



Rusty or Colored Water

Orange or Rusty Water

Red, orange, or yellow water is usually caused by iron (rust). The different colors can be attributed to different chemical forms of the iron (rust) and by varying concentrations of the rust in the water. Rusty water occurs from sediment in the pipes or rust from the inside walls of cast iron water mains. The rust can be disturbed and temporarily suspended in water with unusual water flows from water main breaks, construction, maintenance, or by flushing of a hydrant. This discolored water is not a health threat. When the water is discolored it is recommended to either not wash laundry, to use a rust stain remover, or use regular detergent as long as chlorine bleach is not used as it will react with the iron to form a permanent stain.

Customers can flush this water from their system by letting faucets run until the rusty water clears up. If the water does not clear within 5 to 10 minutes then the rust is still present in the City main and you should wait for the main to clear before flushing your system. This should occur within a few hours.

If water is unusually discolored or the situation continues for an extended time period contact Public Works at (701) 355-1700, option # 4.

Milky White or Cloudy Water

Milky white water is almost always caused by air in the water. To see if the white color in the water is due to air, fill a clear glass with water and set it on the counter. Observe the glass of water for 2 or 3 minutes. If the white color is due to air, the water will begin to clear at the bottom of the glass first and then gradually will clear all the way to the top.

This is a natural phenomenon and is caused by dissolved air in the water that is released when the faucet is opened. When you relieve the pressure by opening the faucet and filling your glass with water, the air is now free to escape from the water, giving it a milky appearance for a few minutes. If your water is cloudy or milky white in appearance and it does not clear in a glass after 5 minutes, contact Public Works at (701) 355-1700, option # 4.

Guidance for Flushing Water System After Low or No Use

Customers that have low use or no use of water from their system should flush the system by letting faucets run for 5 to 10 minutes before consuming water. Begin running water on the upper levels. Continue this until all faucets in your home are running at the same time. Set a timer and shut off the faucets in the order they were turned on. This is particularly useful to those concerned about lead pipes in the home.