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Low Water Pressure or Low Water Flow Trouble Shooting Guide

If you are experiencing low water pressure or low-flow, please use the following information to help diagnose the cause of the problem.

1. Compare the pressure and flow of different water fixtures throughout the house and outside the house. Open a faucet all the way and hold your hand in the stream of water delivered to compare the flow and pressure to your other faucets or fixtures. Different flows or pressures from different fixtures indicate a problem with the faucet/fixture in question or the pipe feeding that fixture. If the faucet closest to the water delivery point (water meter) has good flow and pressure but other faucets and fixtures in different locations have lower flows or pressures the problem is in your house's internal plumbing or fixtures. Older water pipes and fixtures can and will build up mineral deposits that restrict flow and pressure over time. Clean or replace the aerator screens on any affected faucet or fixture. Sometimes the entire fixture assembly must be cleaned or replaced. Remove and clean clogged fixtures with a vinegar or cleaning solution to dissolve mineral build-up. Replace fixtures if necessary.
2. Sometimes the water supply piping in or under the house can be restricted by clogging objects or mineral build-up. Older houses with old pipes (galvanized pipe) may need to have the piping replaced. The water supply pipe/line from the meter to the house can reduce flow if it is a smaller diameter, usually $\frac{3}{4}$ or less. If this is the case, it may need replacing with a larger diameter line. A plumbing contractor may be required to accomplish these tasks.
3. Check for leaks. Any leak can affect flow and pressure. Inspect your water meter when no water is being used. There should be no movement of the needle under the lens of the meter or the small triangle leak-detector located near the needle. While you are at the water meter check the shut-off valves and make sure they are completely open.
4. Check the function of water softeners or water treatment systems such as filters or reverse-osmosis systems. These treatment systems do reduce pressure slightly under normal operating conditions and can clog which will reduce flow or pressure even more.