

**Recommendations for flushing household plumbing at homes served by WV American Water which also use a septic system for sewage disposal, rather than public sewer:**

A large surge of water can be disruptive or harmful to the operation of a septic tank system, or to an HAU (home aeration unit). Surges of water can cause solids to be flushed out of the septic tank or HAU, and also overload the soil absorption system (drainfield). Extreme surges of water may cause septic effluent to surface in the yard.

Septic system owners should make efforts to direct the flush water out to the surface of the ground, if possible, using a hose attached to the faucets. Garden hoses will not connect to most faucets, however, making this connection difficult.

An alternative recommendation would be to limit the discharge to one fixture at a time during part of the recommended flushing period, rather than flushing all faucets at the same. While this will not reduce the total volume used, it will slow down the rate of flow, which will reduce the turbulence in the septic tank (or HAU).

For example, the current flush instructions suggest all hot water taps be opened simultaneously for 15 minutes, and all cold water taps to be flushed simultaneously for 5 minutes. To limit the volume of the surge, each tap could be opened individually for the majority of the required flush time, and then all faucets opened simultaneously for the remainder.

An example of this process would be to open the hot water faucet at the kitchen sink for 13 minutes, shut it off, then open the hot water in the first bathroom sink for 13 minutes, shut it off, then open the hot water at the bathtub for 13 minutes, shut it off, and etc., for all hot water faucets in the home. Once all the hot water faucets had been flushed for 13 minutes, then open all hot water faucets simultaneously for the final two minutes, to ensure there is no “dead space” within the hot water plumbing.

The same process would be used for the cold water, except the time intervals would be four minutes initially for individual faucets, and one minute for all cold water faucets simultaneously.