



# **Flusher Hydrant Use**

## Guidelines and Operating Procedures

### Drinking Water Services

Updated February 2022

## Flusher Hydrant Guidelines

The use of all hydrants including private hydrants is provided for in the *City of Ottawa Water By-Law 2019-74*, as amended. Relevant sections of the by-law are included as Appendix 1.

Access to flusher hydrants is a service provided by the City of Ottawa that requires the cooperation of all parties involved. An individual permit is required for each vehicle that will access a flusher hydrant. Permits may not be transferred.

Any person wishing to use a fire hydrant or draw water from a fire hydrant must obtain a flusher hydrant permit from the City, connect to the hydrant in the manner required by the flusher hydrant permit, comply with the flusher hydrant Use Guidelines and Operational Procedures and report the quantity of water taken within 24 hours.

Any person with knowledge of individuals or companies that access hydrants without authorization must inform the City by calling 613-580-2424 extension 22300.

No water shall be taken from hydrants connected to the City of Ottawa's public well systems, as these hydrants are to be used for firefighting purposes only. These include hydrants located in Carp, Munster Hamlet, Richmond (Kings Park), Richmond West, Greely (Shadow Ridge) and Vars.

Water obtained from flusher hydrants should be considered **NON-POTABLE** and should not be used for drinking purposes.

The permit holder may be responsible for the cost of repairs to any hydrant caused by improper use and operation. Improper use of any fire hydrant is a violation of *The Public Utilities Act* and the *City of Ottawa Water By-Law 2019-74*, as amended.

The use of flusher hydrants will be monitored to ensure that operational and reporting requirements are met.

### Flusher Hydrant Location and Identification

On an annual basis, the City of Ottawa shall provide a map and list of the location of designated flusher hydrants. Flusher hydrants are numbered and a full written description is printed on the reverse of the map.

The map is provided for information purposes only and **shall not** be considered a blanket authorization for flusher hydrant use. During winter months, the number of accessible hydrants is reduced. Hydrants designated for use in the winter months (typically November to April however may be modified if weather permits as determined

by the Infrastructure & Water Services Department) are identified on the map as “all season” hydrants.

Please note that the locations of flusher hydrants may change without prior notification and the City will forward these revisions to all permit holders via email if a hydrant is affected by temporary restrictions (removed or out of service for multiple weeks) during the season.

Flusher hydrant locations are selected annually using the following criteria:

- Size of watermains
- Ease of access to trucks
- Least disruption to traffic and the public
- Reasonable distribution / spacing throughout the City

Flusher hydrants are located in areas of the water distribution system where the steady state operating pressures are moderate.

A flusher hydrant is identified on site by a permanent H<sub>2</sub>O water marker:



***ONLY those hydrants identified on the map and visually marked on-site shall be accessed by permit holders as flusher hydrants.***

## Enforcement and Penalties

Procedures must be strictly adhered to and non-compliance may lead to fines and loss of privileges, including withdrawal of permit issuance. Individual tickets and fines may be issued for unauthorized use, misuse, or failure to report water taken.

The City’s Water By-Law will be strictly enforced in accordance with Section 107. In addition to complying with any of the disclaimers mentioned in this document, please remember that it is the permit holders’ responsibility to comply with any and all other applicable laws and municipal by-laws.

It is also important to note that City of Ottawa staff reserve the right to inspect the vehicle of permit holders, while at a flusher hydrant, for the purpose of ensuring a proper connection to the City's water distribution system.

For questions related to the use and operation of flusher hydrants, please contact the City of Ottawa at [HydrantFlushers@ottawa.ca](mailto:HydrantFlushers@ottawa.ca). For information on the [Water By-law](#), visit [Ottawa.ca](http://Ottawa.ca)

# Flusher Hydrant Operating Procedures

## Vehicle Requirements & Hydrant Operations

### Backflow Prevention

Vehicles/equipment taking water may have built-in devices for backflow prevention including Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assembly and air gaps - see *Figure 1: Truck Backflow Prevention (Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assembly)* or see *Figure 2. Truck Backflow Prevention (Air Gap)*. These are acceptable; however, these devices can be difficult to verify. Unless these devices are permanently mounted to the vehicle and clearly visible, a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention assembly must be installed at the hydrant and shall be considered the only acceptable device.

Backflow prevention is provided for in the *Water By-law Sections 17(7) and 36 to 38*.

### Valve Operation

To minimize risk of damage to fire hydrants and watermains, please operate the valves **slowly** (30 second minimum to one minute operating time), in this order (if you have any questions about the proper operation of the hydrant, please contact us at 613-580-2424 ext. 22300):

- 1) Remove the hydrant lug cap with an approved hydrant wrench, **NOT a claw type wrench**.



