

WHAT'S ON TAP



NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS • SUMMER ISSUE



115-Year-Old Cast Iron Pipe Fails, Triggers Boil Water Advisory

"I am proud of the swift, thorough, and effective response from our teams, and I also want to thank our customers for their support and patience during the incident." – David L. Gadis, CEO and General Manager

If you live in Northwest DC, you might have been impacted by a Boil Water Advisory (BWA) on May 8. DC Water issued the advisory as a precaution after receiving multiple reports of low or no water pressure. When a water distribution system loses pressure, it creates a pathway for contaminants to potentially enter the system. If the low pressure remains uncorrected long enough, it is standard practice to issue a BWA until the safety of the drinking water can be confirmed through two rounds of sample testing.

Authority repair crews worked overnight to reach the damaged main, and found it had split, requiring the replacement of a ten-foot section of the pipe. Further research showed that the 20" cast-iron main was 115 years old and had been installed in 1909.

Following confirmation of two rounds of clear samples, the BWA was lifted on May 10. "Considering our aging water infrastructure and the shift towards weather extremes, I expect there will be more main breaks in the years ahead than we have typically experienced," said **CEO and General Manager David L. Gadis**. "No water utility wants to have a BWA, but every utility experiences them. The key is in how quickly you can respond to the situation. I am proud of the swift, thorough, and effective response from our teams, and I also want to thank our customers for their support and patience during the incident."

CEO's Message

As covered in this issue of *What's on Tap*, DC Water was forced to declare a Boil Water Advisory (BWA) on May 8 in response to a loss of system pressure affecting parts of Northwest Washington. The BWA was triggered when there was a break in a cast iron water main installed more than a century ago.



For decades, under investment in our national water infrastructure has deferred maintenance and replacements, and those needs must now be addressed. Aging water infrastructure can cause leaks, potential contamination, and environmental impacts. Because of the role clean water plays in public health, sanitation, and agriculture, repairing and upgrading our water infrastructure will ensure a clean and sustainable water supply for generations to come.

However, even after factoring in funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), significant, additional investment is needed to effectively address aging water infrastructure, remove lead service lines from our communities, and protect against PFAS, or 'forever chemicals,' and microplastic contamination.

When framed around those needs, it becomes clear that the BIL funding represents only the proverbial drop in the bucket. DC Water continues to advocate for additional funding from the federal and District governments to address these needs without placing the burden on the backs of our customers. I am also committed to ensuring the corporate polluters behind the PFAS crisis shoulder the full burden of remediation. You should not have to pay for a mess you didn't cause.

David L. Gadis
CEO and General Manager
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Above Normal Storm Season Expected



National Weather Center forecasters predict above normal hurricane activity this year. They are forecasting a range of 17 to 25 named storms during the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season, which runs from June 1 to November 30.

As we know, severe storms pack powerful forces and can injure people, damage property and wreak havoc with utilities. Names storms have winds of 39 miles per hour or higher. District area residents and business owners are urged to protect themselves, their loved ones and their property.

Now is the time to prepare

DC Water prepares by ramping up staffing and taking other actions to protect customers, facilities and personnel. We closely monitor flood-prone areas and prep by clearing storm drains and preparing pump stations for increased flows. Emergency equipment, generators and staff are ready to deploy where needed.

We encourage residents to:

- Sign up for text or email alerts at dcwater.com/alerts.
- Report clogged storm drains by calling the 24/7 Command Center at **202-612-3400**.
- Check gutters and downspouts to make sure they are clear of debris.
- Prepare an emergency supply kit that includes a 3-day supply of food and water.
- Keep a battery-powered radio nearby for important news.
- If damage is extensive, listen to the media or visit dcwater.com for information about water and sewer infrastructure and the safety of your drinking water.
- Visit dcwater.com/prepare-hurricane or ready.gov/hurricanes for more information.
- Discuss available insurance options with your agent.
- Visit disb.dc.gov/page/disb-consumer-guide-flood-insurance to learn more about flood insurance.

For those living in low-lying, flood-prone neighborhoods, we recommend installing backwater valves (BW). Also known as backflow prevention devices, they are installed on a sewer lateral that connects a building to the public sewer in the street. The device only allows flow to go out, not in, preventing wastewater from backing up into homes during heavy rainfall.



DC Water's Impact Makes a SPLASH!

The SPLASH program is at the heart of DC Water's mission to support the communities we serve. Administered by the Greater Washington Urban League, SPLASH, short for "Serving People by Lending a Supportive Hand," embodies our unwavering commitment to ensure access to essential water services for all customers, regardless of their financial circumstances. SPLASH provides one-time emergency assistance up to \$350.

DC Water employees give generously to help support the program, which gives them a sense of community and solidarity. An employee who is a regular donor said, "Contributing to SPLASH, even a small amount from each paycheck, allows us to make a meaningful impact. Every small contribution collectively makes a significant difference to those in need."

Contributions to SPLASH are tax-deductible, offering an additional incentive to support such a vital initiative. You can donate the SPLASH by rounding up your bill payment each month.

VOC

Voice of the Customer Survey

We want to hear from YOU!

DC Water is committed to providing the best possible experience, and your feedback is crucial for us to do that. Please take a moment to complete our 2024 survey by scanning the QR Code. Your responses will help us to continually enhance our services to better meet your needs.



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