

WHAT'S ON



TAP?

NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS | VOL. 14 ISSUE 7

GM's Message: Board Approves Revised FY2014 Budget & Rates



Dear Customers,

The rising cost of doing business has driven our rates higher over the past few years, and unfortunately that trend will continue in FY 2014. I detailed the reasons for the increase – particularly mandated construction

projects and the related debt service – at the series of town hall meetings we held this past spring in the District's 8 wards. I also shared with you the proposed rates for the new fiscal year and showed how they would impact the average monthly bill.

However, I am pleased to report the actual rate increase for FY 2014 will be less than projected. We recommended and the Board of Directors approved a revised Operating Budget for DC Water and a smaller total increase in the average bill; a 7.5% increase instead of the 8.8% increase originally proposed. That means the average residential customer's monthly bill will rise by approximately \$5.36 beginning in October.

In the end we were able to shave almost a dollar off the proposed increase in the Impervious Area Charge (IAC) that funds the Clean Rivers Project. That reduction will have most meaningful impact on customers participating in our Customer Assistance Program (CAP). The CAP gives them a discount on their water and sewer charges, but does not lower the IAC. We know that every little bit helps and I pledge that we will continue to work to keep our costs and rates down.

George S. Hawkins

George S. Hawkins
gmsuggestions@dcwater.com

Conserve and Save

It's easy to save money by conserving water at home. Saving water also saves energy and natural resources.



Inside the home, pay attention to running water. Turn off the faucet while shaving or brushing your teeth. Rather than running water until it is cold for drinking, try storing a pitcher of tap water in the refrigerator for cold water anytime. Run the dishwasher only when it's full. Do the same for laundry, unless you have a washing machine that matches water level with load level.

You can also use water-saving devices such as low-flow aerators and showerheads to reduce the amount

see **CONSERVE** continued on back

Clean Out Faucet Aerators for Better Water Quality



Most faucets in the home have aerators at the tip, the final step in the water's journey to your sink. These are mini strainers that usually screw onto the faucet for the purpose of catching small sediment that may have entered the water from the hot water heater or the home's plumbing. It's important to regularly rinse off the aerator to remove any particles that may have collected there. They should also be replaced every year or two. Installing a low-flow aerator reduces the flow by a gallon or two per minute, and saves energy by reducing the amount of hot water used. More information can be found at dcwater.com.

Customer Assistance Helps to Keep the Water On

Some customers face a monthly struggle just to pay their monthly utility bills. But there are programs that can help them keep their water and sewer services on. The Customer Assistance Program (CAP) is administered by the District of Columbia's Department of the Environment (DDOE) Energy Office and provides eligible customers with a discount for the first 400 cubic feet of water and the first 400 cubic feet of sewer services per month. Currently that is a savings of about \$32 per month.

DDOE determines eligibility on the basis of federal low-income guidelines. Applicants must provide:

- Proof of income, such as a paycheck stub
- Current utility bill
- Proof of age

For more information or to apply, please contact the District Department of the Environment (DDOE) at (202) 673-6700.

DISTRICT
DEPARTMENT
OF THE
ENVIRONMENT



If You See Something, Say Something

DC Water relies on a complex infrastructure to deliver safe drinking water, sewer collection and wastewater treatment, and water for fire suppression. The parts of the system must be in good working order to accomplish this every minute of every day. Help protect the system that provides these critical, life-sustaining services. If you see anyone tampering with a hydrant or other DC Water equipment, or think someone is impersonating a DC Water employee, please call the 24-hour Command Center at (202) 612-3400. But please do not put yourself in harm's way. Call 911 if you feel you are in danger.

Conserve *continued*

of water used. Dual-flush toilets are now available that allow you to select regular flow, for solids, or a lower flush for liquids. You can also install a high-efficiency toilet that uses a gallon less per flush.

Outside the home, landscaping can soak up a lot of water. But if you select native plants and shrubs for your yard, they won't need a lot of extra water. Let the grass grow a little longer to hold in moisture and use mulch in flower beds for the same reason. Always obey any watering restrictions in your community. When washing cars, rinse once first then wash from a bucket of soapy water and rinse again. Or go to a car wash. Better yet, go to a car wash that recycles the water.

A sneaky source of high water bills both inside and outside the home is undetected leaks or drips. Check your faucets, pipes, toilets and hoses regularly for leaks that can add to your water bill and cause property damage. A leaking toilet can easily add up to \$400 in water use in just one month! See a video explaining why at [youtube.com/watch?v=W3w9opwL4oc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3w9opwL4oc).

DC Water created an application that alerts customers when their water use spikes dramatically for four consecutive days. Called HUNA, for High Use Notification Alert, the program automatically notifies customers by phone, email or text alert (if contact information is provided to DC Water). Customers are automatically enrolled but may opt out. This service was the first of its kind in the country. For more information on water conservation, or your water and sewer bill, visit dcwater.com or call Customer Service at (202) 354-3600.

