



Fact Sheet

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control • www.scdhec.gov

Flushing Your Home Plumbing System

Important Steps You Can Take to Improve Drinking Water Quality in Your Home

Flushing means running the cold water faucet until the water feels as cold as it can get or noticeably colder. Flushing does not require installation or maintenance of water treatment equipment or complex instructions. You may need to flush the water pipes in your home for many different reasons.

Common Reasons Why Flushing is Recommended:

- If you have an older home and are concerned about the possibility of contaminants in your water pipes.
- If you have a weak stream of water from your faucet caused by a buildup of sediment.
- If there was trouble with your city's water supply and you have been told you should flush the water pipes before using the water.
- If your city's water department has been flushing the water mains and your water is discolored.

The easiest way to promote water quality at home is to **flush your pipes every day**. There are several things you can easily do to make flushing part of your **daily** routine:

- Everyday chores such as washing the dishes, doing laundry, taking a shower, or watering the yard keeps the water moving in your pipes. Let the water run while you accomplish these chores.
- Always let the water run before using it for drinking or cooking.
- Avoid cooking, drinking or preparing baby formula with water from the hot water faucet. Hot water dissolves metals more easily than cold.

Questions?

Contact DHEC's Bureau of Water at 803-898-4300 or visit: <https://www.scdhec.gov/drinkingwaterconcerns>.

Flushing

You can improve the water quality in your home with a few basic steps:

Step 1: Turn on the cold-water faucet at all of your sinks. Let the water run until it gets noticeably colder; i.e., for one to two minutes.

Step 2: Test the water at each sink to be sure it is noticeably colder. This is one way to know the water you are now getting through the faucet has not been sitting in your home's pipes.

Step 3: Fill some containers with this water for cooking and drinking throughout the day so you do not have to continually flush the pipes.

Remember! Each faucet should be flushed individually; flushing a toilet will not flush your pipes.

Remember! Flush your pipes after the water has been sitting for six or more hours (i.e. overnight or while you are at work).