

# WHAT'S ON



# TAP?

NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS | VOL. 15 ISSUE 2

## General Manager's Message



Dear Customers,

The new year brought with it a polar vortex that dropped area temperatures to record lows. Water utilities nationwide braced

for a surge in water main breaks. DC Water prepared for the worst, but was fortunate to sustain only the average number of water main breaks. Still, our water and sewer crews were out in the -11 wind chill, hard at work to restore critical water and sewer services.

Also, our call center and emergency command center were flooded with thousands of calls from residents with household plumbing issues, mostly frozen or broken pipes.

Before the next cold snap, please take a minute to find the emergency shut off valve in your home. A pipe can burst at any time and your quick action to shut off the water can save you from costly property damage. Also, please visit our website for information on how to thaw frozen pipes, or better yet—how to prevent freezing pipes in the first place: [dcwater.com/frozenpipes](http://dcwater.com/frozenpipes).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'George S. Hawkins'.

George S. Hawkins  
[gmsuggestions@dcwater.com](mailto:gmsuggestions@dcwater.com)

## DC Water Announces Green Design Challenge Winners, Unveils Innovative Projects

On January 9, DC Water announced the winning design entries in the 2013 Green Infrastructure Challenge, a competition that started last spring and encouraged submissions of landscape, streetscape and building designs. The ceremony took place at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, and was attended by Mayor Vincent C. Gray. Prize money was awarded for this first phase (design) and will also be awarded for construction of some projects. DC Water will award more than \$1 million total for the two phases.

Green infrastructure is a natural way to manage stormwater by absorbing rain before it makes its way to the sewer or stormwater system. Examples include green roofs, rain barrels and pervious pavement (pavement that lets water run through it). Keeping stormwater out of the sewer system can go a long way to improving the health of local waterways, since it contributes to combined sewer overflows (CSOs) in heavy rain storms.

DC Water General Manager George S. Hawkins, said, "DC Water is educating the community about green infrastructure and incentivizing creative and innovative approaches. We look forward to final projects that will green the District and create a body of research that will benefit other cities."

The winning teams and projects include:

- **ARCADIS**, *Utilizing Lost Urban Space*
- **Tetra Tech**, *Lamont Park: Integrating Green Infrastructure and Bike Infrastructure*
- **CH2M HILL**, *Greening the District's*

*Geometry: Enhancing L'Enfant's Plan*

- **Urban Rain Design | Nitsch Engineering | Stacy Levy Artist | Raymond Papa**, *Kennedy Greened: A Neighborhood Green Street Project*
- **AECOM**, *21st Century Stormwater Management in a 19th Century Neighborhood*
- **McKissack**, *Symbiotic Streetscapes*
- **Bradley Site Design – Greening Urban**, *A Stormwater Park System*

To view the winning designs, please visit [dcwater.com/greenchallenge](http://dcwater.com/greenchallenge). For more information on the Clean Rivers Project, please visit [dcwater.com/cleanrivers](http://dcwater.com/cleanrivers).



## Water Main Breaks — Which One Comes First?



Photo courtesy of United States Environmental Protection Agency

Oftentimes in the colder months, DC Water crews will be faced with the task of repairing multiple water main breaks at once. In a cold January in recent years, for instance, there were more than 30 breaks at one time. Even with extra crews and contractors on stand-by, all of these can't be addressed simultane-

ously. DC Water's investigators prioritize repairs based on the severity of the break, starting with those breaks that cause the highest number of customers to be without water. Other factors that make a repair high priority are those that affect traffic or cause street flooding, those that are causing property damage and those that could cause damage to the environment.

If you see a leak and suspect a water main break, please report it to DC Water by calling (202) 612-3400, reporting it online at [dcwater.com/report\\_problem/](http://dcwater.com/report_problem/) or tweeting @dcwater with a picture.

### TEST YOUR WATER KNOWLEDGE

1. One gallon of water weighs \_\_\_\_\_ pounds.
2. More than 90 percent of the world's fresh water supply is located in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The household appliances that consume the most water are your \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ rank second in household water use.
5. You can reduce the amount of water you use in the home by putting \_\_\_\_\_ on your faucets and \_\_\_\_\_ showerheads in your showers.
6. The water cycle shows that water that evaporates into the atmosphere returns to Earth as \_\_\_\_\_.

ANSWERS  
 1. 8.3 2. Antarctica 3. Toilets (3-5+ gallons per flush) 4. Washing machines  
 5. Low-flow aerators, low-flow 6. rain

## Spring Cleaning Scheduled for District Water Pipes

From **Monday March 17, 2014 and ending Monday April 28, 2014**, the disinfectant used for drinking water treatment will temporarily switch from chloramine (chlorine + ammonia) to chlorine. 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 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 meth-

ods for removing chloramine from tap water are effective in removing chlorine.

The Washington Aqueduct is responsible for treating drinking water in the

District. DC Water works closely with the Aqueduct to monitor drinking water throughout the city to ensure chlorine levels meet safe target levels. To view monthly chlorine levels, visit [dcwater.com/testresults](http://dcwater.com/testresults). For more info, contact the Drinking Water Division at (202) 612-3440.

## Intern at DC Water this Summer!

DC Water is now accepting applications from college students for positions as summer interns. Internships are available in a variety of departments including IT, Legal, External Affairs, Water Services and Engineering. These are full-time paid positions and interns also receive training in professional develop-

ment and attend field trips to learn about the water and wastewater industry. Applications are due at the end of March.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY  
 George S. Hawkins, General Manager

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