

City Marries Watermain Flushing with Downtown Maintenance

In an effort to better manage our water supply and meet our water conservation objectives, the City of Parksville is recycling water used for watermain flushing to help clean the downtown sidewalks and medians.

At this time each year, the City of Parksville runs its annual unidirectional watermain flushing program. Sediment and minerals which build up in the watermain system need to be periodically flushed out to maintain good water quality. Unidirectional flushing is a method to move water through the system in only one direction which causes the water to move at a great velocity and strength. This cleans the pipe more effectively at a faster pace which means less water is discharged.

The program isolates and flushes pipe sections or loops in a sequential manner from source to periphery. The purpose of this program is to improve water aesthetics and quality, reduce sediment, turbidity and risk to public health and improve hydraulic capacity and hydrant efficiency intended to reduce operational costs. Water main flushing is a best management practice and is considered the best way to improve water quality and increase the reliability of the water distribution system. Flushing helps to improve chlorine residuals by reducing regrowth and biofilms. This year's program runs from February 17 to March 28.

Sections of the sidewalks and medians in the downtown area are cleaned on a rotating basis every few years for both aesthetics and safety reasons to prevent build-up of debris and organics. Typically the water flushed from mains is sent to the storm drainage system.

With some innovative thinking by City staff, a portion of the water produced by main flushing is now captured in a portable tank and utilized for the sidewalk cleaning program. Recapturing water discharged through flushing is difficult and generally not cost-effective so we are pleased staff has found a way to marry these two programs to achieve water savings and reduce our impact on the environment.

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For more information:

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