



What's on Tap

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

May 2007

WASA board considers proposed water and sewer rate changes

WASA's Board of Directors is considering a proposed 7.5 percent rate increase for water and sewer services, effective October 1, 2007. If approved, the combined water and sewer rate would increase the average monthly bill by approximately \$3.42 per month, from \$48.66 to \$52.08.

The Board's policy is to keep rates as low as reasonably possible, deliver quality service and meet federally

mandated water quality and environmental requirements.

Gradual rate increases are

periodically required to pay the on-going cost of much-needed improvements to the District's water and sewer systems.

WASA has implemented

a 10-year, \$2.2 billion Capital Improvement Program for several critical projects. These include rehabilitating

or replacing water mains and lead service lines; constructing and renovating pumping stations; completing regulatory and technology improvements at the Blue Plains wastewater treatment plant; and reducing combined sewer overflows that spill into the District's waterways during rainstorms.

Even with the proposed rate change, WASA's rates remain competitive with those of other Mid-Atlantic water utilities.

The Board will host a public hearing in June to hear customer comments on the rate

Proposed rate increases:

- **Water service:** from \$2.03 to \$2.18 per Ccf
- **Sanitary sewer service:** from \$3.06 to \$3.29 per Ccf
- **Right of Way/PILOT fee:** from \$0.44 to \$0.47 per Ccf (District government pass through)

proposal. Additional information is available on the Web at www.dcwasa.com or by calling the Office of Public Affairs at (202) 787-2200.



College interns have a role in WASA research and technology

Ten local university students are helping WASA in important wastewater treatment research. The interns, from the graduate programs at Howard University, George Washington University, Virginia Tech and the University of Maryland, are researching denitrification, a treatment process that removes nitrogen from wastewater. Nitrogen is a key pollutant that causes the depletion of oxygen that fish and other aquatic life need to thrive.

The intern program allows WASA to expand its research capabilities and contribute to the development of the next generation of environmental engineers and scientists.

WASA is collaborating with a number of national research foundations and Mid-Atlantic universities on numerous projects including nitrogen removal, disinfection, solids processing technologies, biosolids management, plant automation and plant security. Students who study in a graduate program can work on research projects year-round at WASA.



"A Guide to Sewer Backup and Flood Prevention" is available

WASA has published *A Guide to Sewer Backup and Flood Prevention*, an educational resource containing valuable information that can help you identify potential problem areas in your home's drainage system or infrastructure.

Specific District neighborhoods have historically had flooding issues due to the bowl-like (low-lying) topography and the inadequate capacity in sewers that were constructed in the late 19th century. Areas around Dupont Circle and the Florida Avenue corridor, among others, have experienced prob-

lems with sewer backups and surface water flooding for many years.

This guide explains steps you can take to upgrade, repair, or help ensure that your home or business stays dry and protected during heavy rain and flooding conditions.

A Guide to Sewer Backup and Flood

Prevention is available by calling WASA's Office of Public Affairs at (202) 787-2200.



How well do you know WASA?

- WASA recently celebrated its tenth anniversary, marking a decade of service as an independent agency since taking over water and sewer utility operations from the District public works department.
- WASA purchases treated drinking water from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Washington Aqueduct and distributes it to more than 130,000 business, government and residential locations in the District.
- WASA has patented new technology that allows customers to receive a phone or e-mail alert when there is an unusual spike in their water use.
- WASA operates the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is one of the largest such plants in the world. The facility covers 150 acres along



Plant operations at Blue Plains

the Potomac River in southwest D.C. and treats hundreds of millions of gallons of wastewater each day from the District and suburban customers in Maryland and Virginia.

- WASA has intensified efforts to protect the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay with the recent approval of water pollution control projects estimated at more than \$900 million.
- WASA is recognized as a national leader in the water and wastewater utility industry and is the recipient of numerous awards for achievement and innovation.

SPLASH program continues to help customers in need

WASA's SPLASH program (Serving the Public by Lending a Supporting Hand) helps financially challenged District customers pay their water and sewer bills and is funded solely by contributions from customers and the community.

Public donations for SPLASH totaled more than \$60,000 in 2006. Customers can contribute to the program by checking the appropriate box on their WASA bill or by calling Customer Service at (202) 354-3600.

This year, the Greater Washington Urban League will assume the role of SPLASH program administrator, previously held by the Salvation Army.

WASA can save you money on outdoor water use

Would you like to save money this spring and summer when watering your lawn or garden? WASA offers District residents the option to sub-meter water for gardening, landscaping, or any other use that does not return water to the sewer system.

To take advantage of this program, a licensed plumber will need to install a service line and make sure your installation is meter-ready. Once WASA completes the installation of a sub-meter, you will not have to pay sewer charges for the water registering through the sub-meter.

If you would like more information on this money-saving program, please contact WASA Customer Service at (202) 354-3600.



Interesting facts about water

- The United States consumes water at twice the rate of other industrialized nations.
- At least 9.6 million households and \$390 billion in property lie in flood prone areas in the United States.
- One gallon of water weighs 8.34 pounds.
- Over 90% of the world's supply of fresh water is located in Antarctica.
- The overall amount of water on our planet has amazingly



remained the same for two billion years.

- By 2025, two-thirds of the world's population will likely have water shortages.
- Water use in the United States alone leaped from 330 million gallons per day in 1980 to 408 million gallons per day in 1990.

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

Para informar emergencias del agua residuales, llame (202) 612-3400.

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 Line, call (202) 787-2732.



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