

Twin Forks MDWCA

Standard Operating Procedure A.6

Response to Contamination of System (including flushing)

Approved by the Board of Directors
[September 17, 2005]

I. Initial Response

A. Anyone learning of contamination of the Twin Forks MDWCA water distribution system should report it immediately to the Twin Forks MDWCA water office [505-687-3621].

B. It is essential that the President (or the person designated by the President) make a sound judgment in regard to the potential of the contamination to cause injury to users of water from the system. In the case that the facts are not yet clear, the judgment should be on the side of caution and safety.

C. If the contamination represents a danger to users of water from the system, the President (or person designated by the President) shall immediately use the resources of the system to warn users to stop using water from the system (or parts of the system) until further notice and notify the New Mexico Environmental Department (Drinking Water Bureau) by telephone for further instructions.

D. The New Mexico Environmental Department may also determine, through the sampling and laboratory analysis program that they manage, that contaminants have entered the system. In such cases, the procedures specified by the New Mexico Environmental Department are to be followed.

II. Restoration of Safe Conditions

A. The President (or the person designated by the President) shall contact the New Mexico Environmental Department and, if the New Mexico Environmental Department sets procedures and/or conditions for the restoration of safe conditions, shall follow those procedures.

1. Upon determination that parts of the system are not contaminated and that safe water can be supplied to these parts of the system, they may be returned to service and users in those areas notified.
2. New Mexico Environmental Department (Drinking Water Bureau) will direct what is necessary to restore the system to safe operation and the tests needed to confirm that the danger from the contamination has been removed.
3. Flushing of the system as appropriate. Twin Forks MDWCA does not have a system of valves designed to allow flushing, and it may be necessary to access points in the system and open distribution lines to flush the system or to flush through residential meters. . If it is necessary to flush a distribution line through a residential meter, the member shall not be charged for the water used for flushing.

If tanks are contaminated, it is best to allow them to fill, then drain the tank completely, refill and drain as necessary. It is best to flush lines from a low point, since this procedure allows the water to run as fast as possible and thereby clean the lines more effectively.

After flushing, the water supply should be tested.

- B. In returning the system to service, users should be clearly informed as to procedures for cleaning their water lines on the residence side of the water cutoff valve.

III. Maintenance of Safe Conditions (Routine Flushing)

In order to maintain chlorine at appropriate levels throughout the Twin Forks MDWCA water distribution system, the Utility Operator shall test chlorine levels in distribution lines, with particular attention to lines with very low flow (“dead legs”) once per month in the Summer. In the event that chlorine levels outside the desired range are found, the Utility Operator shall arrange to flush the line until the chlorine levels return to the appropriate level. If it is necessary to flush a distribution line through a residential meter, the member shall not be charged for the water used for flushing.