



# WAUSAU WATERWORKS

FOR YOU!

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## Annual Hydrant Flushing to Begin May 2

Water utility employees will begin flushing fire hydrants at 7:30 a.m. on Monday morning, May 2, 2016, as part of our annual maintenance program. Flushing accomplishes two tasks; first, it cleans the mains of mineral buildup, and secondly, it ensures that all hydrants are in good operating order.

Flushing will be performed during the daytime hours from 7:30 a.m. until about 3:00 p.m. during which time over 1600 hydrants will be flushed. This process takes about three weeks to complete. All flushing is performed during daylight hours to improve safety for our employees as well as being able to ensure that hydrants are being adequately flushed. **A complete schedule of the hydrant flushing is printed on page 3 of this newsletter.**

Residents are urged to avoid water use when the flushing occurs near their neighborhood, **especially for laundry purposes**, as it may stain clothing. Water softeners should also be bypassed during this time. Some homeowners may experience very low pressure during the flushing process. As flushing occurs in your neighborhood, businesses and homes may experience dirty water for a short period of time.

Residents are also cautioned about driving in the area where the flushing is occurring. Water from hydrants is **under extreme pressure**, with approximately 1,000 gallons per minute being discharged. Although our employees use caution, damage to your vehicle can result if you drive through an area where hydrants are being flushed.



## No Wipes Down the Pipes

The growing use of pre-moistened “personal” wipes continues to cause problems with our sewer system. The wipes clog our sanitary sewers including the pumps, screens, manholes, low points or any other area where the flow is restricted. The problem seems to be getting worse.

The disposable wipes can be grouped together from sources like baby wipes, kitchen cleaning wipes, paper towels, facial tissues, bathroom wipes, diaper liners, etc. Additionally, products like disposable toilet cleaning wands, diapers, feminine hygiene products, floor cleaning wipes and assorted hand towels all add to the list. These are not meant to be flushed. **The only paper product meant to be flushed is old fashion toilet paper, no matter what the manufacturer puts on the label.**

Just because a product label reads “flushable” doesn’t mean it should be flushed. If it’s placed in the toilet, the lever is pushed, the wipe goes down out of sight and mind but, flushable doesn’t mean that it biodegrades or even that it breaks down into tiny particles that won’t cause problems.

The time and money spent cleaning sewers and pumps could be better spent dealing with other issues that we face, and we know that consumers and residents would not want to be responsible for a basement backup or sewer overflow. Please do your part and discard wipes in the trash, not the toilet.

## Private Wells

Private water wells in the City of Wausau are required to be inspected, pass a bacteriological water test (to ensure that there is no coliform or e-coli bacteria present), and be permitted. Permits are good for a period of five years. Wells that are not operable or not up to code will be required to be repaired or abandoned.

Wausau Water Works will be sending letters shortly to property owners who have a permit that will be expiring, or expired permits. As a private well is a source of cross contamination of our public water system, failure to obtain a permit or to abandon a faulty well could result in disconnection of your water service and/or fines. We will also be sending letters to property owners in areas where wells were known to exist at one time to verify if a well exists on the property.

The Wisconsin DNR offers income dependent grants which could cover up to 75% of the cost of abandonment. Wausau Water Works also offers a deferment plan to assist in the cost of well abandonment.

If you have a private well or would like more information on well abandonment or the grant or deferment programs please contact our office at 715-261-7265. Current cost for a well permit is \$15.00 plus the cost of the water test(s). Costs of permits are expected to increase in July.

## Lead in the News

Lead has been a hot topic again with the issues occurring in Flint, Michigan. Wausau, being an older city, has a number of lead service lines. Homes that were built prior to 1965 would likely have lead service lines, either on the City's side of the service lateral, the property owner's side, or possibly both. Homes built between 1965 and 1984 could potentially have copper lines that have lead solder.

There are a number of common sense things that you can do to help minimize your exposure to lead.

- Whenever your water has sat unused for 6 hours or more, flush the cold water at any faucet from where you would drink or use water for cooking, such as the kitchen or bathroom. Run the cold water until it gets cold, cold, that way you know you are getting water that is coming in from the water mains in the street, not the water that has been sitting in your service lateral in your yard.
- Never draw hot water from the faucet for cooking or drinking, as hot water leaches lead faster than cold water. Always draw cold water and heat on the stovetop or in microwave.
- If you are replacing faucets in your home make sure to look for faucets that state they are "lead free". Many older or even foreign produced faucets contain brass that has lead in it.
- The City replaces lead service lines on the utility side of the shut off valve (typically located around the boulevard area of your property) during street reconstruction projects. This is a good time for homeowner's to replace their portion also. Financing sources are available and you may contact Wausau Water Works at 715-261-6530 for more information.
- Homeowners that have concerns regarding lead exposure may have their water tested at state approved laboratories. The cost of the test is generally very inexpensive.

