



**Important  
Information!  
Please Read!**

DC WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY

APRIL 2004

## Annual System-Wide Water Flushing Program

Every spring through fall, WASA conducts an aggressive program to systematically flush water mains in the distribution system by opening hydrants, which allows water to flow freely and at high pressure through the main. Flushing water through pipes at high speeds removes buildup that can cause discolored water. This year's program has begun and will continue through November 2004.

- Flushing is performed Sunday through Thursday, from 10:30 pm to 6:30 am.
- Customers will be notified before flushing begins in their area. Your water supply will not be shut off during flushing.
- Visit [www.dcwasa.com](http://www.dcwasa.com) to learn when flushing will occur in your area.
- You may notice a slight reduction in water pressure and some water discoloration in the early morning hours.
- If your water is discolored, do not run your hot water or do any laundry. Run your cold water until the discolored water clears, then flush your hot water tank by opening the valve at the bottom of the tank. If you are doing laundry when you notice it, do not dry these clothes. Washing the items again should take care of the problem.

If you have any questions, please call our Water Quality Office at **202-612-3440** from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. If you have an emergency, please call WASA's 24-hour hotline at **202-612-3400**.

## Temporary Water Treatment Change

As part of an annual maintenance program, the Army Corps of Engineers' Washington Aqueduct Division, our

water supplier, will temporarily change its disinfectant from chloramines to chlorine, April 2-May 7, 2004. After this time, chloramines will be used as usual to disinfect our drinking water supply. If you have questions about water quality or this change, call our Water Quality Branch at **202-612-3440**, or visit [www.dcwasa.com](http://www.dcwasa.com) to view our annual Water Quality Report.

## Flush To Keep Drinking Water Safe

We recommend that you continue to follow WASA's and EPA's guidance regarding your drinking water:

- Cold water should be used for drinking or cooking, as hot water will contain higher levels of lead. If you need hot water for making hot beverages or for cooking, heat cold water on the stove. Remember that boiling your water will not remove lead.
- To remove debris, periodically remove and clean your faucet's strainer.
- If your water lines have not been used for more than six hours, all WASA customers should flush their lines by running the water for at least 60 seconds before drinking or cooking.
- If you have a lead service line, or believe that you may have a lead service line, flush your water for at least 10 minutes before using it for drinking or cooking. (This can be done economically by showering or washing your clothes.) After doing so, flush your kitchen tap for 60 seconds, then collect drinking water in clean containers and store in the refrigerator.

We encourage you to contact our Lead Services Hotline at **202-787-2732** or [WQP2003@dcwasa.com](mailto:WQP2003@dcwasa.com) if you have questions about whether a lead service line serves your home. If eligible, WASA will provide you with a free testing kit. WASA will forward the test kit to you within four days, provide free pick-up, and deliver test results within 30 days.

# In-Home Treatment Devices Can Filter Lead

Due to elevated lead levels in the tap water of some homes with lead service lines, we have received many inquiries concerning in-home water purification systems. WASA is distributing filters to eligible households that are believed to have lead service lines.

**WASA does not certify or endorse specific home drinking water treatment devices**, but has compiled the following information to help you make a choice that's best for you and your family. You should only purchase a device that has been certified for removing lead by an independent testing organization, such as the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF).

There are three types of in-home water treatment devices:

**1. The Pitcher Filter** is a 1/2- to 1-gallon pitcher with a built-in filter. Water is poured through the filter and is collected in the pitcher. The filter cartridge is periodically replaced after a pre-determined volume of water passes through the unit. This type of device treats approximately 40 gallons of water per filter.

**Advantages:**

Relatively inexpensive; simple to operate; no installation necessary; can be kept in refrigerator; treats only water used for consumption.

**Disadvantages:**

Filters last one to two months; all water for consumption needs to go into the pitcher.

**2. The Faucet Filter** connects to the kitchen sink faucet. Faucet filters have a by-pass that allows only the water to be used for drinking or cooking to be treated, which extends the life of the filter. Water that is not consumed, such as that used for washing dishes, is not filtered by the unit. The filter cartridge for the faucet filter is similar to the pitcher filter. This type of device treats approximately 100-200 gallons of water.

**Advantages:**

Filters last two to three months; simple to operate; can be installed by homeowner; can be set to treat only water used for consumption; indicator on filter shows when cartridge needs replacement.

**Disadvantages:**

Installation required; not compatible with every faucet.

**3. The Under-the-Counter Filter** is attached to your cold water supply line and treats all the water that passes through the faucet. These filters are generally larger than the faucet filters and can treat a larger volume of water. This device treats approximately 200-500 gallons of water.

**Advantages:**

Filters last four to six months; simple to operate; treats all water flow through the faucet.

**Disadvantages:**

Professional installation required.

All of these home water treatment devices are available at hardware and home furnishing stores. Remember to purchase a treatment device that is certified for lead removal by an independent testing organization such as the NSF. An NSF-approved statement should be on the product's packaging. Visit <http://www.nsf.org/certified/dwtu/> for a listing of manufacturers and products that have been certified for the removal of lead.

**CAUTION:** All home treatment devices are only effective if the filter cartridges are replaced regularly based on the manufacturer's instructions. Also, these treatment devices have only been NSF-certified to remove lead in water with concentrations ranging from 150-180 ppb.

## Service Line Information at Your Fingertips

Now you can use your online customer account profile to access the latest information on your service line. If you are already registered to pay your bill or view your account information online, simply log onto your account from [www.dcwasa.com](http://www.dcwasa.com) and click "Lead Service Information." If you do not have an online profile, register by visiting [www.dcwasa.com](http://www.dcwasa.com) and clicking "Register." You will need your WASA account number and customer number, both of which can be found on your bill. Once your account is created, click on "Lead Service Information."

For more information, visit WASA's website at [www.dcwasa.com](http://www.dcwasa.com).

Para leer este folleto en Español, por favor visite nuestra página Web [www.dcwasa.com](http://www.dcwasa.com).

### Report Emergencies 24 Hours A Day!

Contact our 24-Hour Emergency Hotline to report improper hydrant use, catch basins clogged with leaves, water leaks or suspected sewer backups.

**Call 202-612-3400.**

#### District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority

Customer Service Department

810 First Street, NE

Washington, DC 20002

Customer Service: 202-354-3600

24-Hour Emergencies: 202-612-3400

[www.dcwasa.com](http://www.dcwasa.com)

