



Portland Fire Department

Fire Hydrant Testing Program

The goal of the program is to assure a reliable water supply in the event of a fire. The testing is required by the Insurance Service Office (ISO) and must be completed semi-annually in order to maintain our Fire Protection Rating, which directly affects property owner insurance premiums.

Most fire hydrants are not used regularly. Testing is conducted every Wednesday to identify problems so that they may be corrected by the Water Department, ultimately saving the fire department valuable time during a fire. Some of the more common problems found have been hydrant valves that do not open, caps that don't come off, and inadequate water pressure. Only a few hydrants are tested each Wednesday. On average, a fire hydrant near your home or business is tested twice a year.

Why are you being notified of this program?

When fire hydrants are flowed, iron deposits that naturally occur in water lines can get stirred up. This can cause a brown discoloration to the water in the neighborhood around that fire hydrant. While most is flushed from the line during testing, a small amount can remain suspended in the water. This does not affect the safety of the water and will correct itself in a few hours.

What to do?

On Wednesday, we recommend that you run your cold water to determine if there is any discoloration before using it. While the water is safe to drink and cook with, we recommend caution in washing white clothes on Wednesday.

Why the program is important to the citizens of Portland:

- Confidence that our fire hydrants are in good operating condition.
- Semi-annual flowing reduces the iron deposits in our water lines.
- Meeting Insurance Service Office (ISO) requirements.

If you have any questions about hydrant testing in your area, please call the Portland Fire Department at 643-0155.