Kentucky American Water to Start Annual Spring Cleaning

Water main flushing and temporary water treatment change to begin later this month

Kentucky American Water will soon perform the annual flushing of its water distribution system to support the continued provision of high-quality, reliable water service to customers.

“Flushing the water lines in our system assists in helping to clear any buildup of natural mineral deposits and sediment inside the pipes,” said Andy Lewis, vice president of operations for Kentucky American Water. “During these procedures, our team also flushes our hydrants to confirm they are operational and to assess fire flows in the system.”

During the flushing process crews open strategically located hydrants throughout the water distribution system to let water flow at a high velocity through pipes for several minutes to remove natural sediment. Crews will de-chlorinate the water as it leaves hydrants in order to remove the disinfecting agent in the water – chlorine – so that any water that enters streams is not harmful to aquatic life.

Before the hydrant flushing program begins, the company’s three water treatment plants temporarily change the disinfectant used in the treatment process from chloramine to chlorine. The plants resume using chloramine a short time after the hydrant flushing program is complete.

Treatment plants will temporarily switch disinfectant from chloramine to chlorine on Thursday, April 25. Chloramine disinfection will resume on Tuesday, May 21.

Chloramine and chlorine are common disinfectants used in the water treatment process to remove microbial contaminants like bacteria and viruses from water. Chloramine is a water disinfectant that is formed when ammonia is added in combination with chlorine. The temporary change in the treatment process will involve turning off the ammonia feed in the water treatment plants. This is a common practice during flushing programs for water systems that normally use chloramine throughout the year. The amount of chlorine in the water will remain the same, but customers may notice a stronger taste or smell of chlorine in the water. This poses no health risk and the water remains safe to drink.

“We are proud of the excellent quality water we deliver around the clock to our customers,” Lewis said. “In addition to conducting proper infrastructure renewal, essential maintenance activities, such as our hydrant flushing program and temporary change in disinfectant at our treatment facilities, are key to providing our customers with high-quality drinking water. In fact, our collective efforts throughout the year have consistently resulted in the quality of our tap water earning prestigious recognition from the National Partnership for Safe Water.”

Dialysis centers, medical facilities and aquatic pet owners should take precautions during the temporary switch from chloramine to chlorine. Most methods for removing chloramine from tap water are also effective for removing chlorine but confirming that a method is effective for both is recommended.

To reduce a heightened smell or taste of chlorine in tap water, refrigerate cold tap water in an open pitcher. Within a few hours, the chlorine taste or smell will disappear.

It’s possible that customers may experience a slight discoloration of their water when crews are working in their areas. Should a customer notice discolored water coming from the tap, they should simply run their cold water faucet until the water clears. Customers may want to avoid such activities as washing clothes when crews are flushing in their areas since there is potential for discolored water that could stain clothing.

Flushing will occur over several weeks according to the following estimated schedule unless operational adjustments are needed:

Bourbon County
May 1 through May 3 (rural areas)
Nighttime hours

North Middletown and Millersburg
April 22 through April 26
Daytime hours
No treatment change will occur for Millersburg customers.

Clark County
May 13 through May 17
Daytime hours

Fayette County
April 29 through May 11
Nighttime hours

Gallatin and Grant Counties
April 24 through May 12
Daytime hours
No treatment change will occur for Glencoe and Wheatley customers.

Owen County
April 25 through May 17
Daytime hours

Rockcastle County
April 24 through April 26
Daytime hours
No treatment change will occur for these customers.

Scott County
May 13 through May 17
Daytime hours

Woodford County
May 9 through May 11
Nighttime hours

An online map is available for customers to determine when crews will be flushing in their respective areas: www.kawflushing.com. Customers with questions about the flushing program may also contact Customer Service at 1-800-678-6301.

About Kentucky American Water

Kentucky American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest regulated water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and wastewater services to approximately 560,000 people.

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