

Board Lowers Proposed Rate Increase

Bond Rating Upgrades Mean Lower Rates for Consumers

WASA is pleased to report that our Board of Directors voted to cap the increase in water and sewer rates at 2.5 percent, beginning October 1, 2003. This approval nearly cuts in half the original proposed increase of 4.4 percent. What's more, a proposed 5.0 percent increase for October 2004 was dropped altogether.

At its monthly meeting on July 3, the Board's Retail Rates Committee, which is made up solely of District residents, recommended that the Board lower the proposed rate increase for this October and not approve an increase for October 2004. The Committee also stated it will review WASA's financial position later this year and next year to consider future increases.

Board Chairman Glenn S. Gerstell, who also chairs the Retail Rates Committee, said that an examination of WASA's financial position showed that cost savings had occurred over the past year. Gerstell said, "Improved performance at the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant, control of overtime usage, and savings in contractor costs by retraining and utilizing current employees" all helped keep costs low.

The fact that the three principal rating agencies all upgraded WASA to a double A minus credit rating was also good news. Moody's Investors Service, Standard and Poor's, and Fitch Ratings all upgraded WASA's senior lien

"WASA is focused on exploring every avenue to keep costs down for our customers."

- Jerry N. Johnson, WASA General Manager

revenue bonds to "Aa3/AA-/AA-," respectively. The ratings agencies noted WASA's strong financial management, diverse customer base and strength of the management team as major positives.

"This is great news for both WASA and more importantly, its customers. For WASA, this is independent recognition

As was recently reported by *The Washington Post*, residents of DC will be seeing their monthly water bills increase starting October 1, 2003. But, thanks to new bond ratings, consumer costs will be lower than originally anticipated. The three major financial rating agencies have raised WASA's bond status to their AA categories, which is the second highest possible and higher than the rating of the city government.

of the fact that our management team has built our financial house on an excellent foundation. For our customers, since WASA will now be able to pay lower interest rates on our bonds, our customers' water and sewer bills will be lower than if we hadn't received these credit upgrades," said Gerstell.

The Board voted to pass cost savings directly to customers by lowering the original proposed rate increase. The increase is needed to fund WASA's 10-year, \$1.6 billion capital improvement program (CIP). WASA's CIP is well underway, and must continue to ensure safe and reliable delivery and treatment systems for our community.

Gerstell commented that, "This is not unlike a family that saves for college educations — we, too, must save to fund our capital program for infrastructure improvements."

Starting on October 1, 2003, retail rates in the District will increase from \$4.26 per Ccf (Ccf = 100 cubic feet, or 748 gallons) to \$4.37 per Ccf, which is about 2.5 percent more. Typical residential customers use about 8.33 Ccf (or 6,231 gallons) per month and should expect their monthly bill to increase approximately \$0.92 — from \$41.08 to \$42.00.

If you'd like to learn more about WASA's rate increase, call 202-354-3600 or visit www.dcwasa.com.



Lead in Drinking Water

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority are concerned about lead in your drinking water. Although most homes have very low levels of lead in their drinking water, some homes in the community have lead levels above the EPA action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb), or 0.015 milligrams of lead per liter of water (mg/L).

Under federal law the water supplier is required to have a program in place to minimize lead in your drinking water. The Washington Aqueduct (Aqueduct) Division of the Army Corps of Engineers is the wholesale supplier of water to WASA. In compliance with federal requirements, Aqueduct has performed an optimal corrosion control study to minimize lead in the drinking water. The Optimal Corrosion Control Treatment (OCCT) was designated for Aqueduct by the EPA, and OCCT was implemented by Aqueduct in 1993. The OCCT implemented by Aqueduct applies to the WASA water distribution system as Aqueduct is a wholesale supplier of drinking water and has no distribution system of its own. Under the OCCT requirements, a pH of 7.4 to 7.7 must be maintained at the entry points to the distribution system and a minimum pH of 7.0 is to be maintained in the distribution system. The purpose of the OCCT is to control the corrosivity of water and thus minimize leaching of lead or copper from lead service lines and customer plumbing into drinking water.

This program includes corrosion control treatment, source water treatment, and public education.

We are also required to replace the portion of each lead service line that we own if the line contributes lead concentrations of more than 15 ppb after we have completed the comprehensive treatment program. If you have any questions about how we are carrying out the requirements of the lead regulation, please e-mail us at WQP2003@dcwasa.com or give us a call at 202-787-2732.

There are simple steps you can take to protect you and your family by reducing your potential exposure to lead in drinking water.

이 자료는 식수의 질에 관한 정보를 담고 있습니다. 이 내용을 한국어로 알고 싶으시면, 한국 사회 봉사 센터로 월요일부터 금요일까지 오전 9시부터 오후 5시 사이에 301-933-7010으로 전화 주시기 바랍니다.

本文件包含有關飲水品質的資訊。如需該資訊的翻譯服務，請於星期一至星期五上午九時至下午五時電華人社區口會唐人街服務中心。電話號碼 202-898-0061。

Si usted desea recibir este material en Español en forma gratuita, por favor llámenos al 202-787-2200.

