

Prince William Health District Water Conservation During Emergencies Information

Conserving Water During Emergencies

When there is a **water main break** or other water emergency, your water service may be affected or water pressure reduced or turned off. Here are some tips for conserving water during emergencies.



What to Do if Your Water is Turned Off

- **If your water is turned off, use only bottled water for cooking, drinking, and for personal hygiene.(Brushing your teeth)**
- **Toilets, clothes washers, and showers use the most water on average in households.**
 - **Flush Less.** Minimize toilet flushing during emergencies. Fill a milk jug or soda bottle and put it in your toilet tank to reduce the water used when you do flush.
 - **Hold the Laundry.** Please delay doing laundry until after the water emergency is resolved.
 - **Shorter Showers.** Encourage members of your household to take short showers during water emergencies. Turn off the water while soaping or shampooing. **Find an alternative place to shower if your water has been completely turned off.**
- **If you have a rain barrel,** you can use rain barrel water for toilet flushing. Remember **NOT** to drink rain barrel water, and **do not** use it for cooking or washing dishes. Use paper plates, cups, and disposable utensils to avoid the need to wash dishes.

When Water Service is Restored

In most cases, when the water pressure returns, you will need to run the **cold water** tap for a few minutes to clear the pipes. Use of hot water may draw discolored water into your hot water heater, prolonging a potential disruption. If you have questions about your water quality after your water has been turned off, call (703)792-6310.