Wausau does test our water on a 1 to 3 year basis, as determined by the Wisconsin DNR. Based on 2015 results, we are currently in compliance with the testing standards with the required 90% of our samples being below the Action Level of 15.

More information of lead and its' effects may be found on our website at <http://www.ci.wausau.wi.us/Departments/WausauWaterWorks/InformationonLead.aspx> or by contacting our office at 715-261-6530.

## Hydro Corp Inspecting Properties for Cross Connections

Wausau Water Works has contracted with Hydro Corp to perform inspections for potential cross connections in non-residential properties. Hydro Corp is sending out letters asking business owners or owners of apartment buildings to schedule inspections. Wausau Water Works is required by the Wisconsin DNR to ensure that cross-connections to the public water system do not exist.

# Spring Watermain Flushing Schedule

Utility crews will flush watermains through the operation of hydrants during daytime hours from **7:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.** You may want to draw a supply of water prior to your area being flushed. Please be aware that adjacent neighborhoods to the area being flushed may experience dirty water for short periods of time.

**Avoid water use during the scheduled flush, especially for laundry purposes.** It is particularly important to NOT use bleach in your laundry as it may stain your clothing. It is also suggested that you bypass water softeners during this time. Please also be aware that some homeowners may experience very low pressure during the flushing process.

## Flushing Schedule

### West Side

**Monday, May 2** - West Wausau Avenue north to City limits

**Tuesday, May 3** - Wausau Avenue south to Bridge Street and Pinecrest area to Stettin Drive, west to 48th Avenue and north to Hilltop Avenue.

**Wednesday May 4** - Oak Street south to Sherman Street

**Thursday, May 5** - Rosecrans Street south to City limits

### East Side

**Monday, May 9** - Steuben Street north to Sylvan Street; 6th Street to City limits (Evergreen Road), Riverview Court and Riverview Drive

**Tuesday, May 10** - Hamilton Street south to Forest Street

**Wednesday, May 11** - Kickbusch Street south to Town Line Road and Northwestern Avenue

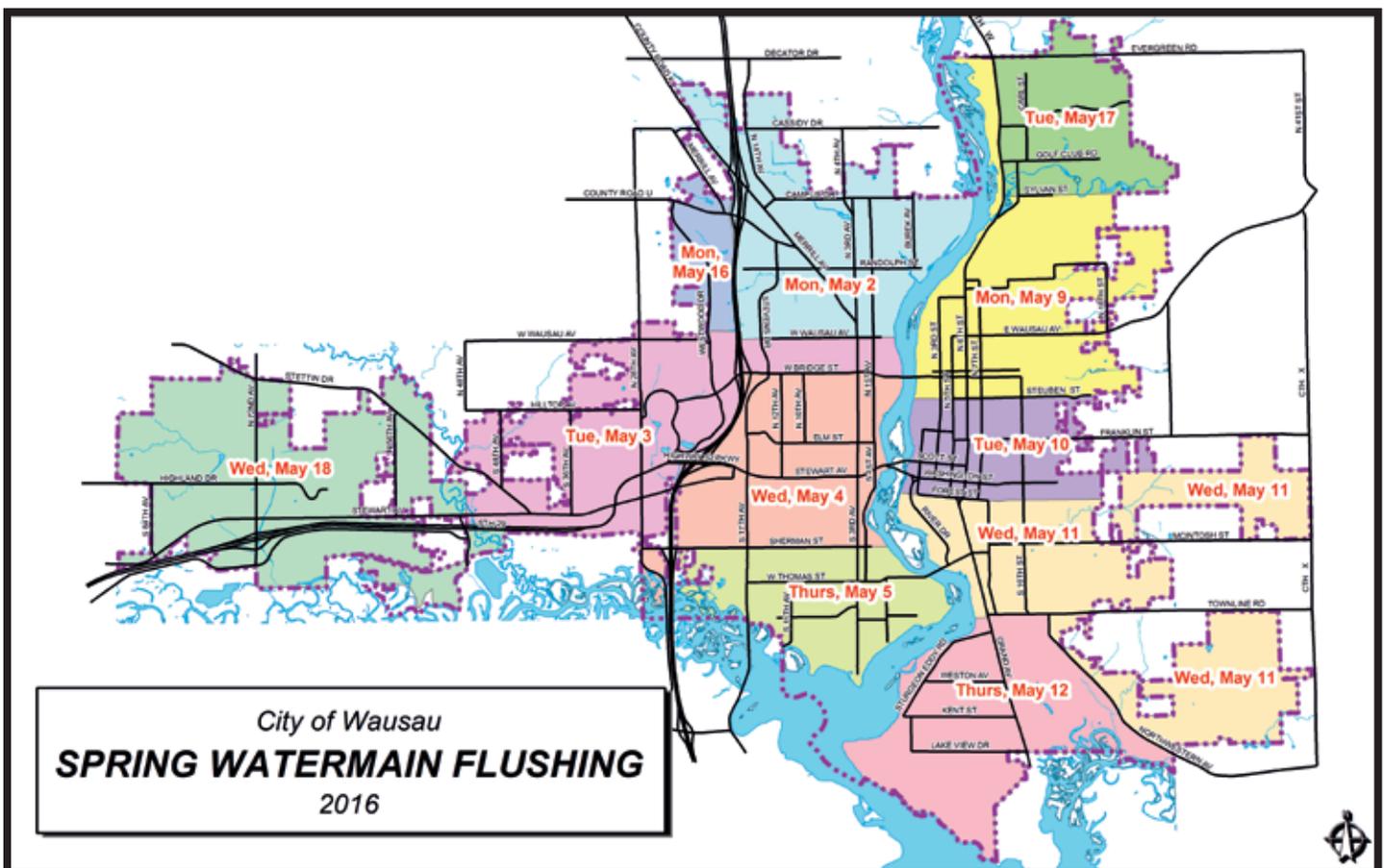
**Thursday, May 12** - Town Line Road south to City limits

