



City of Yakima

# **News Release**

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**Subject: Stagnant Water a Concern for Commercial Building Closures**

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**Release Date: Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

## **Stagnant Water a Concern for Commercial Building Closures**

Extensive COVID-19 stay-at-home orders have resulted in many commercial buildings (offices, hotels, medical facilities, etc.) with reduced or no water use.

Stagnant water in these buildings can cause conditions that increase the risk for growth and spread of Legionella (Legionnaire's disease), lead to low or undetectable levels of the disinfectant chlorine, and create unsafe levels of lead and copper.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has updated its building water system guidance. It is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html>

Other resources include:

- The Washington State Department of Health issued a [COVID-19 Guidance for Legionella and Building Water System Closures](#). It focuses on reducing pathogen and corrosion concerns that occur when there is a large drop in building water use.
- The Environmental Science, Policy & Research Institute (ESPRI) and AH Environmental Consultants, Inc. developed coronavirus building flushing guidance at <https://esprinstitute.org/coronavirus-building-flushing-guidance/>
- The Purdue University [Center for Plumbing Safety](#) organized a [rapid response study](#) for reducing the risk of harmful water in low to no occupancy buildings.

For more information contact Assistant Public Works Director David Brown at 575-6204.