High Water Pressure?

Get the Facts.

What is water pressure?
When you turn on a faucet and water flows, it is because it is being “pushed” by gravity. The height of the nearby City storage reservoir in relation to your home determines the amount of “push,” or water pressure you have.

What is the standard for water pressure?
The Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC) 608.2 recommends that households with water pressure higher than 80 psi (pounds per square inch) install an approved Pressure Reducing Valve (PRV).

Is having high pressure a problem?
High water pressure (in excess of 80 psi) helps fire fighting efforts; however, it can also lead to wasted water and may damage some home appliances, faucets, hoses, and other water fixtures. Installing a PRV can reduce the strain on plumbing fixtures and increase their service life. It can also save you money on your water bill.

Above photo: Pressure Reducing Valve

How can I tell if I have high pressure?
If you hear banging pipes in your home or observe water splashing in your sink, you might have excessive pressure. If you believe you have high pressure and are concerned:

- You can check to see if you are in a high pressure zone online.
- Call a licensed plumber to have a PRV installed. We offer rebates - visit our website for details and download a rebate form.

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Getting a PRV installed:

Your PRV must be installed by a licensed professional. Check the yellow pages for a licensed plumber in your area. Installation of the valve, including parts and labor, typically costs less than $500.

**WARNING:** If your home has a fire suppression system, check with the manufacturer on the minimum pressure required for the system to operate properly before installing a PRV!

Where should the PRV be installed?

A second meter/valve box should be installed within three feet of your original meter/valve box, and between your original meter/valve box and your home (see diagram below). This box should contain an additional shut-off valve followed by the PRV. **Installing your valve in the correct location is important!** This ensures:

- that your PRV can be easily found in the event of failure.
- that the water pressure will be reduced in your whole house rather than only a portion of your house.

Residential PRV Policy:

The Uniform Plumbing Code requires the installation of a PRV on new construction when pressures exceed 80 pounds per square inch (psi). The PRV shall reduce the pressure to 80psi or less.

Static pressure shall be used to determine the need for a PRV. The pressure shall be measured at the meter by City of Olympia staff.

If you Have High Water Pressure:

If the City changes the water system operations which causes the pressure to rise to 80psi or greater, the City will install a PRV at the homeowner’s request. The homeowner is required to make the request for installation of the PRV within one year from the pressure change and will be responsible for maintaining the PRV.

Rebate Program:

The City of Olympia offers a limited number of rebates to City water customers who live in a high pressure zone as part of its water conservation program. If you are experiencing high water pressure in your home, you can receive rebates for up to 50 percent of the installed cost of a PRV at your residence (maximum of $125).

Contacting Public Works:

- 360.753.8588, TTY 1.800.833.6388
- publicworks@ci.olympia.wa.us
- Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday, except City recognized holidays

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*Above: Your original City meter box contains a water shut-off valve followed by your water meter. Your new PRV box will contain another water shut-off valve followed by the pressure reducing valve. The water shut-off valve in your meter box is to be operated by City employees only.*

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*The City of Olympia is committed to the non-discriminatory treatment of all persons in employment and the delivery of services and resources.*