Picture of an approved hydrant wrench

- 2) The gate valve should be fully closed when installed.
- 3) Install the gate valve and, when required, a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention assembly attached.

A shut off gate valve must be installed and used to control the flow from the hydrant - **NOT the hydrant operating nut**.

- 4) To prevent damage to the operating nut, while standing off to the side, use an approved hydrant wrench to turn the hydrant operating nut **slowly** (30 second minimum to one minute operating time), in a smooth and gradual manner.

***The hydrant must be fully opened when in use. The hydrant should be fully opened or fully closed to prevent damage. Damage can be caused from water escaping from drain ports at the base of the hydrant, if the hydrant is left partially closed.***

- 5) Open the gate valve by hand **slowly** (30 second minimum to one minute operating time), in a smooth and gradual manner to bleed the trapped air.
- 6) Once the water starts to flow, close the gate valve by hand **slowly** (30 second minimum to one minute operating time), in a smooth and gradual manner.
- 7) Connect the filler hoses attached to the tanker vehicle. Filler hoses should not be run across a right of way where they may be run over by vehicle traffic. The permit holder shall put in place all required traffic control and pedestrian control measures. The contractor shall take every precaution to ensure there is always a safe pedestrian path while the truck is being filled.
- 8) Fully open the gate valve by hand **slowly** (30 second minimum to one minute operating time), in a smooth and gradual manner and fill the tanker vehicle.
- 9) Once the tanker vehicle is filled, close the gate valve by hand **slowly** (30 second minimum to one minute operating time) in a smooth and gradual manner.
- 10) Using the hydrant wrench, turn the hydrant operating nut **slowly** (30 second minimum to one minute operating time) in a smooth and gradual manner to close the hydrant. **Ensure the flusher hydrant is fully closed.**
- 11) Open the gate valve by hand **slowly** (30 second minimum to one minute operating time) in a smooth and gradual manner to release any back pressure.
- 12) Remove equipment. Wait a minimum of five minutes to allow the hydrant barrel to drain and replace the hydrant lug cap using the hydrant wrench.

## Reporting & Usage; Issues with/Damage to Hydrant

In accordance with Section 67 of the current Water By-Law, all water must be reported within 24 hours of being taken.

To report your water usage, it must be done either by faxing (613) 728-6928 or by emailing [HydrantFlushers@ottawa.ca](mailto:HydrantFlushers@ottawa.ca)

When reporting usage, permit holders must use the standard template provided by the City of Ottawa.

If a hydrant malfunctions during operation, permit holders should leave their gate valve on the hydrant and notify 311 immediately. Permit holders must ensure they provide their company name and contact information when speaking with 311 so that the City can notify them when the repair has been completed and gate valve is available for pick up. The repair will be completed based on priority (this may not be the same day).

## **Appendix 1 City of Ottawa Water By-law 2019-74 Sections**

### **Section 36 to 38 - Backflow Prevention**

#### **Section 36**

No Person shall connect, cause to be connected, or allow to remain connected to the Waterworks, or construct, install or maintain any piping, fixture, fitting, container, appliance, equipment or any other connection which may or could enable any substance to enter the Waterworks.

#### **Section 37**

- (1) The General Manager of Public Works and Environmental Services may require the installation of an Approved Backflow prevention mechanism on a Private Watermain or Private Water Service in accordance with Schedule “I”; and
- (2) Every Person required to install an Approved Backflow prevention mechanism on a Private Watermain or Private Water Service shall comply with the Backflow Prevention Program Requirements as set out in Schedule “I”.

#### **Section 38**

In the event that any or all provisions of Section 36 have been violated, or where a requirement mandated by Section 37 has been violated, the General Manager of Public Works and Environmental Services may shut off the water supply to a Private Water Main or Private Water Service without prior notice to any Person.

### **Sections 66 to 70 - Use and care of hydrants**

#### **Section 66 - Permission to use water from fire hydrants**

No Person shall operate a fire hydrant, except:

1. the General Manager of the City of Ottawa’s Public Works Department;
2. a member of the fire department; or
3. a Person with a permit to take water from flusher hydrants for the purpose of flushing streets; construction and maintenance; flushing sewers or other uses approved by the General Manager of Public Works for which a permit has been issued.

#### **Section 67 - Flusher hydrant permits**

1. The General Manager of Public Works may require that any Person wishing to use a fire hydrant or draw water from a fire hydrant pursuant to subsection 66(3) shall:



- a) obtain a flusher hydrant permit from the City;
  - b) connect to the hydrant in the manner required by the flusher hydrant permit and comply with the Flushers Hydrant Use Guidelines and Operational Procedures while drawing water from a fire hydrant or while connected to a fire hydrant;
  - c) report all water usage within 24 hours of taking the water, as stipulated in the Flushers Hydrants Use Guidelines & Operational Procedures; and
  - d) affix a copy of the flusher hydrant permit to the vehicle it was issued for, as follows:
    1. for single unit vehicles, to the front windshield, lower corner, passenger side; or
    2. for trailer units, to the tanker trailer or water container itself, not the towing vehicle.
2. A flusher hydrant permit shall not be transferred.

