



MEMO

To: Public Works Directors, Superintendents, Mayor & Village Board, Operators

From: Illinois Section of American Water Works Association

Date: April 16, 2020

Re: Building Water Quality and Coronavirus: Flushing Guidance for Periods of Low or No Use

A potential unintended consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic is a situation whereby large buildings (schools, churches, commercial and industrial buildings etc.) with extensive internal premise plumbing systems have had their use significantly reduced or completely shut down for an unusual period of time. This condition can allow opportunistic pathogens (i.e. legionella, coliform bacteria) to become active and grow creating what could be a hazardous situation.

As such, the Illinois Section American Water Works Association strongly recommends maintenance staff and building engineers carefully evaluate their internal building water systems, and develop or implement their Water Quality Management Plan to ensure the water is safe prior to re-occupying.

To assist those responsible for these facilities, the Illinois Section AWWA is sharing a [guidance document](#) prepared by the Environmental Science, Policy & Research Institute (ESPRI). ESPRI is a non-profit, apolitical organization with expertise in opportunistic pathogens and how they occur in the environment. The document provides information about how you can establish a Water Quality Management Plan if you don't already have one.

Additional information is available through the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#) website.

If you have any questions regarding premise plumbing in the wake of COVID-19, please contact the plumbing division of your local Public Health Department.

For more information on ISAWWA, visit www.isawwa.org.