



Chester Water Authority Customer News and Information

Winter 2007/2008 Vol.13 No.3



For Emergency Use Only

Next time you are out and about, take a look at Chester Water Authority (CWA) fire hydrants throughout our service area. You may notice something different—a placard which states the following:

For Emergency Use Only – Unauthorized Use Is Theft

Chester Water Authority – Emergency 610-876-8181

These placards are intended to extend the Authority's message to the public that unauthorized use of our fire hydrants is prohibited. The placards are being installed on the 4^{1/2}-inch nozzle behind the nozzle cap (pictured below) and will not interfere with the operation of the hydrant.



Unauthorized use of fire hydrants is a serious concern to CWA. Fire hydrants are installed for public fire protection. Any use of a hydrant other than by fire company personnel, by CWA personnel, or with CWA's permission is considered unauthorized use.



If you suspect illegal fire hydrant usage, we want to be notified immediately. Anyone who observes a questionable use of a public fire hydrant can report the incident to CWA at (610) 876-8181 or (800) 793-2323, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Chester Water Authority

Quality [^] Service [^] Value



Frequently Asked Questions

I experienced discolored water—why?

From time to time you may have experienced an incident of brown or discolored water at your home and wondered what the cause could be.

There are two typical causes—either a significant flow disturbance has occurred in the water main that supplies your home, or the discoloration is coming from internal plumbing and fixtures in your house.

A significant flow disturbance in the water main can result from hydrant maintenance, fire company activity, unauthorized hydrant use, or even a water main break. These activities can abruptly change the direction or velocity of the water in the main and stir up any settled sediment that may be in the main. CWA personnel systematically flush fire hydrants on an annual basis in an effort to minimize the occurrence of discolored-water incidents.

If you should notice brown or discolored water in your cold water, run it for 3 to 5 minutes to see if the

water will clear. If it does not clear, refrain from using the water for 30 to 60 minutes, and then try running the cold water again. If it is still discolored, please call the Authority at (610) 876-8181 or (800) 793-2323. Once we are aware of the discolored water, we will respond to clear it. Until the cold water has cleared, it is prudent to minimize hot water usage, including laundering, to prevent discolored water from being pulled into your hot water heater and appliances.

If you should notice intermittent discolored or dirty water coming from a single spigot or only during hot water use or after a period of no water use, internal plumbing and fixtures in your home are likely the cause. Typically, such incidents will clear quickly but occur fairly often. Rusting of galvanized steel plumbing in your home can cause the water to appear yellow and have an iron-like taste. Rust dissolves in the water when it sits in the pipes overnight or if the water is not used during the day. Running the water for about a minute before use will clear it.

Why do I smell an odor of rotten eggs when I run the water?

The most common cause of a foul odor during water usage is the drain, and it is more common to customers who have PVC piping.



Organic matter such as hair, soap, and food waste can accumulate on the walls of the drain, providing a place for bacteria to grow. The bacteria can produce a gas that smells like rotten eggs or sewage.

These odors are displaced by the water entering the drain when you turn on your faucet. To make sure the cause is not your tap water, place a small amount of cold tap water in a narrow glass, step away from the sink, swirl the water around inside the glass, and then smell the water. If it does not smell like rotten eggs or sewage, the issue is with the drain. Regular cleaning of the drain can solve the problem.

What is that pink stuff??

Maybe you have seen it: a slimy pink or orange substance that sometimes forms in the moist areas of your home. You will notice it most frequently in your shower or sinks, the toilet bowl, or even your pet's water bowl. It can be more common during and after new construction or remodeling.

Serratia marcescens — a red or pink pigmented bacteria — is likely the cause. An airborne organism commonly found in the environment, it grows in moist areas and needs almost nothing to survive. These bacteria are controlled with normal drinking water disinfectants and therefore are not found in the water but can come from airborne dust and dirt. Regular cleaning and ventilation should reduce these nuisance organisms.



