

# FLUSHING YOUR HOUSE PLUMBING SYSTEM WHEN WATER SERVICES ARE RESTORED

## Guidance

When water service is turned back on, it is important to flush the plumbing in your home. Moving fresh water through your pipes flushes bacteria and metals from your plumbing. These instructions provide step-by-step instructions on how to completely flush your home plumbing. If you have difficulty following these steps, contact a licensed plumber for assistance.

## STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

Complete these steps in the order below. Finish each step completely before moving to the next step.

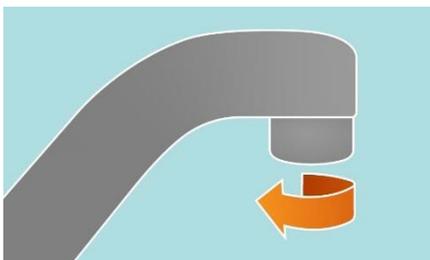
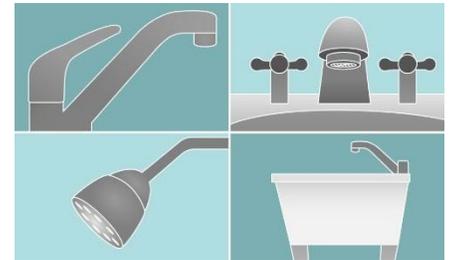
Before starting the steps below:

- Turn off the supply valve to your water heater, if possible.
- Bypass water softeners and/or whole house filters if you have them.

Discoloration may occur during flushing. This is expected.

1. Locate the faucets to be flushed and make sure the drains are open.

- Don't forget faucets in the basement or other floors of your house.
- Remove or bypass all fixture filters. You should not flush through a filter.



2. Remove aerators and screens from faucets and shower heads.

Unscrew the aerators as shown. See guidance below about removing and cleaning your aerators.

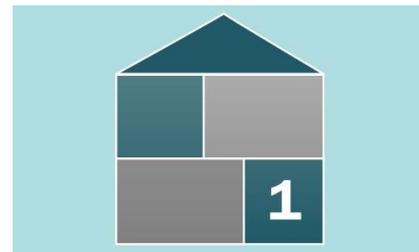
3. Open all cold water taps. Leave all faucets running during this process.

- First open faucets in the basement or lowest floor in the house.
- Then open faucets on the next highest floor of the house.
- Continue until all faucets are open on all floors, including tubs and showers (remove shower head if possible).



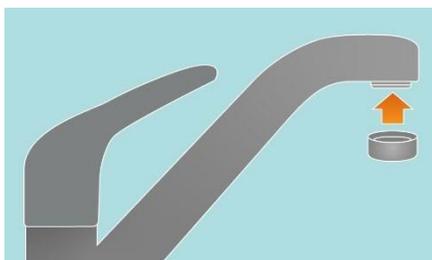
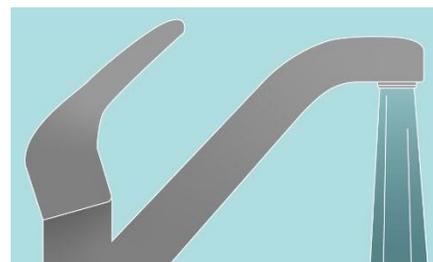
4. Leave ALL faucets running for at least 30 minutes.

5. Turn off the 1st faucet you turned on (basement or lowest floor).



6. Turn off all other faucets in the same order you turned them on.

7. Turn on each kitchen or bathroom tap, one at a time, and run each for 10 minutes or more. Make sure only one tap is running at a time.



8. Clean and re-install aerators and screens on each faucet and shower head.

- See pages below for guidance on cleaning aerators and screens.
- You may need to replace aerators/screens if they are too old or worn.

After completing these steps, remember to re-open the supply valve to your water heater. It is recommended that water heaters be flushed at this time.

**DO NOT use hot water for drinking, cooking or preparing baby formula.**

### ADDITIONAL STEPS TO REDUCE POTENTIAL LEAD EXPOSURE

If you have concerns about lead exposure, public health recommends that any household with a child or pregnant woman use a certified lead filter to reduce lead from their drinking water. Look for filters that are tested and certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 53 for lead reduction. If your household has a child or pregnant woman and are not able to afford the cost of a lead filter, please contact your local municipal water system.

If you wish to get your drinking water tested, use a certified laboratory. To find a certified lab, go to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy's web page at [www.Michigan.gov/EGLE](http://www.Michigan.gov/EGLE) and search "Certified Lab List." For additional information on minimizing lead exposure, visit [www.Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe](http://www.Michigan.gov/MiLeadSafe).

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# Cleaning Your Aerators

## What are aerators and when should they be cleaned?

There are screens on faucets called aerators. Aerators help keep pieces of lead and other particles from getting into your water. Clean your drinking water faucet aerator at least every six months. If there is construction or repairs to the public water system or pipes near your home, clean your drinking water faucet aerator every month until the work is done.

## Follow the steps below to clean your aerators:



1

- The small round piece on the bottom of your faucet is the aerator (pronounced: air-raytor).
- Unscrew the aerator from the bottom of the faucet.
- You should be able to unscrew it with your fingers, but you might need a wrench if it's stuck.



2

- Your aerator might not look the same as this, but it's okay.
- Now that the aerator is off, let's clean it.



3

- While you only need to use water to rinse off your aerator, these things might make it easier to clean it:
  - An old toothbrush
  - A glass of vinegar



4

- Soaking the aerator in vinegar will loosen some of the grime. You can soak it as long as you want, but even five minutes will help.
- The toothbrush makes it easy to scrub the inside. Don't use that toothbrush for brushing your teeth again.



5

A

- If your aerator looks like Photo A, it has a flow control piece. You'll have to take it apart:
  - Pull out the pieces carefully.
  - Note the order that the pieces come out. You'll have to put them back in the same way. It may help to take a picture or write down some notes.
- If your aerator looks like Photo B, go to Step 6.



B



6

- You might not have all of these pieces. They might not be this color. Every aerator is a little different.
- Scrub all of the pieces. Make sure you get down inside the metal piece, removing any bits of grime or metal flakes you see.



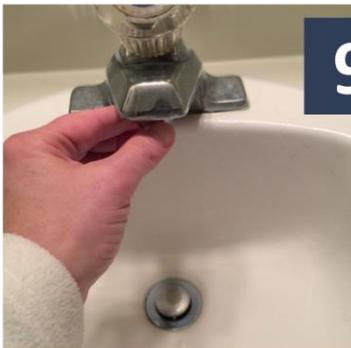
7

- Rinse everything very well.
- Run water through the aerator screen - holding it right side up and upside down.



8

- Once it's clean,
  - If your aerator looks like Photo A in step 5, put it back together.
  - If it looks like Photo B, you're all set.



9

- Put the aerator back on your faucet.
- Repeat these steps at least every six months. Cleaning removes pieces of lead or other particles from your aerator and stops them from getting into your water.

For more information call the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) at 800-648-6942 or visit [Michigan.gov/mileadsafe](https://www.michigan.gov/mileadsafe).