

WHAT'S ON



TAP?

NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS | VOL. 14 ISSUE 2

General Manager's Message: Water Main Break Season



Dear Customers,

One major cause of water outages this time of year is water main breaks. These happen roughly once every two minutes across the country, and about 400 times a year in the District. Part of the reason is the age of water infrastructure – with our pipes averaging 78 years old.

The fix often involves standing for hours, in the dark, in freezing water several inches deep. I hope you'll join me in extending thanks to the dedicated

employees who do this difficult work.

We have multiple crews from multiple departments on standby to address broken mains quickly, but we can't be everywhere at once. Our first reports of trouble often come from customers like you.

If you see water somewhere it shouldn't be, including in the middle of a road or sidewalk, please call us at (202) 612-3400, send a tweet to @dcwater or visit dcwater.com on your mobile phone to report it. Water can freeze when it hits a paved surface, causing a danger for pedestrians, drivers and cyclists. With your help, we'll continue to keep the water running and the streets safe this winter. To see just what goes into a water main repair, visit bit.ly/mainbreaks.

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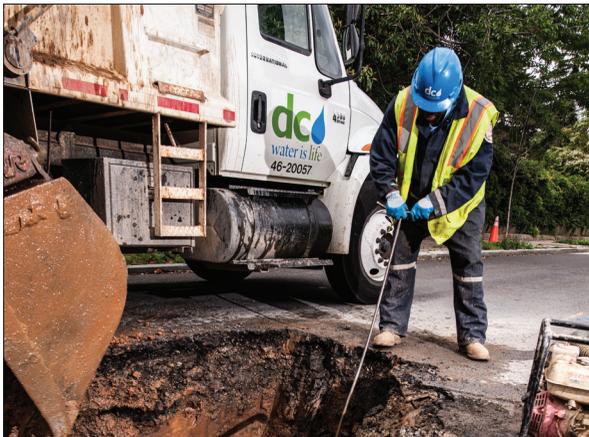


Photo courtesy of United States Environmental Protection Agency

2012 Annual Report Now Available

DC Water's 2012 Annual Report is available online at dcwater.com/annual2012. The annual report is produced every year as required by law and delivered to the Council of the District of Columbia. DC Water uses recycled paper and environmentally responsible ink products for the printed version and encourages readers to view the online version to keep production costs down.



Spring Cleaning the District's Water Pipes

The disinfectant used for drinking water treatment will temporarily switch from chloramine (chlorine + ammonia) to chlorine. The switch is scheduled to begin March 18. During this time, you may notice a slight change in the taste and smell of your drinking water. This standard switch in disinfection is part of an annual program to spring clean water pipes and maintain water quality throughout the year.

If you notice an increased chlorine odor:

- Flush cold water tap for two minutes.
- Refrigerate a pitcher of cold tap water to allow the chlorine odor to disappear.
- Use a pitcher-style or faucet mount filter to remove chlorine taste and odor.

Individuals and business owners who take special precautions to remove chloramine from tap water, such as dialysis centers, medical facilities and aquatic pet owners, should continue to take the same precautions during the temporary switch to chlorine. Most methods for removing chloramine from tap water are effective in removing chlorine.

The Washington Aqueduct is the organization responsible for treating drinking water in the District. Water is routinely monitored throughout the city to ensure chlorine levels meet safe target levels. To view monthly chlorine levels, visit dcwater.com/testresults. For more info, contact the Drinking Water Division at (202) 612-3440.



Maintaining Critical Services through Adversity

As Superstorm Sandy approached the region last October, hundreds of DC Water employees worked hard to keep services intact and prevent flooding in low-lying neighborhoods. There are too many employees to list by name, but six groups deserve special mention.

Blue Plains High Voltage Team – Two feeders provide electricity to the plant. One of these feeders lost power early in the storm. Power distribution personnel responded immediately to perform switching so the remaining feeder was able to supply power to the entire plant.

Sewer Pumping Maintenance – During the storm, there was a failure with the automatic system that rakes screens at the Poplar Point Sewer Pumping Station. Quick-thinking maintenance team members manually raked the screens, a messy process, for hours until the problem could be fixed.

Departments of Sewer Services and Water Services – spent the weekend hand-filling thousands of sandbags and distributing them in the Bloomingdale and LeDroit Park neighborhoods, even hand-delivering sandbags to some customers with special needs. Sewer crews spent days before and during the storm cleaning catch basins throughout these neighborhoods.

Blue Plains Biosolids Team – The well-oiled machine at Blue Plains only works when all parts are working. Part of the process includes daily removal of the biosolids that remain after the wastewater treatment process. Mostly, these are hauled away by 60+ trucks per day and land-applied in rural areas of Virginia. Things can get complicated very quickly during foul weather if these trucks cannot make the trip. The team at Blue Plains made great progress in getting the biosolids removed before the storm hit.

The Process Engineering Team – all process engineers remained at the plant on duty for 33 straight hours and fine tuned process decisions to be sure DC Water operated within its permit despite the high flows.

Mutual Aid Support – A Sewer Services crew took a 300 kW generator to a water pump station in Long Beach Township, New Jersey that lost electricity and water during Sandy. The crew helped set up the equipment and returned to Washington, DC. Once power was restored to Long Beach Township, the generator was relocated to Flanders, NJ, a neighborhood in Mount Olive Township to assist with their sanitary sewer station. This was the first mutual aid response by a DC Water crew to another state.



Five DC Water employees delivered a 300-kilowatt generator to Long Beach Township, New Jersey, to assist in bringing that community's wastewater system back online after Tropical Storm Sandy.



What Not to Flush

Although products such as facial tissues, baby wipes, dental floss, cotton swabs, and kitty litter may fit down your toilet, they can cause clogged pipes for you and your neighbors. The truth is, the only thing that should be flushed is toilet paper and what comes out of you. Not even facial tissue is properly formulated to break down in the sewer system.

Several of these objects combined together can create hazards for not only the sewer pipes, but also the pumps at sewer pumping stations. In the video, "Will it Flush?" dental floss and cotton swabs together wrap around a pump causing it to fail. The video demonstrates how many household objects break down (or don't) and interfere with sewer pumps. The video can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/flushable>.

DC Water's Sewer Services crews are called to investigate sewer clogs in public space throughout the District. They have seen sewer clogs caused by all kinds of objects and encourage you to use the trash can, not the toilet, for trash. If you experience a sewer line clog on your property, please call a licensed plumber. If the clog is in public space, please call the DC Water Command Center's 24-hour line at (202) 612-3400.

Never Pay Late Again with Electronic Bill Pay

DC Water offers automatic bill payment through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), which deducts money from your checking or savings account. You still receive an itemized statement, but you don't have to write checks. Instead, the bank sends the funds and you can rest assured that your payment will be on time.

You may sign up for this option at dcwater.com on My DC Water under the "Pay my bill" option. Or you can set up recurring credit card payments in a similar fashion. If you want to make a one-time payment by electronic check or credit card, use My DC Water or call (202) 354-3600.



For more information, visit dcwater.com.

Para informar emergencias del aguas 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.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

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