

Connecticut Water Offers Resources for a Safe Return to Schools This Fall

Water quality can deteriorate when water becomes stagnant because of low summer usage

Schools should proactively flush water pipes before the school year begins

Connecticut Water's Touchless Water Bottle Filling Station Grant Program Is Now Open

CLINTON, Conn. — August 17, 2021 — Connecticut Water is offering a number of resources to support the safe return to schools this fall, with information on how to flush the water pipes prior to the return of students and staff and the reopening of applications for its water bottle filling station grant program.

Ensuring Safe Water in School Buildings

The water provided by Connecticut Water continues to meet, or is better than, state and federal requirements for safe drinking water. However, the water inside the service line between the water main and the school and the school's domestic plumbing can become stagnant over the summer when there is little usage to pull fresh water from the water main into the building. Stagnant water can harbor disease-causing bacteria, such as Legionella, and may be at increased risk for lead due to prolonged exposure to any solder or fixtures containing lead.

Flushing the pipes of a school is a simple way to ensure that all the stagnant water is purged from a school's water pipes and fresh, safe drinking water is pulled in from the water main in the street. The same concerns and prevention steps also apply to schools that are on their own water sources.

Most schools can flush their facilities by running the taps from all points of use for roughly 10 minutes. (For example, showers, all sink faucets, ice machines, drinking water fountains and coolers.) Flushing may need to occur in segments depending on facility size and water pressure. The purpose of flushing is to replace all water inside the building's piping with fresh water from the water main. Flush each point of use/tap on both the hot water and cold water taps. Flush until the hot water reaches its maximum temperature, and flush the cold water until it reaches a steady cool temperature. It is also a good idea to replace any filters if water filtration systems are used in the building. Larger facilities may need to take additional measures.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health has also provided [Return to Service](#) guidance for buildings that have been closed or partially closed.

For additional information, see the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [Flushing Best Practices](#), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [Guidance on Building Water Systems](#) or the American Water Works Association's [Return to Service Guidance](#). Customers are also welcome to call Connecticut Water at 800-286-5700.

Connecticut Water has supplied this information directly to superintendents at the schools serviced by Connecticut Water.

Touchless Water Bottle Filling Station Program Opens

Since its inception in 2020, Connecticut Water's School Water Bottle Filling Station Grant Program has supplied more than 25 schools with touch-free water bottle filling stations.

(More)

Aside from reducing waste by providing an option for hydration without single-use disposable water bottles, water filling stations have been a crucial element in reducing the spread of germs through traditional water fountains.

Funding will be awarded for up to 10 water bottle filling stations in our service communities, or a total of \$15,000 each calendar year. Funding is provided by Connecticut Water's Charitable Giving program and is not recovered in customer rates. Applications for the program are available at ctwater.com/community. Click on "School Water Bottle Filling Stations." Applications are open through December 1, 2021.

About Connecticut Water

Connecticut Water is a public water utility that is regulated by the Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority. The company provides water service to more than 106,000 customers in 60 Connecticut towns and wastewater services to 3,000 customers in the town of Southbury, Connecticut.

The towns served are Ashford, Avon, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Bolton, Brooklyn, Burlington, Canton, Chester, Clinton, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, Deep River, Durham, East Granby, East Haddam, East Hampton, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Essex, Farmington, Griswold, Guilford, Haddam, Hebron, Killingly, Killingworth, Lebanon, Madison, Manchester, Mansfield, Marlborough, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Oxford, Plainfield, Plymouth, Portland, Prospect, Simsbury, Somers, Southbury, South Windsor, Stafford, Stonington, Suffield, Thomaston, Thompson, Tolland, Vernon, Voluntown, Waterbury, Westbrook, Willington, Windsor Locks and Woodstock.

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Links embedded in news release:

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DPH/dph/drinking_water/pdf/COVID-19-Return-to-Service-Guidance.pdf

<https://www.awwa.org/Resources-Tools/Resource-Topics/Coronavirus#10681543-shutoffs-and-return-to-service-guidance>

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-09/documents/flushing_best_practices_factsheet_508.pdf

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>

Connecticut Water contact:

Daniel J. Meaney, APR

Director of Public Affairs and Corporate Communications

Connecticut Water Company

860-664-6016

Daniel.Meaney@ctwater.com