

WHAT'S ON



TAP?

NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS | VOL. 14 ISSUE 1

General Manager's Message: Green District, Clean Waters



Dear Customers,

Happy New Year! As we've told you in this space before, DC Water is well underway with its \$2.6 billion Clean Rivers Project – a program to reduce overflows to the Anacostia and Potomac rivers and Rock Creek. This spring, we expect to assemble and begin operating the massive machine that will dig the tunnel system for the Anacostia River. This system will nearly eliminate overflows to

the river, and is the largest and most expensive piece of our program. Meanwhile, we have been discussing with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) a plan that could reduce or eliminate the Potomac and Rock Creek tunnels in favor of green development techniques to handle stormwater at the source. These would include trees, porous pavement and green roofs. We plan to study whether neighborhood-wide greening could achieve the right results for water quality, while providing jobs, cleaner air and an aesthetic makeover at the same time. Other cities, such as Philadelphia, are exploring similar paths with the blessing of the EPA and the environmental community.

At press time, DC Water, the District and EPA had just signed the partnership agreement that would start the process for the pilot program. You can read more about our green infrastructure pilot project at dcwater.com/lid.

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The Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) arrives on Blue Plains. It is slated to begin boring the first tunnel in early 2013.

Selected DC Water Achievements in 2012

DC Water continued its global leadership in water sector science, technology, operations and management in 2012. Just a few highlights for the year follow below:

An award-winning year.

The Authority and its staff members won more than 20 awards in 2012. Included were:

Fuhrman Medal for Research Collaboration between practice and academia – *Water Environment Federation*

Planning Honour Award for biosolids program (International Competition) – *International Water Association*

Utility Performer of the Year – *American Water Summit*

Research and Technology Award for high strength nitrogen treatment – *American Academy of Environmental Engineers*

National Environmental Achievement Award for Outstanding Contributions to Environmental Protection and the Clean Water Community – *National Association of Clean Water Agencies*

Excellence in Environmental Engineering for Environmental Communications Awards – *American Academy of Environmental Engineers*

Finalist in CFO of the Year Awards – *The Washington Business Journal*

Engineering protection projects.

DC Water and the District unveiled plans in December for a three-pronged construction project to mitigate flooding in Bloomingdale and LeDroit Park.

Financial excellence.

One of the three principal credit ratings upgraded DC Water's rating while the other two affirmed their rating. This came in the same year in which the federal government received a downgrade in its rating. DC Water also successfully issued \$441 million in Public Utility Subordinate Lien Revenue Bonds to fund construction activities, at very favorable interest rates.

Anniversary Year.

DC Water celebrated the 75 year anniversary of the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant in the same year that the Clean Water Act turned 50.



see **ACHIEVEMENTS** continued on back



DC Water Refunds Customers

DC Water will issue a one-time credit to customer bills in early 2013. Depending upon bill cycle and account status, customers may receive the credit as early as January or late as April.

DC Water relies on customer bill payments to fund its operations and capital projects. Each year, management takes a long-term look in developing a proposed budget and a rate structure to support that budget. Through exceptional management and sound financial planning, DC Water expects it finished Fiscal Year 2012 (which ended September 30, 2012) with a surplus.

"Our customers trust us to spend their money wisely," said General Manager George S. Hawkins. "We take that stewardship responsibility very seriously. This year, our teams did the job with a little less than we anticipated, and we feel the right thing to do is to give some of that back to our customers, while also offsetting a little of the upcoming rate increases."

The Authority's Board of Directors approved a customer rebate with a total of \$4.2 million to be paid on active accounts for billed usage during FY 2012. Customers will be refunded \$.10 per Ccf and \$1 per ERU. The average household rebate will be just over \$9.00.

If a customer's rebate exceeds the bill, the remainder of the credit will be applied to the next bill. Those who participate in the Customer Assistance Program will be credited based on their billed consumption that is not covered by the CAP program.

For more detailed information, please visit dcwater.com/rebate.

Achievements *continued*

Lending a helping hand.

DC Water launched automatic payroll deduction for contributions to SPLASH, the emergency fund for customers in the most dire need. Employees immediately added thousands of dollars in pledged contributions.

For more information, visit dcwater.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.

What to Know About your Faucets

Every day, we rely on our household taps for water. A few simple tips can help ensure clean, fresh water every time you turn on the tap.

1. Flush cold taps for two minutes before using water for drinking and cooking when household water has not been used for several hours. When water sits in your pipes for long periods of time, water quality can decline.
2. Do not use hot tap water for drinking and cooking. Hot water may have metals, sediment and bacteria that build up in the water heater.
3. Routinely clean faucet strainers. Sediment and metals can collect in the aerator screen located at the tip of your faucets. Replace aerators that are in poor condition (available at local hardware stores).
4. Routinely replace filter cartridges to prevent any build up of bacteria and metals. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for filter replacement.



Thaw Frozen Pipes Before they Burst



If you find you have a frozen pipe, you should immediately take steps to thaw the pipe to keep it from bursting.

First, locate and shut off the main water supply valve in case a pipe has broken. Next, open the faucet so that water will flow through the pipe once the area is melted. This will help melt more ice. Then, apply heat to or around the pipe. Keep all sources of heat away from flammable materials and do not use any open flame devices. Also, do not use devices that will cause the melted ice to boil, as that can also cause pipes to break. Call a licensed plumber if you cannot locate the frozen section, you are unable to reach it, or you are unable to thaw it. Check for other frozen pipes in your home or business, especially those pipes that are located along an exterior wall or bring the water into the building at the foundation. For emergency service inside your home, contact a licensed plumber. Call the DC Water 24-hour emergency line at (202) 612-3400 for water emergencies on public property.