

What's on Tap

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

September 2006

Latest tests show city water meets federal quality regulations Lead service line replacement program continues

Water distributed in the District of Columbia continues to meet federal standards for lead under the Safe Drinking Water Act. In test results from tap water samples taken in the first six months of this year, the average lead level was six parts per billion (6 ppb). (The Environmental Protection Agency has established a lead "action level" at 15 ppb.)

Lead levels have, in fact, been declining continuously since fall 2004, following a change in water chemistry at the water treatment plant that produces the water that WASA distributes.

Even though the city's water is well within the allowable limit for lead, WASA continues to honor its pledge to install copper pipes to replace the public portion of the lead service lines that connect many District homes to water mains in the street. To date, more than 9,000 service lines have been removed in neighborhoods around the city. The cost to replace the estimated 30,000 lead service lines citywide is approximately \$400 million.

As WASA crews replace lead service lines in public



space, property owners are encouraged to replace any lead lines on their private property as well. Financial assistance is available for those who qual-

ify in the form of grants from the District's Department of Housing and Community Development and low-interest loans through Wachovia Bank. Both programs have income guidelines for eligibility.

For more information, contact the Lead Service Hotline at (202) 787-2732 or e-mail us at waterquality@dcwasa.com.



Paying your bill is as easy as 1-2-3

- 1. Electronically**—You can pay your bill with your VISA, MasterCard, or Discover card, or set up Automatic Bill Payment, where your monthly bill is deducted directly from your checking account or charged to your credit card. You can do either, at any time, by visiting www.dcwasa.com or calling (202) 354-3600.
- 2. Wachovia Bank**—You may bring cash, check or money order for the amount due to any Wachovia branch office in the District of Columbia. (You should not pay a bill on or after its due date at a bank location.)
- 3. WASA business office**—You can pay your bill at one of our business offices:
 - 810 First St., NE—1st floor
 - Penn Branch Municipal Service Center, 3200 Pennsylvania Ave., SE—lower level (Cash not accepted at this location)

More information means more value for customers Customers can receive high water use alerts

WASA has combined radio and computer technologies to enhance and expand customer services.

Using radio frequency technology, WASA's automated meter reading tracks customers' daily water use. That information has now been integrated into a Web-based program that lets customers check on how much water they are using.

WASA also uses this information to create a "customer profile" that trends average daily

use. If a customer has four consecutive days of well above normal use, WASA sends the customer an alert by e-mail or telephone. This high-usage notification program (HUNA) can help detect potential problems or plumbing leaks and has been a welcomed, money-saving feature for customers (see "customer comments").



Sample "My Account" Monthly Usage chart with links to view daily water usage by month

WASA's AMR technology also offers other services, including advance customer notification of any planned temporary shutdowns in specific areas.

To take advantage of these features, WASA must have the customer's current phone and/or e-mail information.

see [Water alerts](#) on back



Customer Assistance Programs are available when needed



Occasionally, some WASA customers are confronted with circumstances beyond their control and face financial difficulties. Fortunately, WASA has several programs to help needy individuals and families with their water/sewer bill.

The Utility Discount Program is administered by the DC Energy Office and gives eligible homeowners and tenants a discount on their water bill. Qualified customers can receive an exemption for charges on the first 400 cubic feet (4 ccf) per month of water usage. That's a discount of about \$7.25 a month or up to \$87 a year. The program is limited to single-family, owner-occupied residential accounts and individually metered tenant accounts. Eligibility is based on federal income guidelines. Call (202) 673-6700 for more information.

S.P.L.A.S.H. – *Serving People by Lending A Supporting Hand* – offers assistance to cus-

tomers facing hardships so that they can maintain critical water and sewer services. S.P.L.A.S.H. is funded solely by customer and community contributions and administered by the Salvation Army. Customers can make a contribution to this program by marking the appropriate box on their bill. Call (202) 354-3600 for more information.

Payment Arrangements can help to avoid service interruptions if customers get behind on their bills. Customers should advise WASA when unexpected financial situations occur, and a manageable payment arrangement can be made. For more information, call Customer Service at (202) 354-3600.

Water alerts

continued from front

To update your customer account information, contact WASA at (202) 354-3600 or e-mail custserv@dcwasa.com.

WASA customer comments:

- **“Thank you very much. This is great service. I did find a leaking toilet two days ago...”**
- **“Thank you so much for this notice. I accidentally left my water sprinkler on out back. Thanks for the alert...”**



Mark your calendars for JUDD!!

Tuesday, October 31, 2006, 8 am - 7 pm
Washington Convention Center

Each year, WASA joins Pepco, Verizon, and Washington Gas for *Joint Utility Discount Day* (JUDD) to help District residents apply for available discounts on their utility bills.

Adopt-A-Block – working together for a clean and beautiful city

Is there an area in your neighborhood that you would like to help keep clean? The Mayor's Office of the Clean City sponsors a program that helps you and your neighbors adopt an area of your community to help make our city clean and beautiful. The clean&greenDC Adopt-A-Block program is easy to organize for your neighborhood.

In order to be a part of the program a group:

- Adopts a minimum of two square blocks of a residential or commercial area
 - Agrees to conduct a quarterly clean-up day and weekly litter pickup in the adopted area
 - Maintains this agreement for two years
- For more information on the Adopt-A-Block program, call (202) 724-8967 or e-mail cleancity@dc.gov



Please keep your water meter clear

WASA meters are equipped with an automated meter reading device that sends out a signal that is read from a distance. The signal cannot be read if the meter is blocked. Please keep the meter top

clear of flower pots, trash cans, dirt and mulch, vehicles, and anything else that might cover the meter.



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

Para informar emergencias del agua residuales, llama (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 Hotline, call (202) 787-2732.