

WHAT'S ON



TAP?

NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS | VOL. 15 ISSUE 10

General Manager's Message: Make a difference



Dear Customers,
I just noticed that donations to our SPLASH customer assistance program far outpaced what we expected this year. We set a target of \$80,000, but due to your generosity, we collected a total of \$115,984 on

behalf of low-income residents. That's great news and a credit to all of you who have made contributions.

SPLASH – short for Serving People by Lending A Supporting Hand – makes the difference for dozens of customers each year who are about to lose their service because they can't afford to pay the bill. Unfortunately, there are always more people who need help than funds available.

Hundreds of DC Water employees donate to this program as well, through a deduction on their paychecks. I hope you will join them if you have not already made a contribution, and if you have, please consider giving a little more. As we head into the holiday season, your gift could make a huge difference for a family in need.

George S. Hawkins

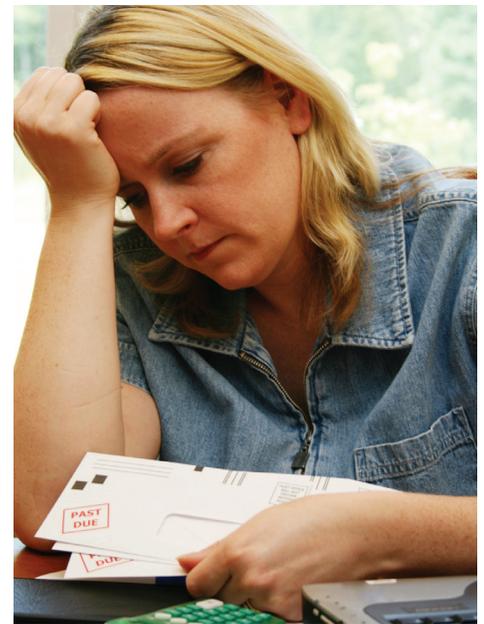
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Helping those in need now and all through the year

At this time of year we tend to think about helping those who could use a hand up. Truth is, many people right here in our city have trouble paying their bills each month. In the District, more than a quarter of residents live below the poverty line. But there are programs to help with water and sewer bills. The first is the Customer Assistance Program (CAP) that is administered by the District of Columbia's Department of the Environment (DDOE) Energy Office and provides eligible households with a discount of up to 400 cubic feet of water and up to 400 cubic feet of sewer services per month, a current savings as much as \$37 for water and sewer services. DDOE determines eligibility on the basis of federal low-income guidelines. Applicants must provide proof of income, proof of age and a current utility bill. Please call 311 to find out where to apply for this program.

Years ago, DC Water employees started the SPLASH fund (Serving People by Lending a Supporting Hand) for those customers in dire need who would be facing a service shut-off without the assistance. SPLASH is funded solely by contributions from customers, employees and the community. In fact, last fiscal year, employees contributed



\$24,933 and the public added another \$91,051. The Greater Washington Urban League manages the fund and DC Water pays all administrative fees so that every dollar raised can be distributed to eligible customers. Those who suddenly have a high water bill can also call DC Water to set up an extended payment plan.

To find out more about DC Water's payment assistance options, please visit dcwater.com/cap or call (202) 354-3600 to speak with a Customer Care Associate.

Did you know...

that not all of the fees on your DC Water bill go to DC Water? Your DC Water bill includes fees collected on behalf of the District government. These fees are the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), Right-of-Way (ROW), and Stormwater Fee lines on your bill.

Cold Weather Causes Cloudy Water

When it is cold outside, water may appear cloudy or milky due to air bubbles in the water. Cold water holds more air than warm water, so when the water enters your household plumbing and begins to warm, oxygen escapes and temporarily causes the water to look cloudy. Construction in the pipe system can also create excess oxygen in the water that results in a cloudy appearance. These air bubbles are not a health concern and the cloudiness should naturally disappear in a few minutes. If you experience cloudy water, fill a clear container from your cold water tap and wait for a few minutes. If the water clears from the bottom to the top of the container, air bubbles are rising to the surface. If the cloudiness does not disappear, contact the Drinking Water Division at (202) 612-3440 or drinkingwater@dcwater.com.



Winter weather brings water main breaks

As the thermometer plummets, the number of water main breaks rises. Expansion and contraction of pipe material and the difference in temperature in the ground and the water running through the pipe can contribute to water main breaks, creating unexpected problems for customers and motorists. DC Water averages about 400 water main breaks per year and most occur in the winter.

The Authority proactively schedules more stand-by crews in the winter, and cross-trained sewer staff to also make water main repairs. When multiple breaks occur, repairs are prioritized based on severity of the break, impact to customers and the environment, potential damage to public and private property, and traffic conditions. When emergency water main breaks cause widespread service disruptions they become critical repairs.



Photo courtesy of USEPA

In general, it takes six to eight hours to repair a water main if it is straight forward and all the necessary parts are on hand. A video at bit.ly/mainbreaks explains the steps involved in repairing a water main break.

Please report water running from streets or sidewalks. Call DC Water's 24-hour Command Center at (202) 612-3400 or report it on dcwater.com, or tweet @dcwater with a picture and location. Please be specific about the location and appearance. For listings of current repairs, please visit the home page and click on the location under "In Your Neighborhood."

Community Spotlight: Greater Washington Urban League

The Greater Washington Urban League (GWUL) is a nonprofit social services and civil rights organization with headquarters in the District of Columbia and offices in the District and Prince George's County, Maryland. GWUL strives to empower communities and to change lives using the approaches of social work, advocacy, law and other disciplines. The GWUL provides direct services and advocacy to more than 65,000 individuals annually. The GWUL manages and administers some 20 programs in the areas of education, employment and training; housing and community development; and health and special services, including DC Water's SPLASH fund to assist District families in urgent need of assistance to prevent termination of water and sewer service.

The GWUL also hosts a satellite job center for contractors working for DC Water under the DC Water Works program in its headquarters building once a week. DC Water Works job listings and other employment opportunities are posted on GWUL's website to promote local hiring.

The GWUL was founded in 1938 and is one of 95 affiliates of the National Urban League. The 40-member Board of Directors that governs the League represents a cross-section of individuals from the metropolitan Washington area. An Advisory Board provides expertise and guidance to support the League's work.

The GWUL is a 501(c)(3) organization and a member agency of the United Way of the National Capital Area. The GWUL seeks creative ways to involve the private sector and community groups in joint ventures. In addition, memberships are available for individuals and corporations. Learn more at: gwul.org or call (202) 265-8200.



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