Health Effects of Lead

Lead is a common metal found throughout the environment in lead-based paint; air; soil; household dust; food; certain types of pottery, porcelain, and pewter; and water. Lead can pose a significant risk to your health if too much of it enters your body.

Lead builds up in the body over many years and can cause damage to the brain, red blood cells, and kidneys. The greatest risk is to young children and pregnant women. Amounts of lead that won't hurt adults can slow down normal mental and physical development of growing bodies. In addition, a child at play often comes into contact with sources of lead contamination – like dirt and dust – that rarely affect an adult. It is important to wash children's hands and toys often, and to try to make sure they only put food in their mouths.

Lead in Drinking Water

Lead in drinking water, although rarely the sole cause of lead poisoning, can significantly increase a person's total lead exposure, particularly the exposure of infants who drink baby formulas and concentrated juices that are mixed with water from homes with lead service lines and/or plumbing systems. The EPA estimates that drinking water can make up 20 percent or more of a person's total exposure to lead.

How Lead Enters Our Drinking Water

Lead is unusual among drinking water contaminants in that it seldom occurs naturally in water supplies like rivers and lakes. Lead enters drinking water primarily as a result of the corrosion, or wearing away, of materials containing lead in the water distribution system and household plumbing. These materials include lead-based solder used to join copper pipe, brass and chrome-plated brass faucets, and in some cases, pipes made of lead that connect your house to the water main (service lines). In 1986, Congress banned the use of lead solder containing greater than 0.2% lead, and restricted the lead content of faucets, pipes, and other plumbing materials to 8.0%.

When water stands in lead pipes or plumbing systems containing lead for several hours or more, the lead may dissolve into your drinking water. This means the first water drawn from the tap in the morning, or later in the afternoon after returning from work or school, can contain fairly high levels of lead.

Steps to Reduce Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water

Despite our best efforts mentioned earlier to control water corrosivity and remove lead from the water supply, lead levels in some homes or buildings can be high because service lines and internal plumbing systems can contribute lead to water delivered by those pipes. To find out whether you need to take action in your own home, have your drinking water tested to determine if it contains excessive concentrations of lead. Testing the water is essential because you cannot see, taste, or smell lead in drinking water. Some local laboratories that can provide this service are listed on the last page. For more information on having your water tested, please e-mail us at WQP2003@dcwasa.com or call us at 202-787-2732.

If a water test indicates that the drinking water drawn from a tap in your home contains lead above 15 ppb, then you should take the following precautions:

1. Flush Your System. Let the water run from the tap before using it for drinking or cooking any time the water in a faucet has gone unused for more than six hours. The longer water resides in your home's plumbing the more lead it may contain. Flushing the tap means running the cold water faucet until the water gets noticeably colder, usually about 15 to 30 seconds. If your house has a lead service line to the water main, you may have to flush the water for a longer time, perhaps one minute, before drinking. Although toilet flushing or showering flushes water through a portion of your home's plumbing system, you still need to flush the water in each faucet before using it for drinking or cooking. Flushing tap water is a simple and inexpensive measure you can take to protect your family's health. It usually uses less than one or two gallons of water and costs less than \$3.00 per month at half a penny per gallon. To conserve water, fill a couple of bottles for drinking water after flushing the tap, and whenever possible use the first flush water to wash the dishes or water the plants. If you live in a high-rise building, letting the water flow before using it may not work to lessen your risk from lead. The plumbing systems have more, and sometimes larger, pipes than smaller buildings. Ask your landlord for help in locating the source of the lead and for advice on reducing the lead level.

2. Use Only Cold Water for Cooking and Drinking. Try not to cook with, or drink water from the hot water tap. Hot water can dissolve more lead more quickly than cold water. If you need hot water, draw water from the cold tap and heat it on the stove.

3. Remove Debris from Faucet Strainers Regularly. Remove loose lead solder and debris from the plumbing materials installed in newly constructed homes, or homes in which the plumbing has recently been replaced, by removing the faucet strainers from all taps and running the water for 3 to 5 minutes. Thereafter, periodically remove the strainers and flush out any debris that has accumulated over time.

4. Identify and Replace Lead Solder. If your copper pipes are joined with lead solder that has been installed illegally since it was banned in 1986, notify the plumber who did the work and request that he or she replace the lead solder with lead-free solder. Lead solder looks dull gray, and when scratched with a key looks shiny. In addition, notify EPA Region's Safe Drinking Water Act Enforcement Branch at 215-814-5445 about the violation.

5. Find out Whether Your Service Line is Made of Lead. Determine whether or not the service line that connects your home or apartment to the water main is made of lead. The best way to determine if your service line is made of lead is by either hiring a licensed plumber to inspect the line or by contacting the plumbing contractor who installed the line. You can identify the plumbing contractor by checking the city's records of building permits, which should be maintained in the files of the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) at 202-442-4642.

