

WATER MAIN FLUSHING FACT SHEET

March 2022

City of San Bruno's Valve Program Keeps Pipes Clean and Water Quality High.

From time to time, you may notice the City of San Bruno's Water Division crews opening water valves or fire hydrants and running water in your neighborhood. This systematic maintenance program extends the life of pipes and valves ensuring high quality water.

Why is City Staff Opening the Valves?

Water leaving the treatment plant and wells is clean and safe, but may pick up tastes, colors, or odors as it travels through distribution system pipes on its way to customers. Opening the valves improves water quality at the customer tap and also helps to recirculate the water in the system. The process of opening valves and hydrants to remove high volumes of water at a fast discharge rate is the only way to clean the pipelines. The brief large volume flow of water that is discharged scours the pipes for cleaning.

Doesn't This Waste Water?

No. By opening and closing valves and using the pressure of the water to clean pipes, the City of San Bruno is undertaking preventative maintenance that keeps the quality of the water in pipelines high and helps prevent a major leak or valve failure in the future. Unplanned events like main breaks or valve failures can cause large amounts of water to be lost, so a smaller amount of water used or lost while opening the valves and hydrants reduces the risk of larger amounts of water being lost during an unplanned or uncontrolled event.

Will My Water Service Be Affected?

Most customers will not be affected by this activity; however, some might temporarily experience a slight discoloration or sediment in their water after pipelines in their area have been cleaned. To clear this sediment, run all outdoor spigots until the water runs clear, and then run interior faucets until they run clear. This typically takes about three to four minutes. Service interruptions normally do not occur during pipeline cleaning activities.

How Long Does The City of San Bruno Keep The Valves Open?

The valves are open for about three to four minutes, though the amount of time can be longer depending on the length and size of the pipe.