



Sativa Los Angeles County Water District Removes Discolored Water from System April 2018

Discolored Water

The discoloration in our system's water does not pose a health threat. Sativa County Water District (SLACWD) takes discolored and brown tap water reports and concerns seriously, as discoloration in the water we serve our customers leads to concerns about the safety and appearance of the water.

SLACWD maintains and receives its water from two active wells, distributed through an eight-mile pipeline network. As an essential part of our system's maintenance program, SLACWD opens hydrants to clear our water mains of sediment build up due to old pipelines. This is a State-wide maintenance practice known as **flushing** and is used by many water agencies to manage sediments and presence of discolored water due to an aging infrastructure.

Recently, the SLACWD has implemented a more aggressive flushing program that requires flushing the system four times a year and began early April. District crews open fire hydrants and blow-off valves to flow high velocity water in a planned route. The water travels so fast that it is strong enough to remove the build-up of sediment and discolored water from inside the pipes.

The cause of the recent water discoloration reports experienced by our customers was due to sediment build up due to the lack of high velocity flushing in a very old pipeline system. This new aggressive Deep Main Water Flushing Program will result in clear water improvement as SLACWD and the residents have already noticed clear water throughout the system. Residents have been notified that at times, these flushing activities stir and 'kick up' decades of sediment buildup within our pipes. This stirred discolored water may flow and be trapped in resident water heaters for days or weeks. For this reason, SLACWD has provided instructions on how residents can drain their water heaters. Flushing the system with high velocities, together with draining resident water heaters, will result in clear water.

Upgrading Water Services

Under new operations management since January 2018, Sativa County Water District has initiated an aggressive, Systemwide Improvement Program (SIP) to deliver safe and reliable

water that meets and exceeds drinking water standards for health and safety set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of California. The SIP is a program to improve our aging water pipes that are over 70 years old. The program will help address deferred water maintenance issues and replace the aging infrastructure that has led to sediment buildup and brown water. SLACWD has recently applied for state grant funding to support the design and construction of these much-needed improvements as part of the SIP.

To address the problem of lack of water system improvements, SLACWD began flushing out the water pipe system throughout our service area neighborhoods through area fire hydrants. The initial deep main flushing activity began on April 4. This flushing program will continue regularly, monthly for some locations and quarterly for the rest of the distribution system. As part of the program, SLACWD crews will move from one end of the water distribution system serving our service area to another until all of the pipes have been cleaned and flushed, block by block.

What Customers can do to eliminate brown water

We are committed to providing quality service to our customers and, in order to ensure customer confidence, we are taking immediate steps to address our customer's discolored water reports. First, we ask that our customers flush their discolored water until they get clear water from their main. Second, we have posted how-to videos in both English and Spanish, now available on our website at www.satvawd.com, on how to properly drain their home water heaters. Proper water heater drainage will help ensure water in homes will not be discolored or brown, and if a customer prefers to have an expert provide water heater drainage service, we will be more than happy to schedule this service free of charge. Further, we will also be providing bottled water to all customers who request it to ensure confidence and reliability in their water needs while we work on our Deep Water Main Flushing Program over the next few months.

Our Commitment

SLACWD will continue to frequently test the water in our service area for water safety and quality throughout our flushing program. Water samples will continue to be taken daily at multiple locations throughout our service area. To date, all test results show that the water is in compliance with limits for more than 200 regulated and unregulated contaminants and current findings confirm that, despite our water's occasional discoloration, our drinking water continues to meet all standards for safe drinking water.

While we continue our flushing program over the course of the next several months, flushing of the pipes will help remove the sediment our customers are reporting in their tap water. During this period of flushing, residents may continue to notice occasional discoloration. Residents will be notified of flushing activity in their area through door hangers placed by SLACWD crews as they move from area to area.

SLACWD has highly effective water treatment and quality assurance processes in place to ensure the absence of harmful substances in tap water. Water quality is monitored by licensed operators following local, state and federal guidelines. Providing safe, reliable water to our customers is our highest priority at SLACWD. We will continue to provide updates about the progress of the flushing operation at www.satvawd.com.

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