



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL  
Fire Department

403 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-5705

phone (919) 968-2781 fax (919) 932-2956  
www.townofchapelhill.org

## FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**ISSUED BY:** Deputy Chief J.M. Lawrence  
**SUBJECT:** Upcoming Fire Hydrant Maintenance  
**CONTACT:** (919) 969-2008, (919) 968-2781, or OWASA at (919) 537-4224  
**DATE:** June 4, 2013

### **Joint News Release from the Chapel Hill Fire Department and the Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA)**

#### **Chapel Hill Fire Department will inspect fire hydrants in June; Citizens may notice discoloration of water and release of water from hydrants.**

During the month of June, the Chapel Hill Fire Department will be performing inspections and maintenance on all fire hydrants within Chapel Hill.

During these inspections, water will be released from each hydrant to clean the hydrant. This “flushing” may cause discoloration of OWASA drinking water, and citizens with discolored water are asked to run cold water from a bathtub or other faucet for 5 to 10 minutes to clear up the water. If the water does not clear up after 10 minutes, please contact OWASA at 919-968-4421.

The discoloration, which often occurs during maintenance of the water system and use of hydrants, does not mean that water is unsafe to drink but discolored water should not be used for laundry, etc.

Deputy Fire Chief Matt Lawrence said, “This hydrant maintenance and inspection program is important to ensure that the hydrants that our department depends on for fire protection are working properly, accessible, and well-maintained for reliable use during fire emergencies. Also, annual inspection of these hydrants is a requirement for our department to maintain its Insurance Services Organization (ISO) rating, which affects citizens’ insurance rates.”

The flushing will normally occur between 8 AM and 5 PM, but some work may be done in the early evening hours before dark.

The Fire Department will use dechlorination tablets to treat the water released from hydrants so it will not harm fish or amphibians, and flushing will be limited to the amount needed to clean each hydrant.

If maintenance or repair needs are identified in the inspections, the Fire Department will coordinate repairs with OWASA.

**For more information:**

Chapel Hill Fire Department: Deputy Chief Matt Lawrence, 919-969-2008, 919-968-2781 or [mlawrence@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mlawrence@townofchapelhill.org)

OWASA: Thurman Green, Manager, Distribution and Collection Systems, 919-537-4224 or [tgreen@owasa.org](mailto:tgreen@owasa.org)

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