

District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority

CRIAC Report

Fiscal Year 2021

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Requirement

This report is required by the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority Omnibus Amendment Act of 2020. The Transparency Act requires DC Water to publish a report of the average Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) for residential customers in the District and the average residential charge in each Ward as well as efforts to publicize customer assistance programs.

The Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge

The Clean Rivers Project is DC Water's ongoing program to reduce combined sewer overflows (CSO's) into the District's waterways - the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers and Rock Creek. The Project is a massive infrastructure and support program designed to capture and clean wastewater during rainfalls before it ever reaches our rivers. The \$2.99 billion project that will be completed in 2030 has been primarily funded from the Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC).

The Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) is a fair way to distribute the cost of maintaining storm sewers and protecting area waterways because it is based on a property's contribution of rainwater to the District's sewer system. Because charges are based on the amount of impervious area on a property, owners of large office buildings, shopping centers and parking lots will be charged more than owners of modest residential dwellings.

All residential, multi-family and non-residential customers are billed a CRIAC. The charge is based on an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). An ERU is a statistical median of the amount of impervious surface area in a single-family residential property, measured in square feet. The approved monthly ERU values for FY 2021 and FY 2022 are \$19.52 and \$18.40 respectively.

Residential CRIAC Charges for Fiscal Year 2021

The average residential CRIAC charge in FY 2021 was \$20.89 per month or \$250.68 per year.

The average charge per Ward is provided in the table below.

Ward	Average ERUs	Average Monthly Charge	Average Annual Charge
1	0.94	\$18.35	\$220.20
2	1.06	\$20.69	\$248.28
3	1.60	\$31.23	\$374.76
4	1.16	\$22.64	\$271.68
5	0.98	\$19.13	\$229.56
6	0.90	\$17.57	\$210.84
7	0.92	\$17.96	\$215.52
8	0.88	\$17.18	\$206.16
District-wide	1.07	\$20.89	\$250.68

Customer Discounts

DC Water has a long history of lending a helping hand to customers in financial need who are having trouble paying their water bills. Now, we know the need is even greater due to the economic toll of the coronavirus pandemic. In response, we have launched DC Water Cares, a new program to assist customers who have fallen behind. In addition, we are now offering emergency assistance to people who rent in multi-family buildings.

DC Water offers the following assistance programs. For more information please see <https://www.dwater.com/customer-assistance>.

- Customer Assistance Program (CAP) provides a discount on the first 400 cubic feet (3,000 gallons) of water and sewer services used each month. Eligible households will receive a 75 percent reduction in the monthly CRIAC fee and a Water Service Replacement Fee waiver. The monthly discount is approximately \$80 a month.
- Customer Assistance Program II (CAP2) provides a discount on the first 300 cubic feet (2,250 gallons) of water and sewer services used each month (with the exception of PILOT and ROW fees) and a 50 percent reduction in the monthly CRIAC fee. The monthly discount is approximately \$52 a month.

- Customer Assistance Program III (CAP3) provides a discount of 75 percent off of the monthly CRIAC. The monthly discount is approximately \$14 a month.
- Residential Assistance Program (Emergency Residential Relief) - Up to \$2,000 to help income-eligible customers eliminate their past due balance.
- Multifamily Assistance Program (for Renters and Multifamily Occupants) - Up to \$2,000 for those whose water bill is paid through rent or to an HOA/condo association.
- CRIAC Relief for Nonprofit Organizations - Credits of up to 90% of the CRIAC portion of a nonprofit's water bill.
- Extended Payment Plans - Repay past due balances over time. More flexible options now available. No late fees accrue while meeting payment plan obligations.
- SPLASH (One-time Emergency Assistance) - DC Water employees, customers and others donate to this one-time assistance fund for those facing disconnection.

Publication of Assistance Programs

DC Water extensively publicized the availability of financial assistance programs in FY2020 and FY2021, in coordination with the Executive Office of the Mayor and DOEE. During that time, we saw a marked increase in the number of customers taking advantage of the assistance. The financial impact of the pandemic likely contributed to the boost in participation, along with our aggressive efforts to promote the programs and ensure customers were aware of the assistance available.

We employed several tactics to promote and market the expanded customer assistance programs (CAP) including bill inserts and messages, paid advertising, promotion across all of our social media platforms, Nextdoor, earned media in local news outlets, and direct outreach to residents including seniors. We engaged with customers in-person before the pandemic, and virtually once the public health emergency began. We presented to dozens of community groups and partnered with a wide range of organizations and agencies to inform the public about the suite of assistance programs. We also partnered with local food banks to insert DC Water Cares fliers into food bags and boxes for their clients.

Paid Marketing Campaigns:

2020 – \$9,483.20 - Print ads in the Washington Informer, Hill Rag, East of the River, Mid-City, Afro-American and Washington Post.

2021 - \$47,109.20 – Multifaceted campaign including Metrobus ads, Bus shelter ads, and print ads in the Washington Post, Washington Informer, and Capital Community News (Hill Rag, East of the River, Mid-City).