

water rings

January - March 2010

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Annual System Flushing

"System flushing" is the phrase used to describe the routine procedure of operating valves and fire hydrants in the water distribution system in order to maintain the highest level of water quality.

This year, system flushing will be done between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, beginning on March 22 and continuing through June 3.

This year's schedule is:

Montgomery and New Britain Townships - March 22 - May 3 (including Candlelight Farms, Parsons Lane, Meetinghouse Road, Goodman Tract, Gwynedd Knoll and Hunt Club sections of Lower Gwynedd Township)

Upper Dublin Township - March 22 - April 13 (including the Delaware Valley Industrial Park and Llewellyn, Annasmead, Baker and Llanfair Road sections of Lower Gwynedd Township)

Whitpain Township - April 8 - April 19

Lower and Upper Gwynedd Townships & North Wales Borough - April 28 - June 3 (including Normandy Farms, Normandy Farms Estates, Windermere and Amberley Sections of Whitpain Township)

You may notice reduced pressure or cloudy water when flushing is being done in your area. This is expected and is not harmful. Simply let the **COLD** water run from your taps until it becomes clear.

If problems persist, please call 215-699-4836. Our Customer Service Representatives are available between 8:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Friday. If you call after hours, your call will be taken by our answering service and you will be contacted by one of our on-call staff.



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This Issue

- | | |
|------------------------|----------|
| System Flushing | 1 |
| Free Gardening | |
| Workshops | |

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Utility Markings | 2 |
| Explained | |
| Q & A - Why is System | |
| Flushing Needed? | |

Free Rain Barrel and Rain Garden Workshops

It might be cold out, but many of us are already thinking about spring and planning our gardens. Did you know that during the summer months the average homeowner uses 40 percent of their household water in the yard? This may lead to a beautiful yard, but it also means that a lot of treated drinking water is wasted.

In cooperation with the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association, we will be offering two workshops to teach you how to harness our plentiful rainfall to save money and at the same time preserve the environment.

Rain Barrels - Wednesday, May 5 at 7:00 p.m.
Rain Gardens - Wednesday, May 19 at 7:00 p.m.

Rain Barrels - In the first of a two part series addressing water saving techniques in your home garden, we'll examine purchased rain

barrels as well as the do-it-yourself variety. In this workshop you will learn how to install and use your own rain barrel.

Rain Gardens - Part two of our water conservation series considers the most beautiful way to conserve water- building your own rain garden! Simple to install and maintain, rain gardens are indeed a thing of beauty. Learn where to site, how to build and what to plant in your rain garden.

The workshops will take place at the Authority office at 200 W. Walnut Street in North Wales and are free of charge to NWWA customers. Registration is required and spaces are limited.

Sign up by email by sending a note to wizard@nwwater.com or by calling our office at 215-699-4836.



Water Rings is printed on 100% recycled paper using soy-based ink.

Utility Sidewalk and Roadway Markings Explained

Have you noticed those colored lines that are sometimes painted on your lawn, the sidewalk or on the roadway? Those markings note the location of buried utility lines.

When someone plans to dig or excavate an area, they are required by law to contact Pennsylvania One Call (by dialing 8-1-1 or 1-800-242-1776) first so that utilities can mark the location of their lines before they start to dig. Knowing the approximate location of buried lines before each digging project helps protect workers from injury and the consequences that can result from accidentally damaging a buried utility line. The depths of utility lines vary, and there can be multiple utility lines in the same area.

Each color represents a different utility as follows:

Red = electric power lines, cables, conduit and lighting cables

Yellow = gas, oil, steam, petroleum or gaseous materials

Orange = communication, alarm or signal lines, cables or conduit

Blue = potable water

Purple = reclaimed water, irrigation or slurry lines

Green = sewers and drain lines

It is important that these marks remain visible and unaltered until all excavation in the area has been completed. Removing, moving or otherwise tampering with marks for underground utility lines can cause interruption of service to you and your neighbors and may result in costly repairs that could increase your monthly utility bills. It can also result in injury or even death to those in the immediate vicinity.

Tampering with these underground facility marks, even those on private property, is a violation of the Pennsylvania Utility Line Protection Act 287, as amended. Conviction can result in a fine of up to \$50,000, or imprisonment of up to 90 days, or both, not to speak of any civil liabilities in the matter. If you witness or suspect that someone has tampered with underground facility marks, please immediately notify Pennsylvania One Call by dialing 8-1-1 or 1-800-242-1776. To learn more, visit www.pa1call.org.



Q: *Why is flushing necessary and what actually happens to enhance water quality?*

A: Flushing is performed throughout the system to make certain that transmission and distribution pipelines are free from any impurities or sediment that may accumulate over the course of time. System flushing is just one of many tools the Authority uses to ensure that water quality remains at the highest level and each customer always receives safe, healthy drinking water exceeding all regulatory requirements.

The flushing process the Authority incorporates is referred to as "unidirectional flushing." This means that we start at the water source, or tank, and work outward into the distribution system. Valves are manipulated to reverse the pattern of normal flow, disinfection residuals are raised in the area and water is flowed from the hydrants at an increased velocity. This ensures that the inside of the piping is scoured and any foreign matter is safely flushed away. Flushing is also performed to clean newly installed water mains and after main breaks or repairs are completed.

One interesting facet to system flushing is that the Authority cannot release water with a disinfectant residual into the environment. Under the regulations of the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Laws, chlorinated water is classified as a pollutant and may cause damage and in-stream impacts to aquatic life, even fish kills. Water released during the flushing operation is directed through special diffusers that introduce vitamin C into the waste flow. The vitamin C neutralizes the residual making it safe to discharge into storm sewers, culverts and any receiving natural water way. In this way, we are stewards of the environment we all share.