



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR TENANTS/BUILDING OWNERS ON SAFELY RE-OPENING BUSINESSES AFTER BEING SHUT DOWN FOR A PROLONGED PERIOD OF TIME



This fact sheet is intended to assist with identifying possible concerns for tenants and building owners that plan to reopen their businesses after being closed for a prolonged period.

When buildings are closed or on low occupancy for any prolonged period, water in the building becomes stagnant and can pose serious health risks. Harmful microbiological and chemical contaminants can grow or leach into water supply.

Basically we need to get rid of the stagnant water in the pipes, and this will vary based on factors such as length of the shutdown, size of the building, number of occupants, complexity of the system, integrity of the plumbing, and maintenance performed during the shutdown.

Municipal utilities are responsible to get clean, safe drinking water to each property; however, **it is the responsibility of each property owner** to ensure it maintains the safety of that water within their building.

It is important to flush the system, run water from your taps for at least 20 minutes to flush out stagnant water, dislodge sediment, etc... Rigorous cleaning of fixtures, and in some cases, you may need to consider disinfecting the system.

Drains & Sewers - Wastewater systems that haven't been used for some time need to be flushed to ensure solids and sediment are washed away. Floor drains and pea traps are a concern as the water in them may have evaporated over the shutdown causing odour issues. You want to ensure that all drains and traps are refilled.

CHECKLIST Re-Opening Buildings

- ☐ Know where your shut off valves are. If applicable identify zones and include all treatment equipment, pumps, valves, tanks, etc...
- ☐ Flush your entire system. Flush at full force by opening the tap fully (remove the aerator filter or shower head)
- ☐ Start where the water enters the building and work from closest to furthest, closest zone to furthest zone, closest outlet to furthest outlet
- ☐ Flush your cold water system first then your hot water system
- ☐ Hot water should be maintained at a temperature over 50°C throughout the system. So the hot water lines need to be flushed and it is highly recommended that, if at all possible, you should drain your hot water tanks and refill
- ☐ Then flush the system from closest to furthest from the tank
- ☐ Clean, disinfect and rinse all outlets, screens etc.

For more detailed information on maintenance & mitigation during a shutdown, and reopening your building, visit our website to view the Canadian Water and Wastewater Association report on Safely Re-Opening Buildings.