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FLORENCE
SOUTH CAROLINA

For Immediate Release – June 25, 2024

City Addresses Water Quality Issues that Occurred on Monday, June 24, 2024 and Upcoming Planned Maintenance at the Surface Water Treatment Plant

Media Contacts:

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FLORENCE, SC – On Monday, June 24th, many of our utility customers experienced discolored water. We apologize for this occurrence and understand the frustration of our utility customers and accept full responsibility to provide the best water quality for those we serve.

In preparation for scheduled maintenance, a by-pass pump was being installed yesterday at the surface water treatment plant. Although unanticipated, during this process, interruptions in flow at the plant resulted in hydraulic changes which created a disturbance of the water system and ultimately impacted water quality.

To prevent future occurrences, city staff in conjunction with recommendations from the city's consulting engineering team, and with the assistance from a licensed utility contractor will perform maintenance to install a new 36" diameter valve from July 1 – 3, 2024 at the Frank E. Willis Pee Dee Regional Water Treatment Plant. This valve controls the facility's ability to distribute water and supply the city's water system. While the city anticipates the repair to take a few days, potential delays may exist. During this time, water production volume will not change, but unforeseen events like fires or water main breaks could strain services, causing low pressure.

How can utility customers help?

While the city does not anticipate any disruptions, we do suggest out of an abundance of caution that residents limit non-essential water use such as filling swimming pools, washing your car, and watering the lawn. Conserve water where you can by taking shorter showers, turning off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving, and delaying laundry if possible, during this time.

What is the Utilities Department doing in preparation for the repair?

In the days before the repair, the city's elevated tanks will be topped off to assist with meeting system demands and ensure that water pressures are properly maintained. City staff is collaborating closely with the contractors performing this repair and will be on-hand to assist as necessary.

What is the effect for customers?

If repairs go as expected, and there are no unusually large drains on the system, customers should not be impacted.

What should customers expect once the plant is back online?

Due to hydraulics of the distribution system, there could be some additional water quality issues (discoloration from iron) once the plant is back online. Following the repair, utility operators will gradually restore the plant and flush the system to mitigate these issues.

The City of Florence Marketing & Public Relations team will keep customers updated of the status of these repairs on the city's website at www.cityofflorence.com and on the City's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/cityofflorence>.

City of Florence Utility Staff has notified the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) of this scheduled maintenance and are keeping them informed through this process. If you have any questions concerning this notice, please call the City of Florence Public Works & Utilities Department at (843) 665-3236.

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