WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS

The purpose of a distribution system is to deliver water to consumer with appropriate quality, quantity and pressure. The distribution system is the last "barrier" for protecting public health, meaning the physical and chemical barriers that have been established are necessary to protect the public from intentional or unintentional exposure to contaminants after the water has been treated.

Water quality can deteriorate in the distribution system. A loss of pressure can allow contaminants to enter the distribution system because of back pressure, and very high pressures can cause back siphonage. High water pressures can also cause water lines and fixtures to break allowing contaminants to enter the distribution system. Dead-ends in distribution systems can lead to water becoming stagnant in portions of the distribution system, which could lead to loss of disinfectant residual and bacterial regrowth. The installation of new pipes or the repair of existing pipes can introduce contaminants into the distribution system.

Regulations that help monitor the health of your distribution systems are the Revised Total Coliform Rule, Ground Water, Lead and Copper and Disinfectant Byproduct Rule (DBP).

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Distribution Best Practices

Using effective best practices in your operation, maintenance and management policies will influence the quality of water you deliver to your customers.

- Have an accurate map of your distribution piping, valves, dead ends and any loops throughout the system. This will help in isolating any water main breaks, flushing areas that are stagnant and may have low disinfectant residual or high DBP’s.
- Install flushing valves in areas with low water turnover, deadends or systems with seasonal populations that may need additional flushing when populations are low.
- Deadends are required to be flushed quarterly according to FAC 62-555, and it is recommended that your entire water system be flushed once or twice a year to remove sediment.
- Know what material is used for piping throughout your distribution system, as piping ages, different material can cause different water quality issues. Galvanized piping cause color and iron complaints and copper pipes are susceptible to corrosion and can develop leaks.
Have written water main repair and replacement procedures. Repair crews must follow proper procedures for disinfecting a water line after installation or repair and issue precautionary boil water notices when required. If the breaks are frequent, there may be a problem with the integrity of the piping material. Each main break opens the system to contamination, and frequent breaks increase the potential for introducing waterborne pathogens into the system.

Cross Connection plans and effective programs protect your distribution systems from potential contamination from backflow from non-potable liquid, solid or gas (gasoline, pesticides, pool water). Install approved backflow prevention devices where required, such as irrigation or fire sprinkler systems, do not submerge hoses or place them where they could become submerged, and use hose bib vacuum breakers on fixtures at inside or outside faucets/spigots

REMINDER FOR ALL COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

Your 2017 Consumer Confidence Report is due to your customers and our office by July 1, 2018. If you wish to have it reviewed by our office prior to that date it must be submitted by April 30. Reports must be delivered electronically or by mail or hand delivery. If you have no monitoring, operator or chlorine violations and serve less than 500 persons you may be eligible for a mailing waiver.

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