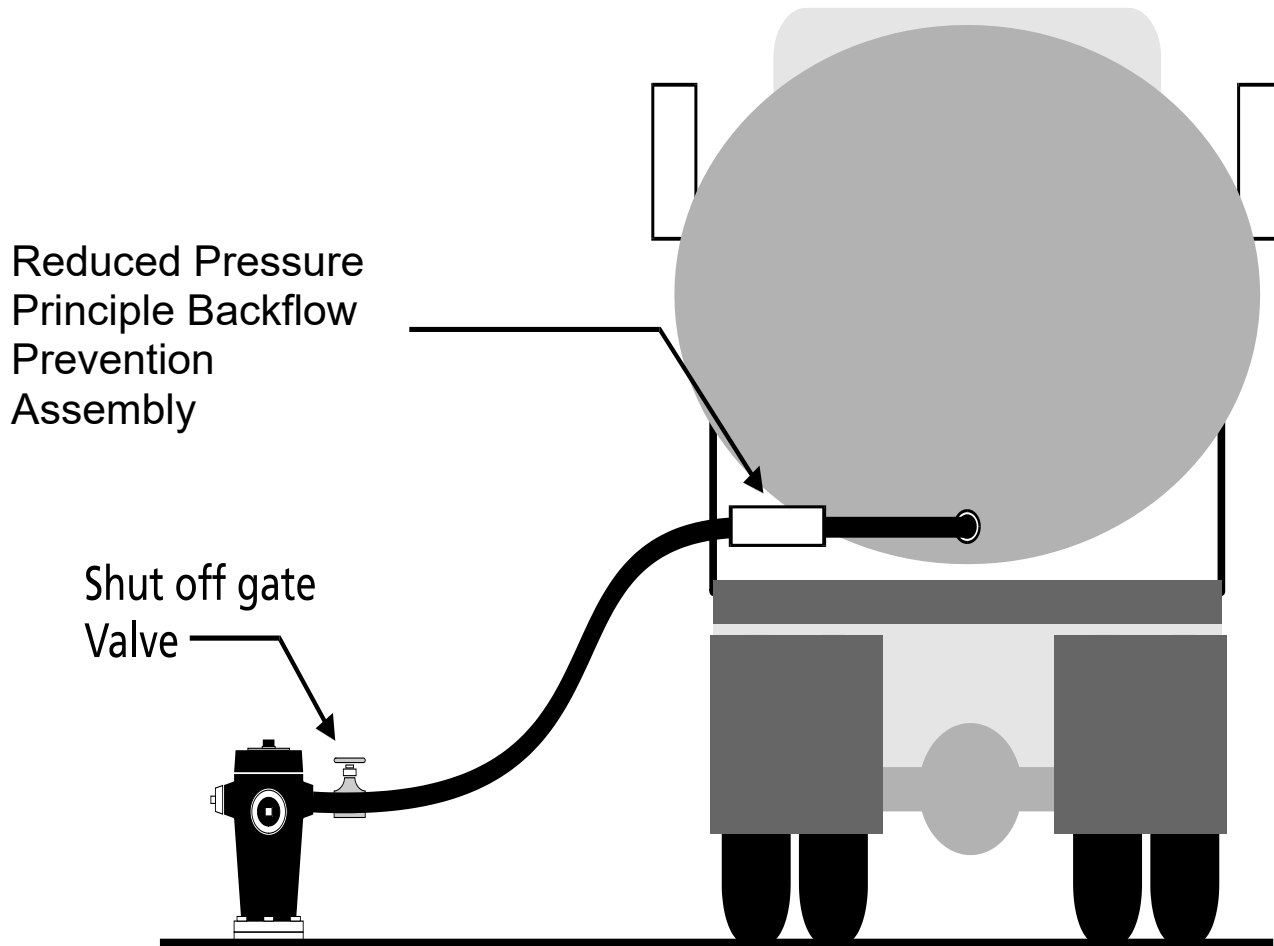
## **Sections 107– Enforcement, offences and penalties**

### **Section 107**

This By-law shall be enforced by a By-law Officer.

