

# Flushing Guidelines for Water Outlets in Hospitals

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**In order to ensure quality and safety of the water supply, all infrequently used water outlets must be flushed. Flushing must be sufficient to remove all stagnant water leading to the outlet.**

## 1. DAILY USE WATER OUTLETS



Daily use water outlets **DO NOT REQUIRE FLUSHING**  
 This includes showers.

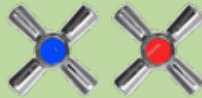
### AVOID SPLASHING



When running taps with a strong flow, **beware of splashing or creating aerosols.**

## 2. INFREQUENTLY USED WATER OUTLETS

The Unit/Ward clinical manager must ensure all infrequently used outlets are flushed at least once per week.



- Weekly flushing of infrequently used outlets:
- run **cold water for 3 minutes**
  - run **hot water for 3 minutes once the water is hot**

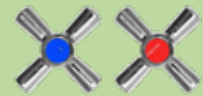
If there is difficulty gaining access to areas in need of weekly flushing, flush through & **purge water outlet to drain before use.**

## 3. AUGMENTED CARE UNITS

Daily flushing is recommended **if water outlets are not in frequent daily use.**



A local risk assessment by the IPC team and relevant personnel may determine this.



- Daily flushing of augmented care units
- run **cold water for 1 minutes**
  - run **hot water for 1 minute once the water is hot**

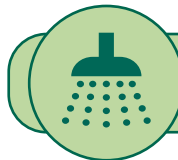
## Tap Flow Rates

Tap flow rates can vary significantly in healthcare facilities, even within the same area, certain areas may need higher flow rates (e.g. sluice rooms or pot washing sinks in kitchens) but most healthcare taps should be less than 8 litres/min.

**WHEN IT COMES TO LEGIONELLA FLUSHING, AND WATER USE IN GENERAL, THE HIGHER THE FLOW RATE THE HIGHER THE COST.**

So, if you notice a tap that seems or have a high flow rate, or splashes up when you turn it on, contact your on-site maintenance or green team.

## BEST PRACTICE FLOW RATES



**Washrooms & Public Toilets:**  
 2 - 4 litres per minute



**Toilets:**  
 4 - 6 litres per minute



**Kitchens & Canteens:**  
 6 - 8 litres per minute

For more on measuring flow rates see our [Water Efficiency Guide for the Healthcare Sector](#)

