

Resuming Use of Water Fountains: COVID-19

Water fountains are an important resource in public spaces, especially during summer when heat and dehydration can be the most dangerous. The risk of getting COVID-19 from touching a solid surface (like a water fountain button) is low, and COVID-19 has not been found in drinking water. Therefore, **water fountains and bottle fillers can be used during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Safety tips for reactivating fountains

Shutting off water fountains or other fixtures for long periods of time can increase the risk of water quality problems, including growth of dangerous bacteria like Legionella. Buildings and fixtures that have low use or are in unoccupied spaces should be reactivated with care.

Daily cleaning to prevent disease

To further reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, MDH recommends that programs establish a daily schedule for cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces, especially in shared or public spaces. This may include water fountains, doorknobs, light switches, sink handles, restrooms, countertops, desks, keyboards, etc.

Water helps prevent heat-related illness

Access to drinking water provides more benefit than risk by preventing dehydration, heat-related illnesses, and physical distress during activities and at times of extreme heat.