

O'Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Co.

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PROTOCOLS FOR KEEPING BLACK DEPOSITS FROM ACCUMULATING IN THE PLUMBING OF BUILDINGS FROM THE WATER SUPPLIED BY THE O'CONNOR TRACT COOPERATIVE WATER COMPANY

(O'Connor Water)

If property managers or tenants have any concerns about the water quality, they should contact O'Connor Water.

STEPS THAT APARTMENT MANAGEMENT SHOULD TAKE TO PREVENT ACCUMULATION OF BLACK DEPOSITS IN THE BUILDING'S PLUMBING

1. Turn on all the exterior hose bibs and let the water run until it runs clear, usually about 5 to 15 minutes. Do this at least once per month if hose bibs are not routinely used by the residents.
2. Consider also periodically flushing interior plumbing such as central water heaters where water can sit and black deposits can accumulate.
3. Contact O'Connor Water 650-321-2723 with any water quality concerns or questions.

HOW TO RESPOND TO A TENANT CONCERN ABOUT THE WATER

If any tenant reports that the water appears dark, dirty or muddy, the following steps should be taken by apartment managers to ensure clear water for the tenants.

1. Turn on all the exterior hose bibs and let the water run until it runs clear, usually about 5 to 15 minutes.
2. Instruct the tenant to let the water run from the tap until it is clear usually 5 to 15 minutes.
3. Call and report the situation to O'Connor Water 650-321-2723.
4. Provide the O'Connor Water phone number to tenants so that they can also report any concerns they have.
5. If the problem persists, consider flushing interior plumbing such as central water heaters where water can sit and black deposits can accumulate.

HOW TO HANDLE HYDRANT FLUSHING

The black deposits can also accumulate in some areas of the distribution system. Therefore, O'Connor Water regularly flushes the mains (one to four times per year) by opening the hydrants on that main. This can cause an increase in the black deposits in water from the system. Email and on-site notification of hydrant flushing is provided giving the time frame that the flushing will take place. It is important to check that the water is running clear after hydrant flushing before washing clothes that could be stained by the black deposits.

When the apartment manager receives notification of hydrant flushing, the following steps should be taken:

1. Notify tenants of the times of the hydrant flushing and advise them to run their faucets after the flushing until the water runs clear.
2. Plan to run outside hoses immediately after the flushing is completed.
3. Notify O'Connor Water 650-321-2723 if the above procedures do not result in clear water or if management or tenants have any other questions or concerns.

These steps should also be taken following water shutoffs for maintenance.

FOLLOW UP THAT MAY BE NEEDED

If running interior and exterior faucets does not clear the water in a building, it is possible that accumulation has occurred somewhere in the plumbing and further steps may be necessary such as draining the hot water heater.

In any case, if dark water persists or if any residents have concerns, it is important to contact O'Connor Water immediately and someone will respond to investigate.

BACKGROUND

O'Connor Water supplies water to the member's properties at the curb stops from well water through distribution mains. The well water is "hard" water meaning that there is a high concentration of minerals in the water that form white deposits of calcium carbonate in tea kettles. In addition, the water has relatively high levels of manganese. The manganese can settle out of the water within the plumbing system forming a black deposit.

Therefore, it is important that the water continues to move through the plumbing on a regular basis. The manganese in particular is noticeable as black particles at the bottom of containers. Normally, the small amount of manganese is not visible in the water. However, under certain circumstances, sufficient accumulation appears in the water causing it to look dark or murky due to settling. Note that this is not the same as the white murky look that water often has when first coming out of the tap due to air bubbles that quickly disappear leaving the water clear. Due to settling, the mineral amount can accumulate to levels that cause staining to clothes and other items.

If the water appears dark, it is important to let the water run from the tap until it is clear. In most single family homes, running interior faucets will clear the manganese from the plumbing within 15 minutes, resulting in ongoing clear water, though sometimes it is necessary to run water from hose bibs. In apartment buildings, running the water from faucets inside individual units is not sufficient to clear the manganese from the building's plumbing.