1. In addition to any other provision of this By-law, any Person who contravenes any provision of this By-law or any schedules attached hereto is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a minimum fine of \$500 and a maximum fine of \$100,000 as provided for in subsection 429(3)(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001.
2. A Person who is convicted of an offence under this By-law is liable, for each day or part of a day that the offence continues, to a minimum fine of \$500 and a maximum fine of \$10,000 and the total of all daily fines for the offence is not limited to \$100,000 as provided for in subsection 429(3)(2) of the Municipal Act, 2001.

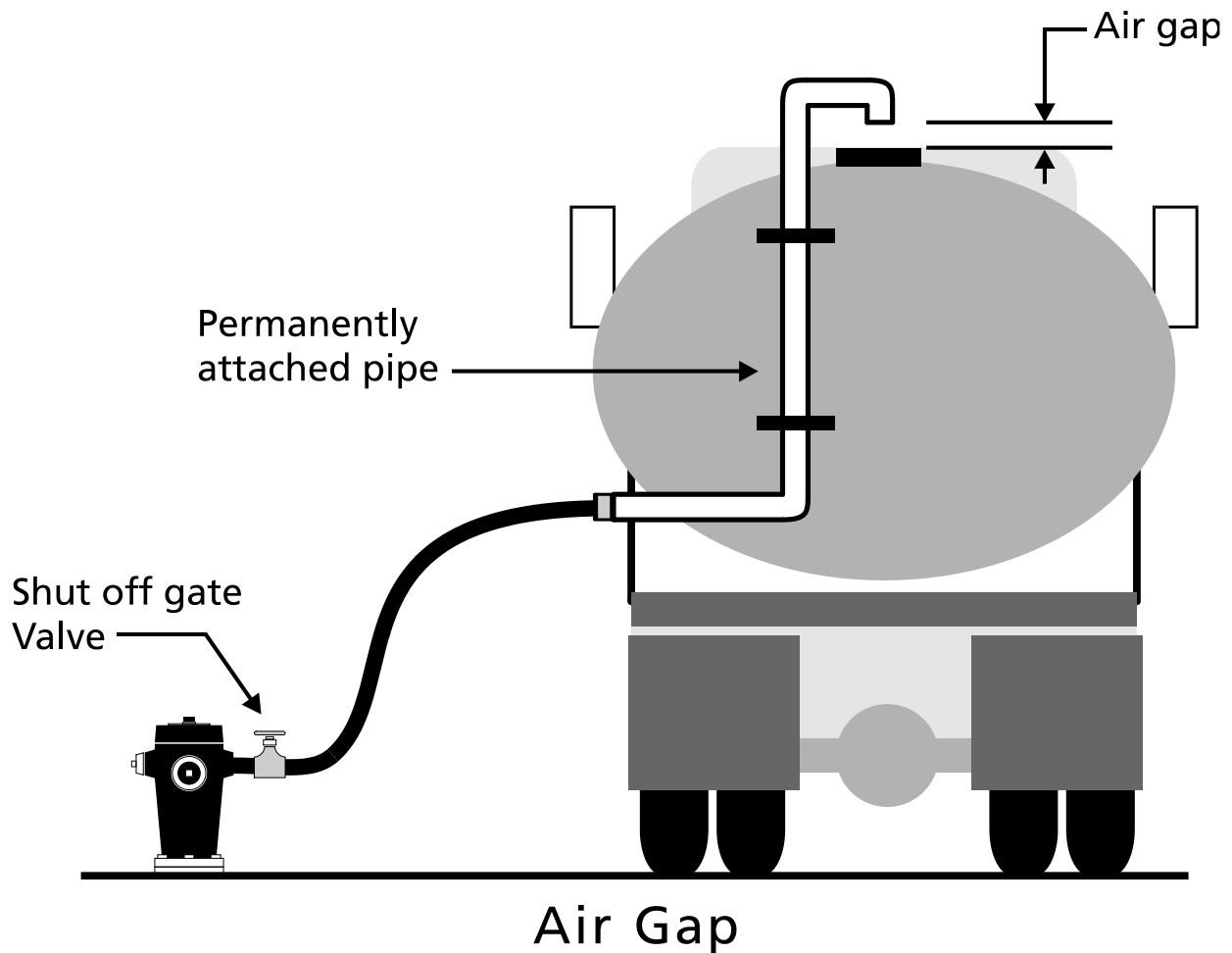
**Figure 1: Truck Backflow Prevention (Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assembly)**



**Please refer to Valve Operation once you've identified your vehicle set up.**

- 1) The Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assembly must be attached permanently to the vehicle in a clearly visible location.**
- 2) The length of hose should be kept to a minimum.**

**Figure 2: Truck Backflow Prevention (Air Gap)**



**Please refer to Valve Operation once you've identified your vehicle set up.**

- 1) The air gap MUST be in a clearly visible location and must be a minimum of two times the diameter of the permanently attached pipe.**
- 2) The length of hose should be kept to a minimum.**