

WHAT'S ON TAP



NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS • WINTER ISSUE



Meet Florencetine Preston: A Champion of Change in Lead Free DC!

In the heart of DC Water's Lead Free DC (LFDC) Program is a remarkable story of dedication, continuous learning, and community involvement. At 86 years of age, **Florencetine Preston** is leaving her mark on her community while championing DC Water's mission to ensure safe, lead-free water for the communities we serve.

Ms. Preston's DC Water journey started through the Department of Employment Services (DOES) Senior Program, opening doors for older adults to dive into meaningful work. Drawing from her 26-year experience as a foster parent for children with disabilities, Florencetine was struck by their unwavering determination to succeed despite facing tough challenges. That same grit defines her work at DC Water. "In my work with LFDC, I've witnessed the impact of education. It's not just about replacing pipes; it's about empowering our community with knowledge to safeguard our water and our future."

Having had lead pipes in her home replaced by DC Water, she brings a personal perspective to the task of ensuring safe, lead-free drinking water. By carefully leveraging her position as a respected community elder, Florencetine is able to actively engage residents during events such as health fairs and church activities that attract

people of all ages. This inclusive engagement helps Lead Free DC to reach every part of the communities we serve.

As with her time as a foster parent, Florencetine takes pride in mentoring and supporting her younger peers, emphasizing the pivotal role of community programs in offering valuable experiences. Her advice to newcomers in these programs? "Dive in with an open mind, ready to learn, lend a hand, and forge friendships."

Her vision for her future with LFDC is crystal clear—"to keep contributing, learning, and leaving a positive mark."

Florencetine's example speaks to the importance of programs like LFDC, opening doors for people of all ages to explore new career paths, give back to their community, and foster lasting change. Her extraordinary story stands as a symbol of commitment to community involvement, inspiring others to make a difference in their own unique ways. It also showcases that we can all work together to collaborate across boundaries and bridge generational gaps to promote vital initiatives like Lead Free DC.

To learn more about Lead Free DC, visit dcwater.com/lead.

CEO's Message

Weather forecasters are predicting a snowy winter, which would be welcome news for the Washington region. The amount of precipitation we received was below normal for much of 2023, raising concerns about a potential drought.



Our drinking water in the District of Columbia comes from the Potomac River and when the flow drops below a certain threshold, it triggers drought monitoring by the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB) of which the District is a member. During a particularly dry stretch last summer, DC was under "moderate drought" conditions.

But rest assured, the region is well protected during a drought due to decades of planning and preparation. The Council of Governments has a comprehensive drought plan that has been in place since the region's last major drought in 2000, and upstream reservoirs can release stored water into the Potomac when necessary. Those reservoirs are currently at 100% capacity.

Still, although there's no cause for alarm about a potential drought, it is always a good idea to use water wisely and conserve where you can.

David L. Gadis, CEO
ceosuggestions@dcwater.com

Don't Forget to Reenroll for Customer Assistance!

Every year, our DC Water Cares program helps thousands of customers who can't afford to pay their water bills. DC Water Cares is among the most robust assistance programs offered by any water utility in the nation. Households with incomes up to \$152,100 (household of four) may qualify for assistance.



This is a reminder to complete your annual enrollment for the new fiscal year – which began on October 1.

Participants in one of our Customer Assistance Programs (CAP) receive discounts on monthly water usage charges, the Water System Replacement Fee (WSRF), and/or the Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC). The discounts range from \$196 to \$1,082 annually and expire each year on September 30.

By enrolling in a CAP program, you may also be eligible to receive up to an additional \$2,000 in assistance while funds from our Residential Assistance Program (RAP) are available! The sooner you reapply, the sooner you can start saving on your water bill! Visit doee.dc.gov/service/criacrelief to apply.



Online Payment Changes

DC Water offers a number of convenient options for paying your bill online. Create an account at mydcwater.com and use your credit card, checking or savings account to make a one-time payment. You can also sign up for recurring payment options using a credit card or your checking or savings account.

Beginning in February of this year, we will be switching to a new platform to process payments. The Paymentus interface will have a different look and feel, and some new features, but otherwise the switch should be relatively seamless for customers.

Please note that if you use a credit card to pay online, DC Water will begin assessing a processing fee in 2024 to cover the rising costs of offering this service. The fee will be \$1.95 per transaction for residential customers (2.65% for non-residential). We will continue to accept E-Check payments at no additional charge. DC Water is also phasing out its mobile app. Instead, you can access the My DC Water portal on your web browser or your mobile device. Visit dcwater.com/paying-your-bill for more payment options.

Protect Your Pipes This Winter

'Tis the season for frigid temperatures and frozen pipes! Anytime the mercury dips into the teens or colder, there is a chance water will freeze in the underground service line leading to your home, or even in your indoor plumbing. Here are a few tips to help prevent that from happening:



- Allow cold faucets to drip and open cabinet doors if you have uninsulated pipes under sinks on exterior walls.
- Install a "pipe sleeve" for water pipes that are not insulated.
- Find the water shut-off valve in your home in advance of a water emergency, so you know how to stop the water quickly if a pipe should burst.
- If you are going away for an extended period, be sure to maintain adequate heat inside your home at no lower than 55 degrees.
- Disconnect garden hoses and, if practical, use an indoor valve to shut off and drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets.
- Open the outside hose bibs to allow any water in the line to drain out. Keep this outside valve open.
- If your pipes do freeze, visit dcwater.com/cold-weather-pipes for tips on how to thaw them safely.
- For emergency service inside your home, contact a licensed plumber. Call the DC Water 24-hour emergency hotline at **202-612-3400** for water emergencies on public property.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY
Customer Service Department
5000 Overlook Avenue, SW, Suite 400, Washington DC 20032

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