lines and lessens the formation of corrosion. This reduces the amount of discolored or dirty water complaints.

2. **Taste and odor control** – Flushing removes many of the deposits, sediment and other materials that affect water quality and will reduce taste and odor problems.

3. **Chlorine residuals** - Flushing reduces sediment, corrosion, and bio-film. As a result, the City uses less chlorine but still maintains trace amounts in the water system as required by State and EPA regulations.

4. **Bacteria control** - Bacteria growth in drinking water systems usually occurs when an area becomes stagnant. Anaerobic bacteria can be eliminated by replacing dormant water with fresh water. Areas that are susceptible to these problems include all dead end lines, especially fire lines and hydrants.

**Additional benefits included in a flushing program:**

- Exercising, testing and repair of fire hydrants helps ensure that



fire hydrants will work properly in times of emergency.

- Valve exercising and locating closed valves helps ensure immediate access to valves and ensures that they will work properly in times of need.
- Flushing allows water personnel to evaluate and monitor hydraulic flows in water mains to improve system operation, maintenance and design.



The City of Orem is aware of inherent issues associated with a project of this magnitude, particularly on the heels of a six-year drought. We reaffirm the fact that we have an adequate supply of water to accomplish this task and provide enough water for the coming year. We are committed to conserving water, energy and manpower by flushing no more than is necessary. The approximate amount of water used for the flushing program is thirty-million gallons. This amounts to less than a twenty-four hour supply for the entire City during the summer months.

Flushing fire hydrants is one of the most important maintenance practices that can be performed on a water distribution system. The personnel you see flushing fire hydrants, are trained in sound and proven water system maintenance practices. Thank you for your cooperation with this project. If you have questions or concerns, please call the Department of Public Works Water Section at 229-7570.