Downtown Canal Dyes

Beginning in January 2022, the process to dye the Downtown Canal will transition from a first come, first served basis to a lottery. The purpose of the change is to make dyeing the Downtown Canal a more equitable process. This document provides answers to frequently asked questions about dyeing the Downtown Canal and also outlines the new process.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will the lottery process work?
We will randomly draw six entrants from the collective submissions. These entrants will be contacted in the order of which they are pulled to select their preferred date.

How does my organization enter the lottery?
All interested organizations must complete this form by January 10, 2022. Only one entry per organization. If your organization completes more than one form, you will be removed from the process.

Why is the process changing?
Dyeing the Canal puts stress on the ecosystem within the water and increases maintenance and cleaning needs. A limited number of dye events will allow the Canal to continue as a beautiful, public space in downtown Indianapolis. Beginning in 2021, 21 days are required between each canal dye which helped clear the water between dyes, however that process was not necessarily equitable as it favored the organization who reserved the date first.

What dye colors are allowed?
Royal blue, turquoise, teal and bright green.

Why are these dye colors allowed?
Shades of blue and green do not dramatically change the state of the water and are more natural colors. Shades of red, pink, orange and purple increase Canal cleaning and maintenance needs.

How much time must elapse between dyes and why?
We require 21 days between Canal dyes. This allows the water to return to its natural state, clear of dye. The dye produces a larger impact when poured into clean water.

How much of the Canal can I dye?
Only the fountain will be dyed, not the entire Canal.

Can I supply my own dye?
Dye must be purchased through the City's vendor. Other dyes will not be used.