

# HUMBOLDT BAY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 22, 2026

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT: Temporary Discolored Water Following Pressure Surge in Transmission Pipeline

Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District (HBMWD) is aware that some customers are experiencing cloudy, red, or brown tap water and wants to assure the public that **your water is safe to drink**. The temporary discoloration is the result of a pressure surge that occurred in one of the District's transmission pipelines.

### What Happened

A sudden pressure surge occurred in a District transmission pipeline. Pressure surges—sometimes called “water hammer” events—can occur when flow conditions in a pipeline change rapidly, such as during a pump start or stop, valve operation, or abrupt demand change. The resulting hydraulic force can temporarily disturb sediment and mineral deposits that naturally accumulate on the interior walls of water mains over time. When this material is dislodged and carried into the distribution system, it causes the red, brown, or rusty appearance that some customers are seeing.

### Is My Water Safe?

Yes. The discoloration is caused by iron and manganese—naturally occurring minerals present in all water systems. While the appearance and taste may be temporarily unpleasant, the water meets all state and federal drinking water standards and does not pose a health risk.

However, HBMWD recommends the following precautions until the water clears:

- Avoid running hot water or doing laundry until the water clears at your tap, as discolored water may stain fabrics and leave deposits in water heaters.
- If the water appears to clear at your tap, run it for an additional 2–3 minutes to ensure fresh water has fully flushed your service line.

### How to Clear Your Tap Water

To clear discolored water from your home plumbing:

- Start with a cold water tap at the faucet closest to your water meter or service connection (typically a garden hose or utility sink).
- If flushing through faucet, remove aerator prior to flushing.
- Run cold water for 3–5 minutes or until the water runs clear.
- Do not run hot water during this process.

- Once the water runs clear at that tap, you can use water throughout the rest of your home normally.

### **What HBMWD Is Doing**

District operations staff are actively monitoring water quality throughout the affected area and are conducting system flushing operations with local water providers to clear the pipeline and distribution system as quickly as possible. We are working to restore normal water appearance as soon as it is safe to do so and will provide updates if conditions change.

### **Questions or Concerns?**

Customers with questions or ongoing concerns about their water quality may contact HBMWD at **(707) 822-2918**. We appreciate your patience while we work to resolve this situation.