Water System Flushed

Each year a team of three Chester Water Authority employees inspects and flushes all fire hydrants in the Authority's service area—comprising approximately 640 miles of water main and 2,652 fire hydrants. The Authority has marked its fourth consecutive year of using a newer strategy for flushing the system. The process that used to take about nine months has now been cut down radically, to a little over nine weeks.

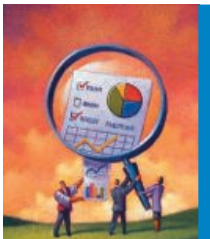
Timely inspections, flushing, and repairs of the ever-increasing number of hydrants in our

distribution system ensure that they are operating properly if and when they are needed to fight fires. The process also preserves water quality for our customers.

Our Distribution Department mails scheduling notices to municipalities, fire chiefs, and county fire boards. These efforts are synchronized with the Authority's Public Relations Department, which places the notices in local newspapers on a weekly basis and posts notices on our Web site to alert customers to this process as it occurs.

Chester Water Authority Web Site

Come visit our site...you can find answers to questions, check out our history, link to informational sites, and keep posted with up-to-date information
www.chesterwater.com



Consumer Confidence Report

In March 2007, the Authority mailed its Water Quality Report for calendar year 2006. The report has been produced in accordance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations. Because the report follows standards set by the EPA and uses technical terms and wording, the report contains a glossary to help you better understand it.

We are proud that our water meets or exceeds all

state and federal regulations — and we are pleased to be able to provide this information to our customers!

If you haven't already received your copy, or would like to have another, please call our Customer Service Department at (610) 876-8181 or (800) 793-2323. We will mail a report to you. You can also get a copy of the report on our Web site—www.chesterwater.com. We have it posted there!

Business Hours and Phone

Walk-in: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Telephone: 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM
Monday through Friday
Telephone: (610) 876-8181
(800) 793-2323

Web Site

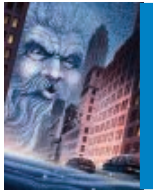
www.chesterwater.com

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 467
Chester, PA 19016

Emergency Hours and Phone

24 HOURS A DAY
7 DAYS A WEEK
Telephone: (610) 876-8181



Getting Prepared for Old Man Winter

Every winter, many homeowners face the expense and inconvenience of frozen water pipes. But you can cross that off your list of winter worries by taking a few simple precautions.

Disconnect and drain outdoor hoses. Detaching the hose allows water to drain from the pipe. Otherwise, a single hard overnight freeze can burst either the faucet or the pipe it's connected to.

Insulate pipes or faucets in unheated areas. If you have pipelines in an unheated garage or cold crawl space beneath your house, wrap the water pipes before temperatures plummet. Hardware or building supply stores have good pipe-wrapping materials available.

Seal off access doors, air vents, and cracks. Repair broken basement windows. Winter winds whistling through overlooked openings can quickly freeze exposed water pipes.

Find the master shutoff. It's most likely where the water line comes into your house from the street. If it's not there, it may be near the water heater or the washing machine. If a pipe bursts anywhere in the house — kitchen, bath, basement, or crawl space — this valve turns it off. So find it now, and paint it a bright color or hang a tag on it. Be sure everyone in the house knows where it is and what it does.

Don't let cold weather surprise you — be prepared!



Leak Study Avoiding Costly Damage

Before leaks occur, which may result in costly repairs and damages, Chester Water Authority takes a proactive stance. The Authority's Distribution Department expanded its annual survey of the older sections of our water main system to cover 200 miles in the City of Chester, Brook-haven Borough, Nether Providence Township, Parkside Borough, Upland Borough, and Chester Township in Delaware County, as well as New Garden Township in Chester County.

Using electronic leak-detection equipment to find underground leaks from the street surface, we perform the survey during the spring, summer, and fall months to allow time to make repairs before winter. The cost of the survey is exceeded by the savings in preventing main breaks and associated damage, water leakage, and insurance claims.