8 Key Steps for Reopening Buildings

1. Develop a comprehensive water management program (WMP) for your water system and all devices that use water. Guidance to help with this process is available from CDC and others.

2. Ensure your water heater is properly maintained and the temperature is correctly set.

3. Flush your water system. (See graphic on back.)

4. Clean all decorative water features, such as fountains.

5. Ensure hot tubs/spas are safe for use.

6. Ensure cooling towers are clean and well-maintained.

7. Ensure safety equipment including fire sprinkler systems, eye wash stations, and safety showers are clean and well-maintained.

8. Maintain your water system.

Local water agencies are providing public notice about plumbing system safety, however, it is the responsibility of building owners and managers to address any related issues on their own properties. Details about these recommendations from the CDC are at https://bit.ly/CDCBuildingGuidance.
FLUSH YOUR WATER SYSTEM

Flushing hot and cold water through all points of use (e.g., showers, sink faucets) is part of the process for ensuring safety when reopening buildings after long periods of inactivity. Flushing may need to be done in segments (e.g., by floor or individual rooms) due to facility size and water pressure. The purpose of building flushing is to replace all water inside building pipes with fresh water. Flush until the hot water reaches its maximum temperature.

1. Disconnect any point-of-entry device filters and clean faucet aerators.

2. Next, locate the cold water faucet closest to where the water enters the building. Then, turn on the faucets in kitchens and bathrooms. Let the cold water flow for 20 minutes or more.

3. Flush all appliances that use water. Run an empty load in the dishwasher, let water flow through drinking water fountains and kitchen sink sprayers. Empty the ice from ice maker bin, run and discard two additional batches of ice.

4. Flush all toilets, spas and water features like fountains. Follow manufacturer’s instructions on filter replacement.

5. Increase the temperature on the hot water heater to at least 140 degrees and wait for the water heater to reach that temperature (times may vary). Turn on the hot water tap closest to the water heater and in kitchens and bathrooms; leave them on until cool water flows from the faucets.

6. Remember to turn off all faucets and reset the water heater to the desired temperature.