

Guidance for Potable Water Dispensing Unit (PWDU) Operation during COVID-19

The following are options that can be considered by communities with a PWDU to increase safety and minimize risks. These options may need to be altered given each community's individual needs and circumstances. PWDUs provide high quality drinking water to users. MAE recommends that communities continue to operate their PWDUs and not shut them down.

Staff member on-site at PWDU and dispensing the water

1. For this option, the community should consider reducing operating hours for the PWDU and inform residents of the new operating hours. The community will need to determine an appropriate number of hours for operation to avoid congestion at the PWDU.
2. A sign should be placed on the door to the PWDU emphasizing social distancing and outlining new PWDU operation as per bullets #3 and #4.
3. Only one staff member to be allowed inside the PWDU dispensing area.
4. Residents are to place their containers at the PWDU entrance and then step away and maintain a 2 metre separation from the door.
5. Staff should wash their hands before and after handling a resident's container.
6. Staff should clean the exterior of the container using one of the following methods:
 - o disinfecting wipe;
 - o alcohol swab; or
 - o spray bottle containing a diluted bleach solution along with a paper towel (dilute bleach solution can be made by mixing 2 teaspoons of household strength bleach with 1 litre of water). **WARNING:** Mixing bleach (sodium hypochlorite) with other chemicals (even a residue) can create chlorine gas. Use a new or fully cleaned spray bottle if mixing your own dilute bleach mixture.
7. Staff should disinfect the dispensing tap between each use using one of the above methods;
8. Staff should be careful when filling containers to not touch the container off the dispensing tap.
9. Town staff should enhance disinfection of PWDU components; increase the frequency of disinfecting items such as door handle, and dispensing area worktop during operating hours.

Residents to dispense their own water from the PWDU:

1. A sign should be placed on the door to the PWDU emphasizing social distancing and that only one person may enter the PWDU dispensing area at a time.
2. A portable hand wash station could be established so residents can wash their hands before using the PWDU.

3. Hand sanitizer could be provided at the PWDU (attached to wall) for residents to use before filling their containers.
4. Disinfecting wipes, alcohol swabs, or dilute bleach solution could be provided at the PWDU for residents to clean the dispensing taps prior to use.
5. Town staff should enhance disinfection of PWDU components; increase the frequency of disinfecting items such as door handle, dispensing tap, and dispensing area worktop during operating hours.
6. A staff member could be on-site to control access to the PWDU and ensure residents are using the hand-washing and/or disinfection options. Staff should maintain 2 metre separation from PWDU users.
7. The community should consider reducing operating hours for the PWDU and inform residents of the new operating hours. The community will need to determine an appropriate number of hours for operation to avoid congestion at the PWDU.

Updated: April 7, 2020