

WHAT'S ON



TAP?

NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS | VOL. 13 ISSUE 3

General Manager's Message: Fats, Oils and Grease



Dear Customers,

You may have noticed that within this space I often address national and global issues related to water and wastewater:

On the local level, I have been asked by many individuals what they can do in their everyday lives to make a difference to the District of Columbia's water and sewer system. This month I am using this column to talk about something simple, yet very critical to our sewer system.

Fats, oils and grease that go down the drain wreak havoc in the sewer system, sticking to the inside of sewer pipes that are located on both public and private property. Over time, this creates a build up of hardened grease, effectively making the inside of the pipe smaller and smaller, until it entirely blocks the flow. Clogged sewers lead to serious problems including backups and overflows in homes and in the streets.

Backups can cause property damage, expensive cleanup and repairs, and health risks. Backups that overflow into the street may end up in the stormwater system, which discharges directly to local waterways, creating additional health risks and environmental harm.

You can help by keeping fats, oils and grease out of your plumbing and out of the sewer system. Use a can to collect cooking grease, put a lid on it, and throw it out in the garbage. Commercial kitchens should do the same, and also install grease interceptors in both sink and floor drains. Each one of us can make positive changes that help protect our water and sewer systems and the environment.

George S. Hawkins
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TOWN HALL MEETINGS BEGIN IN MARCH

DC Water proudly hosts the spring Town Hall Meetings in the months of March and April. Come out to hear the General Manager of your water utility explain what your water bill pays for. Please check dcwater.com/customer-care/rates.cfm for the latest schedule and contact information.

DC Water Cleans Air Over C&O Canal

More than a decade ago, DC Water began investigating ways to reduce odors along the 50-mile Potomac Interceptor; where vents from the large sewer produced an odor noticeable in the air above ground. The Authority researched the problem and arrived at a plan. All parties came together for a groundbreaking for "Operation Clean Air" in spring 2010. Six "scrubbing facilities" with advanced technology and carbon filters will clean the air and allow DC Water to close most of the vents along the sewer. This is welcome news for outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy the C&O Canal and Clara Barton Parkway.

After securing more than 40 permits, the Authority



was able to begin construction on facilities at three Maryland sites and one District site.

This construction should be completed in late 2012. DC Water continues working to secure the required permits for the two Virginia sites.

Contingent on these permits being granted, the Authority plans to begin construction later this year. DC Water and community groups along the interceptor have worked for years on this solution.

Did You Know?

Did you know DC Water offers automatic bill payment through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), which automatically 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 for you 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.



DC Water Offers Customer Service 24/7 through Voice Recognition Program in English and Spanish

Language line supports 100 languages during business hours

DC Water offers customer service in many ways. Customers and the public can access

information on the website, dcwater.com, anytime and even pay bills or report a problem online. Or during business hours, customers may call (202) 354-3600 for Customer Service.

The Authority has a voice recognition program on its Customer Service phone line in both English and Spanish so that customers can get information about their services, their bills or receive

answers to other questions, anytime. For emergencies, there is a 24-hour Command Center located at the Customer Service Center, reachable at (202) 612-3400.

For customers who speak other languages, assistance is offered through the Language Line, which supports about 100 different languages. Those who need assistance in another language can simply call in and ask for a specific language. DC Water connects with the Language Line in a three-way call, where the Language Line serves as translator.



DC Water Launches New Mobile Application

You can download and use DC Water's new mobile application to report a problem. Even better, your location can be automatically dispatched if your phone has GPS functionality. You can still reach us through all the old channels as well—tweet

@dcwater, call our Command Center at (202) 612-3400, or visit the website at dcwater.com/report_problem/



April is Earth Month – Join Volunteers from Across the Region to Clean Up Our Waterways

Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS) Annual Earth Day Cleanup and Celebration

Saturday, April 21, 2012
Cleanup: 9 a.m.-12 p.m.
Celebration: 12 p.m.-2 p.m.

Location:

Cleanup: Various sites throughout the Watershed.
Celebration: RFK Parking Lot #6 and #7
Please visit anacostiaws.org for more information.

Alice Ferguson Foundation's Potomac River Watershed Cleanup

Saturday, April 14, 2012
Cleanup: 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Contact the Cleanup Coordinator at (202) 973-8203 or potomaccleanup@fergusonfoundation.org



Spring Cleaning the District's Water Pipes

Beginning in March, DC Water will begin its annual flushing program to clean the District's water distribution system.

During this program, DC Water opens fire hydrants and flushes water mains throughout the city. Each year, the flushing program and a temporary switch in water disinfection are conducted to enhance drinking water quality and minimize the impacts of aging pipes. The average age of a water main pipe in the District is 77 years old.

Customers will be notified when DC Water flushes hydrants in their area. Crews will perform flushing between 10:30 p.m. and 6:30 a.m., when water usage is typically low.



Flushing may cause temporary water discoloration and customers are recommended to run cold water taps for a few minutes until water clears. Customers may also notice a slight change in the taste or smell of their water during the temporary switch in water disinfection that will occur March 26 through May 7. For more information or to report a water quality issue, contact the Drinking Water Division at (202) 612-3440.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY
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