### Other Areas

**Monday, May 16** - high pressure zone by 28th Avenue Reservoir, Highway U

**Tuesday, May 17** - Riverview area

**Wednesday, May 18** - 56th Avenue west to City limits



## Call Diggers Hotline Before You Dig

Construction projects such as installing decks, fences and tree planting are another sign of spring. Homeowners are reminded to contact Diggers Hotline before you dig by simply dialing 811 from any land line or cell phone. Or, you can place an online request at [www.diggershotline.com](http://www.diggershotline.com).

Homeowners are also reminded that they must allow 3 business days (not including the day the request is called in) for all their utilities to be located before they dig, and should plan their projects accordingly. There is no cost to the homeowner to contact Diggers Hotline, who will then inform all utilities with buried facilities, such as water, sewer, gas and electric utilities, telephone and cable companies of your intentions to dig in a specific area.

Water lines are marked in the street and up to the curb stop (shut off valve) which is typically located in the boulevard area. Water pipes beyond that point and into the house were installed privately and the utility does not have any record of where they are located.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## Deferment Plans Available

Wausau Water Works knows that sometimes it can be difficult to come up with the money to make repairs to leaking service lines, replace old lead service lines or abandon old wells. To assist homeowners, we have developed a deferment plan to assist with these types of expenses. The homeowner will need to sign an agreement with Wausau Water Works then the utility will pay the plumber (that the homeowner has hired) for the work that has been performed and defer the cost of repairs to be applied to the property taxes as a special assessment. More information on this deferment program may be obtained by calling 715-261-7265.

## Water Works to Implement Uni-Directional Flushing Program

With Wausau being an old community, there are still many homes and businesses with lead service laterals. To enhance water quality and help alleviate lead issues, the Utility will be implementing a Uni-Directional flushing program. The idea behind this type of flushing is to do a comprehensive flushing starting in a particular section of the city and working our way out to the far edges pushing the water through hydrants as we go. This systematic, high-velocity program removes settled particles and cleans underground water mains thereby enhancing the water quality.

Wausau Water Works will be sending postcards to residents as this specialized flushing is done in neighborhoods. You will be recommended not to run water while this flushing is taking place, nor should you do laundry, especially avoiding the use of bleach during this time.

For more information regarding the Uni-Directional Flushing Program contact Wausau Water Works at 715-261-7265.

## Water Drops....

### Which uses more water, a tub bath or a shower?

That depends on many factors: how big your tub is, how long you shower, how fast the water comes out of your showerhead, whether or not you turn off the water while soaping, and so forth. Answer this question yourself by closing the drain when you shower and see if you get a tub full of water. (Don't try this in a shower stall.)

### If I leave the water running while I brush my teeth does this waste much water?

You bet! Leaving the water running is a bad habit: about 4 to 6 gallons of water go down the drain needlessly every time you brush. Turning off the water when you are not using it will save water and save you money.

Another way many people unthinkingly waste water is while they are waiting for the hot water to come to a shower, tub or sink. Catching this water to use for plant watering is a good conservation tip.

*(Source: Plain Talk About Drinking Water, 2001, American Water Works Association)*

## In Memoriam

Wausau Water Works would like to extend our heartfelt sympathies to the family of Ryan Nesbitt. Ryan, who passed away on March 5, 2016, served as a water treatment plant operator for the utility for 30 years, retiring in 2011.