

Prep Your Water System for an Open House

Put your best foot forward when the public comes to your plant to learn about water treatment and the importance of their water service.

An open house is a great way to **connect with customers**. Plus, at an open house employees can show friends and family what their workplace looks like and how it works.

Open House Checklist

- Be sure the plant is on and fully operational to “show off” what you do best.
- Post signs to help visitors find their way around. Important signs include: welcome, parking, restrooms, meeting location and arrows to help them navigate where you want them to go. Be sure that restricted areas are roped off and “Staff Only” signs are posted for public safety.
- Clean Up. You don’t invite guests over to your home without spiffing the place up a little. Be sure that your plant is clean and polished. Trim the lawn and shrubs, dust, freshen the paint where needed, scrub down everything, etc. This will likely be the first time visitors will see a facility like yours, so you want to make it shine.
- Prepare all staff. An open house is an “all hands on deck” situation. Make sure that everyone can answer basic questions about the plant and operation. Smiles and a welcoming attitude are key to making the best impression.





Open House Activities

You do not have to do everything on this list. Start with a few activities, and do them really well. Then, add more next time.

TOUR

Show the basics of the water treatment process. On the tour emphasize the importance of the water service you provide and how your utility works hard to keep the community safe and healthy. Take visitors to the lab, do a backwash, let them look into microscopes or test a sample for chlorine. Make it as interactive as possible.

EXAMPLES

Put out examples of things that are safe and interesting for people to look at and touch. It could be a filter, a pump, pipe, tool, meter, map, etc.

GIVEAWAYS

Make sure giveaways are educational and water focused. Examples: reusable bottles to make tap on-the-go quick and easy, tablets to check toilet leaks, reusable tote bags with a water message, etc.

DISPLAYS

Set up a display showing how much tap water that one penny buys next to a can of soda or milk with price tags. Or, if you have a bigger space, do a cost-for-cost comparison.

Show visitors how many gallons will leak from a dripping faucet in 24 hours. You could have an example leak right there dripping into a barrel. Explain to them how much a small leak would cost over a month or a year. Give visitors information about how to fix a leak in their home.

GAMES

Water Haul – Have visitors try carrying a 5-gallon bucket of water a short distance. Talk about how water is heavy (8lbs/gallon). The average person uses 100 gallons each day. Could they carry all that from their nearest stream or lake? Your utility is there to bring it to their house conveniently.

Water Taste Test – Set up a water taste test. Have folks taste your water and bottled water. Then, have them vote which one they like best. Messages could include: bottled water costs 600 times more than tap; tap water is tested more often for your safety than bottled water; tap water is the greener choice.

Quiz Game – After the tour, quiz visitors on the main points you covered in your tour. Give prizes for correct answers.

ART

There are lots of water cycle and water treatment coloring pages online that you can print for guests to color. Or, have art supplies for visitors to make their own posters along a certain theme.