

What's on Tap

News for Customers of the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (WASA)

December 2005

2005 Was a Banner Year for Serving Our Customers

On behalf of our Board of Directors and employees, WASA extends best wishes to you for a great holiday season. As the New Year approaches, we want to share with you a few highlighted WASA achievements during 2005.



You can now use voice recognition technology for customer services.

New voice technology serves WASA customers 24 hours a day

WASA implemented Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology, which allows customers to use voice commands to perform many self-service applications like bill payment, retrieving water usage information, requesting payment extensions, and other services 24 hours a day.

Lead levels in the District's drinking water continue to drop

Changes in water chemistry by the Washington Aqueduct have driven down lead levels in the District's drinking water. Tests so far this

year show about 90 percent of the homes sampled have fallen below the federal lead "action level" as required under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Lead and Copper Rule. The addition of orthophosphate to the drinking water was based on recommendations by a working group that included the Washington Aqueduct, WASA, the District Department of Health, EPA and water quality experts.

In addition, WASA continues to move very aggressively to replace public lead service pipes in the District. In 2005, WASA replaced 4,137 public lead service lines and created financing options for customers who choose to replace lead service lines on their private property.

WASA biosolids program is nationally recognized

WASA's Biosolids Management Program received national recognition this year by the EPA with its 2005 National First Place Clean Water Act Recognition Award. The award recognizes outstanding operational projects, research, technological



University of Maryland researcher tests soil where WASA biosolids were applied to agricultural land.

advances, and public awareness efforts that promote the beneficial uses of municipal wastewater biosolids. Biosolids are treated residue left over from the sewage treatment process. More than 1200 wet tons are hauled each day from the Blue Plains plant for reuse as fertilizer and mulch.

WASA improves infrastructure to ensure reliable service

During the past year, WASA committed nearly \$300 million to dramatically enhance water distribution and wastewater treatment services, including: improving large underground water transmission mains at several major

intersections; renovating the main water pumping station at Bryant Street; and increasing water system pressure and system reliability east of the Anacostia with new transmission mains. WASA is also improving the wastewater system by initiating construction of the new Eastside Pumping Station; improving the Potomac



Water main improvements enhance the water distribution system.

Interceptor; and making progress on the Anacostia sewer improvement program to substantially reduce flooding near Nannie Helen Burroughs and Minnesota Avenues, NE.

These improvements are only a few of the many investments WASA is making to provide better service to customers now and in the years to come.

Happy Holidays!

Help us update your customer account information

WASA is preparing to introduce several new services that will continue to help you control your water use—and reduce your costs. They will also help us notify you in advance, for example, when there is a planned service shutdown in your neighborhood.

To bring these new services to you online and by phone, we need to ensure that your customer account information (current phone number or email address) is up to date. To update your customer account information, contact WASA at (202) 354-3600.

Over the past few years, WASA has intro-



Updating your account information is quick and easy.

duced new technologies that make tracking your current water use easier and viewing and paying your bill more efficient.

The new automated meter-reading program provides a daily, accurate water reading, rather than an estimate of usage. The Interactive Voice

Response system makes it easier for you to navigate the different service offerings, and will help us introduce new services as they are developed.

Our Customer Call Center is more responsive and better able to handle more complex customer concerns on the spot.

Guide to Services for the Latino Community now available



The District of Columbia has published the new “*Guía de Servicios, Washington a su alcance*,” a first-ever guide to District services for Spanish-speaking residents.

The Spanish-language guide includes descriptive and up-to-date information on government and nongovernment programs and services, including telephone numbers and other contact information in the areas of health, education, legal services, and economic development.

More than 10,000 copies of the guide were printed—one for each Latino household in the city. To obtain a copy, check with local community-based organizations or call the DC Office of Latino Affairs, (202) 671-2825.

District high school students can now learn about wastewater treatment in their schools

WASA is now working with District high school science programs to help students learn about the science of environmental engineering and wastewater treatment. Using a highly interactive mini-wastewater treatment plant as the teaching tool, students can learn about the processes involved in treating wastewater and recycling it back into area rivers and tributaries.

WASA will provide the materials, including the student and teacher workbooks, free of charge.



High school teachers are trained on wastewater treatment.

WASA personnel will also help teachers develop the program and integrate it into their science classes.

If you would like your child's school to participate in this program, have the school call WASA's Office of Public Affairs, at (202) 787-2200.



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Water and Sewer
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For more information, visit WASA's web site at www.dcwasa.com.

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

Report Emergencies 24 Hours a day!

To report improper use of hydrants, clogged catch basins, water main leaks, or suspected sewer backups, call (202) 612-3400.

To reach WASA's Lead Services Hotline, call (202) 787-2732.