

WHAT'S ON



TAP?

NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS | VOL. 12 ISSUE 9

General Manager's Message: We're All Environmentalists



Dear Customers,

Recently, I was pleased to accept the 2011 Environmental Leadership Award from the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. I'm honored, but the award has a more significant meaning for DC Water. It means the proper recognition of our work as environmental stewardship.

For years, environmentalists and regulators viewed wastewater treatment plants, such as ours, as "polluters." It is easy to attack what's easy to see, and Blue Plains is the world's largest plant of its kind. However, these facilities aren't producing pollution at all, as a plant that makes cars or cameras would. Instead, we take what society doesn't want, and *prevent* it from polluting the receiving water body by using the best technology our budgets will allow.

In fact, Blue Plains could reduce its nitrogen and phosphorus outputs to zero (at great cost to all of you), and the health of the Chesapeake Bay would still be impaired from farm field and parking lot runoff. So I believe it's time for a wholesale re-examination of clean water issues – including who should be responsible for paying for what and when.

I welcome our customers, as well as our friends at the Alliance, into that conversation.

George S. Hawkins
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Did You Know?

Did you know in the early 1970s, the federal government contributed 70 percent of the funds used for water infrastructure improvement, but this share dropped to less than 5 percent by 2007?



Keep Catch Basins Clear of Debris

Please help DC Water keep streets from flooding and keep trash out of our waterways. The District has more than 25,000 storm drains that direct stormwater off roads and into sewers. A catch basin is the part of the storm drain that catches litter before it can enter the system. DC Water cleans and maintains catch basins regularly, removing 23 tons of debris every day.

Even with regular cleaning, this is the time of year for leaves and ice to clog up catch basins. To prevent flooding in your neighborhood, please call (202) 612-3400 or send a



tweet to @dcwater to report clogged catch basins you see. Be sure to tell us the location as specifically as possible.

You can help to reduce pollution in local waterways by following these tips:

- Don't throw trash and yard waste in neighborhood storm drains or catch basins – deposit them in the appropriate cans.
- Don't throw trash on city streets or in alleys.

Help Those in Need to Maintain Critical Water and Sewer Services

How long could you survive without water and sewer services? We all take for granted that we'll have water with which to cook, to wash, to drink, and to brush our teeth, and that our toilets will flush. Yet, some families are struggling to pay their water and sewer bills and are in jeopardy of losing these critical services.

You can help families keep their water and sewer turned on by donating to the SPLASH fund. Through generous donations from people like you, DC Water is able to provide financial assistance to individuals and families on the brink of losing water and sewer services.

see **SPLASH** continued on back

Winterize Your Home

There are steps you may take to help prevent frozen pipes in your home. Water expands as it freezes, and the added pressure can cause the pipe to break.



Pipes that freeze most frequently are those that are exposed to the outside and those in unheated interior areas such as kitchen cabinets, attics, garages, basements and crawl spaces.

Before the onset of cold weather, help prevent frozen pipes by following these recommendations:

- Remove, drain, and store garden hoses.
- Close the inside valves that control the water supply to outside hose attachments, (known as bibs).

- Open the outside hose bibs to allow any water in the line to drain out. Keep this outside valve open.
- You may want to install a “pipe sleeve” for water pipes that are not insulated. Building supply stores carry these and other supplies for insulating pipes.
- If you go away for an extended time during cold weather, leave the thermostat set above 55 degrees before you leave.

SPLASH *continued*

SPLASH is funded solely by contributions from customers, residents and businesses. To contribute, you can check the appropriate box on your DC Water bill or call Customer Service at (202) 354-3600. You may also take advantage of the Round Up feature when paying



your bill.

Additionally, donations may be made through DC Water’s website at dcwater.com/splash or by making a check payable to DC Water and Sewer Authority SPLASH Program. Checks can be mailed to 810 First Street, N.E., Suite 1100, Washington, D.C. 20002.

Free Water Bottle Refills Around DC

You can now refill your water bottle for free at more than 100 locations throughout the District. DC Water is finding ways to save people money on bottled water and improve public access to drinking water – TapIt™ is one example. TapIt is a city-wide water bottle refilling network of restaurants and cafés that are choosing to promote tap water and eliminate bottled water waste.

When you’re on the way to work or school, exercising or simply out and about,

you can stop by any TapIt location and refill your water bottle. Find DC TapIt

locations at tapitwater.com or download the iPhone app. If a local restaurant or café is not a TapIt partner, you can encourage them to sign up – it’s free. We have the opportunity to clean up our neighborhoods, local waterways and keep plastic bottles out of landfills. Drink tap,

protect the environment and save your money. Grab a reusable bottle and fill up for free.



Money in the Tank

Interested in saving money and water? Consider a dual flush toilet, which can help lower your water use (and water bills).

Dual flush toilets allow you to control the amount of water used with each flush, whether you need to use a small flush or a large flush, with a push of a button. Dual flush toilets are used all over the world and have been found to reduce water use in the bathroom by more than 50 percent.

These toilets can be purchased at hardware and plumbing stores, or you can buy a kit to modify



an existing standard toilet. Look for the EPA WaterSense label to ensure it meets EPA criteria for performance and efficiency.

You can also find more information online at epa.gov/WaterSense/products/toilets.html