

ANNUAL FIRE HYDRANT TESTING IN RICHMOND HEIGHTS

The Richmond Heights Division of Fire will begin conducting its annual Fire Hydrant Testing Program **May 7th, 2018**. The work should be completed by the end of June.

The goal of our testing program is to assure a reliable water supply in the event of a fire. The testing is required by the Insurance Service Office (ISO) and must be completed annually in order to maintain our Fire Protection Rating, which directly affects property owner insurance premiums.

In addition to being a requirement of ISO, hydrant testing provides many benefits for fire personnel. We gain firsthand knowledge of where hydrants are located, assure they are visible from the road, operational as a "first water" source, and are able to confirm they are maintained on a regular basis.

Annually the Division of Fire conducts inspections to assure the hydrants we depend upon for extinguishing fires are operational, provide adequate water flow, and maintain adequate system pressure. NFPA standards also call for all public fire hydrants to be inspected on a regular basis. We perform annual inspections not only for the purpose of complying with the standards, but we need to have a high degree of confidence that all hydrants will perform properly in an emergency.

A number of circumstances can affect a hydrant's performance which includes vandalism, accidental damage, wear and tear, mechanical malfunction and even contractors performing work on water lines who forget to reopen hydrant tap valves. We want to detect any of these problems and correct them prior to the hydrant being needed.

This year starting in May we will resume our normal hydrant testing and maintenance program. Testing includes cleaning the threads, flushing and checking for working condition and flows. All testing is done by on duty personnel. Any fire hydrant found to be in need of repair are identified and tagged. Repairs are reported to and completed by the Cleveland Division of Water.

Should you notice fire personnel checking hydrants in your area, be assured our intentions are not to waste water or destroy property; we are working to ensure your safety. Should you notice a hydrant in need of repair, please call the Division of Fire or the Service Department so repairs can be initiated.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What should you do when hydrants are being flushed in your area?

If you see a crew flushing a hydrant on your street, avoid running tap water and using the washing machine or the dishwasher until the flushing is completed. If you see hydrant flushing crews working in the area, please drive carefully and treat them like any other road construction crew.

Why is the water pressure low?

Your water pressure may be low due to the flushing of fire hydrants, which lowers the water pressure in the area that is being tested.

What should you do after the hydrants are flushed?

If tap water is used during flushing, it could come out discolored. If you encounter discolored water, shut the water off and wait several minutes. After waiting, check the clarity by running cold water for a few minutes, allowing new water to work its way into your pipes. If the water is clear, it's OK to use. If not, wait a few more minutes and check again. In some cases, there may be slight discoloration for a few hours. This discoloration only affects the appearance of the water, it does not affect the taste or water quality. Avoid washing laundry during scheduled flushing times. Wait until the water runs clear at the tap, then wash a load of dark clothes first. If pressure or volume seems low, check your faucet screens for trapped particles.

Why does your water look funny after hydrant flushing?

When a hydrant is opened, there will be temporary incidences of discolored water while fine sediment particles are flushed out. There is no health hazard associated with the discolored water. Allow a few hours for discoloration to dissipate. To verify water is clear, run your cold-water tap for a few minutes