A licensed plumber can at the same time check to see if your home's plumbing contains lead solder, lead pipes, or pipe fittings that contain lead. WASA also maintains records of the materials located in the public portions of the distribution system. E-mail us at WQP2003@dcwasa.com or call 202-787-2732 for information. If the service line that connects your dwelling to the water main contributes more than 15 ppb to drinking water, after our comprehensive treatment program is in place, we are required to replace the portion of the line we own. If only part of the line is owned by WASA, we are required to provide the owner of the privately owned portion of the line with information on how to replace the privately owned portion of the service line, and offer to replace that portion of the line at the owner's expense. If we replace only the portion of the line that we own, we also are required to notify you in advance and provide you with information on the steps you can take to minimize exposure to any temporary increase in lead levels that may result from the partial replacement, to take a follow-up sample at our expense from the line within 72 hours after the partial replacement, and to mail or otherwise provide you with the results of that sample within three business days of receiving the results. An acceptable replacement material is copper.

6. Have an Electrician Check Your Wiring. If grounding wires from the electrical system are attached to your pipes, corrosion may be greater. Check with a licensed electrician or your local electrical code to determine if your wiring can be grounded elsewhere. DO NOT attempt to change the wiring yourself because improper grounding can cause electrical shock and fire hazards.

The steps described above will reduce the lead concentrations in your drinking water. However, if a water test indicates that the drinking water coming from your tap contains lead concentrations in excess of 15 ppb after flushing, or after we have completed our actions to minimize lead levels, then you may want to take the following additional measures:

7. Purchase or Lease a Home Treatment Device. Home treatment devices are limited in that each unit treats only the water that flows from the faucet to which it is connected, and all of the devices require periodic maintenance and replacement. Devices such as reverse osmosis systems or distillers can effectively remove lead from your drinking water. Some activated carbon filters *may* reduce lead levels at the tap; however, all lead reduction claims should be investigated. Be sure to check the actual performance of a specific home treatment device before and after installing the unit.

8. Purchase Bottled Water for Drinking and Cooking.

For More Information

You can consult a variety of sources for additional information:

- Your family doctor or pediatrician can perform a blood test for lead and provide you with information about the health effects of lead.

Continued from the inside pages

Government agencies that can be contacted include:

- To get information about your community's water supply, e-mail us at WQP2003@dcwasa.com or call 202-787-2732. A list of local laboratories that have been certified by EPA for testing water quality is below.
- The DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs at 202-442-4641 can provide you with information about building permit records that should contain the names of plumbing contractors who plumbed your home.
- The DC Department of Health at 202-535-2690 can provide you with information about the health effects of lead and how you can have your child's blood tested.

EPA-Certified Laboratories

The following is a list of some EPA-approved laboratories in your area that you can call to have your water tested for lead.

AMA Analytical Services, Inc.

4475 Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, MD 20706
301-459-2640

Anabell Environmental, Inc.

8648 Dakota Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
301-548-9425

Envirometric Laboratories, Inc.

354 Hungerford Drive, Suite 100
Rockville, MD 20850
301-838-3091

GPL Laboratories, LLLP

202 Perry Parkway
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
301-926-6802

Metropolitan Environmental Testing Services, Inc.

179 Smallwood Village Center
Waldorf, MD 20602
301-870-1995

WSSC, LSG

12245 Tech Road
Silver Spring, MD 20904
301-206-7580

For more information, visit WASA's Website at www.dcwasa.com.

Para leer este folleto en Español, por favor visite nuestra página Web www.dcwasa.com.

Visit www.dcwasa.com for 100 ways to use water wisely.

Report Emergencies 24 Hours A Day!

It's easy to get in touch with WASA. Use our hotline number to report improper use of hydrants, catch basins that have become clogged with leaves, water leaks or suspected sewer backups.

24-Hour Emergency Hotline: 202-612-3400



The Main Ingredient

Orange Sherbet Salad

Makes 6 servings

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Ready in: 2 hours, 15 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 (6-ounce) packages orange-flavored gelatin
- 4 cups boiling WASA water
- 1 quart orange sherbet
- 2 (11-ounce) cans mandarin oranges
- 3 bananas, sliced

Directions

Combine the gelatin and boiling water; stir until dissolved. Add sherbet and fruit. Mix well.

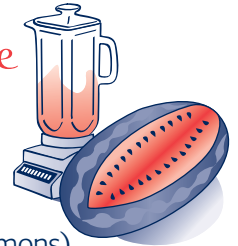
Pour into a 9" x 13" dish and chill until set. Serve cold.

Watermelon Lemonade

Makes 6 cups

Ingredients

- 6 cups watermelon, without seeds
- 1/2 cup lemon juice (about 4-6 large lemons)
- 1 cup WASA water
- 1/2 cup sugar (adjust to taste)
- 1 cup club soda



Directions

Puree watermelon in a blender. Pour into a large pitcher (or container for mixing). Mix with the water and lemon juice, dissolving the sugar into the mixture. Chill. Add the club soda just before serving. Garnish with lemon slices.

Want to see your favorite WASA water recipe featured in "What's On Tap"? Just send your name, address, phone number and clearly printed recipe to:

District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority
Public Affairs Office - Favorite Recipes
5000 Overlook Ave, SW, Washington, DC 20032

Remember—you can pay your bill online at www.dcwasa.com

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

