



What's on Tap

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

November 2006

Free "Guide To Customer Services" is packed with information

Do you understand all of the separate charges found on your monthly water and sewer bill or know your rights and responsibilities as a WASA customer? Are you aware of WASA's payment options and payment assistance programs? Do you know where to check for household leaks or how to establish a new account? WASA's new *Guide to Customer Services* can address these and other subjects and provides you with WASA

contact information as well as tips on how to use your water wisely. For instance, you should water your lawn slowly and thoroughly when it's cool and not windy. This free useful 12-page *Guide to Customer Services* booklet is now



available at these WASA business offices:
■ 810 First Street NE
■ Penn Branch Municipal Service Center, 3200 Pennsylvania Avenue NE
Copies of the *Guide* are also available by calling WASA's Office of Public Affairs at (202) 787-2200.

Customer aid is just a SPLASH away



For most of us, the upcoming holiday season means lots of delicious food, presents, and good cheer. But it also means a time for giving to those individuals and families who are having a tough time due to financial distress.

SPLASH, which means *Serving People by Lending A Supporting Hand*, offers assistance to those WASA customers who are facing hardships so that they can keep critical water and sewer services. SPLASH is funded by generous contributions from thousands of WASA customers and is administered by a non-profit agency in the community.

Take a little time to think about those who could use your financial help this holiday season by donating to SPLASH. To contribute, please mark the appropriate box on your bill or call (202) 354-3600 for more information.

Check your water system for leaks

WASA's Automated Meter Reading (AMR) system offers value-added services to our customers. It provides monthly and daily information on your water usage so a plumbing problem can be identified that may potentially save you hundreds of dollars.

By visiting WASA's website (www.dcwasa.com) and logging on *My Account*, you can access charts and graphs that will explain your monthly water usage history over the past 24 months.

WASA will send an alert via email if you have registered on *My Account* or call you if an unusually high spike in usage is detected for four consecutive days.

Fall is here—be wary of wet leaves

The same colorful fall leaves we enjoy on trees can potentially cause serious accidents when they fall to streets and sidewalks. When an abundance of leaves on the ground get wet from rain or snow, they become slippery.



Drive slowly through wet leaves on the street and avoid hard or panic braking, because the leaves reduce traction and can cause skids, especially when making turns. They can also cover parts of the yellow and white pavement markings on the road, making it difficult to determine shoulder and

lane widths. Always keep your windshield clean, as wet leaves can get clogged under your wiper blades, impeding wiper performance and visibility.

Avoid walking on sidewalks full of wet leaves as it's very easy to slip and fall. Leaves that look dry can actually be wet underneath and fool you. They retain large amounts of water and can create a slippery surface.

Leaves can also clog up catch basins and cause street flooding. Please help keep neighborhood catch basins clear of leaves, trash and other debris.

You can prevent or prepare for water emergencies

No one likes surprises that could cause unexpected inconveniences. WASA wants to help customers prevent or prepare for water service disruptions.



repair work on a water main, you will be notified in advance the day and hours that water will be turned off.

To keep pipes from freezing during winter:

Help avoid emergencies by immediately reporting broken or damaged waterlines to WASA at (202) 612-3400.

If your water will be turned off due to planned

- Wrap pipes in insulation before cold weather arrives.
- Turn off the inside valve that controls your outside hose bibs and drain the water in the pipes.

Before you dig, call "Miss Utility"

You may be thinking about outdoor projects around the home before the winter weather approaches. If your project involves major digging, don't start until you make a call to "Miss Utility"—it's required by law.



A painted line (in the above photo, blue) marks an underground utility.

one-call notification system used in the District, Maryland, and Northern Virginia.

The "Miss Utility" center informs participating utilities of upcoming excavation work so that underground utilities can be located and marked in advance to prevent damage or harm.

Call "Miss Utility" at (800) 257-7777 at least two working days (48 hours) before digging.

Digging in your yard without the proper authorization can lead to cutting utility lines, a disruption of services and may cause life threatening personal injury. "Miss Utility" is a

Some wastewater terms you may not know

When describing sewer services, WASA uses terms that may be unfamiliar. Here are a few that are frequently used when describing how the wastewater collection and treatment systems operate:

Biosolids

The organic material left over from the wastewater treatment process that can be recycled as a nutrient back into the ground. WASA frequently provides this product to area farms to enrich the soil.

Combined Sewer System (CSS)

A wastewater collection system which conveys sanitary wastewaters

(domestic, commercial and industrial wastewaters) and storm water through a single pipe to a publicly owned wastewater treatment plant.

Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO)

A discharge of untreated wastewater from a combined sewer system at a point prior to entering a treatment plant. CSO's generally occur during periods of wet weather (rainfall or snowmelt). The sewer systems become overloaded, bypass treatment works, and discharge directly to local waterways.



Paying bills is easy with Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)

When using WASA's Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), you can avoid late fees, postage, checks, mailing and paying in person. For your convenience, monthly automatic bill payment through EFT deducts money from your checking or savings account.



You'll still receive an itemized statement, but won't have to write checks. Instead, the bank sends the funds for you, providing a safe and reliable way for bill payment.

Request an application by calling WASA at (202) 354-3600 or registering for *My Account* on www.dcwasa.com.

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.

