

What's on Tap

News for Customers of the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (WASA)

September 2007



Attention to infrastructure is essential for critical water and sewer services

The recent tragic collapse of the bridge in Minneapolis is a clear reminder of the importance of investing in our nation's infrastructure. In addition to bridges and highways, our drinking and wastewater facilities are fundamental to sustaining our quality of life and health. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that water and sewer systems nationwide will require an investment of more than \$500 billion above current spending levels over the next 20 years to improve the infrastructure.

Meeting infrastructure needs is a significant cost burden for customers in older cities like the District. Many parts of the water and sewer system are more than 100 years old, dating back to the late 1800s. To address the District's aging infrastructure, gradual rate increases have been necessary to



WASA crews replace an 8" water main valve in NW DC.

fund WASA's 10-year, \$2.1 billion Capitol Improvement Program (CIP).

A few of the following projects are underway. An estimated 34,000 lead service water lines are being replaced. The program to eliminate dead-end water mains to improve circulation will be completed this year at a cost of \$17 million. More than \$70 million is being

invested east of the Anacostia to improve water pressure, quality, and reliability by rehabilitating and constructing water storage facilities and replacing old cast iron water mains and a 1913 pumping station with one that is fully automated. Thirty-six million dollars is being spent throughout the District to replace pipeline valves that are corroded or have become inoperable. A new above-ground Eastside Pumping Station went into service last year and rehabilitation on three other wastewater pumping stations is underway. More than \$600 million has been spent in the last 10 years as part of a critical overhaul of Blue Plains, the District's wastewater treatment facility originally constructed in 1938. Nearly \$492 million will be spent over the next 10 years on projects to control overflows into local

rivers from the District's combined sewer system which was constructed in 1870.

Meeting infrastructure repair and replacement needs is essential for WASA to maintain critical, safe and reliable water and sewer services.

Did you know that WASA maintains and oversees:

- 1,800 miles of sanitary and combined sewer lines
- 9 wastewater pumping stations
- 15 storm water pumping stations
- 53 outfalls
- 1,300 miles of water pipes
- 5 water pumping stations
- 5 water reservoirs
- 4 water storage tanks
- 36,000 valves
- 9,100 fire hydrants

Water on tap: Is the water from your faucet safe to drink?

The answer is yes! Congress passed the *Safe Drinking Water Act* giving the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the power to prescribe and enforce regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in public water systems. Drinking water in the District comes from the Potomac River and

is treated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Washington Aqueduct at its Decarlia and McMillian treatment plants.

The water that is then distributed by WASA meets all federal



EPA regulations and standards for public health safety. Drinking water treatment has virtually eliminated water-borne diseases and increased life expectancy in the

U.S. by 30 years.

WASA continually monitors drinking water quality by collecting and analyzing hundreds of samples per month from various locations in the distribution system. The results of these tests are available by visiting the WASA website at

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Emergency assistance available to District electric customers

Emergency assistance is available to low income District residents who have received a disconnection notice for electric service, or are currently disconnected. If you have received a disconnection notice from the electric company, you need to go to the District Department of the Environment's Energy Division (DDOE) located at 2000 14th Street, NW #300E. You do not need an appointment. To apply for assistance, you must bring the disconnection notice, proof of income, most recent utility bills, and a picture ID with you to DDOE Monday through Friday, between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.



Residents are also encouraged to take advantage of the Utility Discount Programs (UDP) which offers discounted rates on electric, gas, telephone and water bills. Please call the Energy Hotline at (202) 673-6750 for details.



Mark your calendars for JUDD!!
Wednesday, October 31, 2007, 8 am - 7 pm
Washington Convention Center
 Each year, WASA joins Pepco, Verizon, and Washington Gas for *Joint Utility Discount Day* (JUDD) to help District residents apply for available discounts on their utility bills.

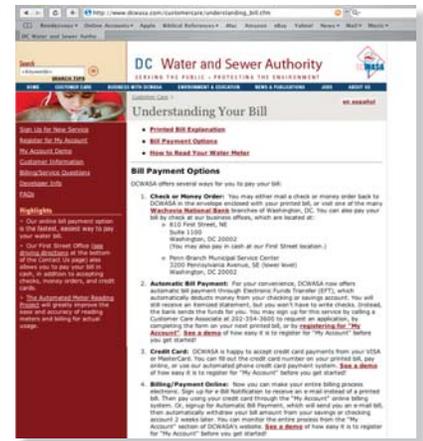
Please keep water meters clear

Estimated water bills have virtually been eliminated for WASA customers because of Automated Meter Reading technology. Each meter now has an automated meter reading device that sends out a signal, which is read from a distance. The signal cannot be read, however, if the meter is blocked. Please keep the meter top clear of flower pots, trash cans, dirt, vehicles, or anything else that might cover the meter. The automated meter installation program is 98 percent completed. The state of the art meters allow WASA to read them without actually coming to your home.



Paying your WASA bill is easy with Electronic Funds Transfer

You can avoid late fees, postage, checks, mailing or paying in person if you use WASA's Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). For your convenience, you can set up a monthly automatic bill payment through EFT that will deduct money from your checking or savings account. You'll still receive an itemized statement, but won't have to write checks. Instead, the bank will send the funds directly to WASA for you, providing a safe and reliable way



for bill payment. Request an application by calling WASA at (202) 354-3600 or registering for "My Account" on www.dcwasa.com. Or, sign up for the recurring credit card payment option through the "My Account."

Water on tap *continued from front*

www.dcwasa.com/waterquality and selecting *FAQs about Water Quality* in the left hand menu. Anyone with water quality questions or concerns should contact the WASA Water Quality Division at (202) 612-3440. Although District drinking water meets the health standards set for contaminants, people with special

health care needs may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Consumers who are immuno-compromised or with similar conditions should always follow the advice of their healthcare providers in consuming tap water. For more information, see www.epa.gov/safewater/healthcare/.

For more information, visit WASA's website at www.dcwasa.com.

Para informar emergencias del agua residuales, llama (202) 612-3400.

Report Emergencies 24 Hours a day!

To report improper use of hydrants, clogged catch basins, water main leaks, or suspected sewer backups, call (202) 612-3400.

To reach WASA's Lead Services Line, call (202) 787-2732.