

WHAT'S ON TAP



NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS • VOLUME 17 ISSUE 4



GENERAL MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Dear Customers:

Last month, DC Water connected with many of our customers at Town Hall meetings in each of the District's eight Wards. This marked the seventh consecutive year I traveled with our team across DC to explain what to expect on next year's bill and provide updates on our major projects. Eight public meetings in one month is a huge undertaking, but I consider meeting in person with our customers to be an essential responsibility in my role as CEO and General Manager.



This year we're proposing rates for both FY 2017 and FY 2018. Setting rates for multiple years benefits customers by allowing you to plan for future costs. For DC Water, multi-year rates provide predictable revenue and requires us to be more disciplined in managing your ratepayer dollars. In fact, setting multi-year rates allowed us to reduce our water and sewer rate increases to 5% for the next two years. Previous rate projections anticipated 7.5% annual water and sewer rate increases. Reducing our rate increases is particularly noteworthy since we're growing our programs to meet regulatory mandates and improve service.

We know that any rate increase affects our customers. That's why I constantly challenge our team to find ways to do our job better – better service at a lower cost. We are now realizing some of those savings,

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SPRING CLEANING ENDS IN MAY

From March 7 to May 2 this year, the disinfectant used in the District's drinking water was temporarily switched from chloramines to chlorine. In May, the disinfection returned to chloramines. The Washington Aqueduct is the organization responsible for treating drinking water in the District. The Aqueduct uses chloramines (chlorine plus ammonia) as a disinfectant for most of the year, because it prevents the growth of harmful microorganisms and provides long-lasting protection as water travels through the pipes to your tap.

Customers who take special precautions to remove chlorine from tap water, such as dialysis centers, medical facilities and aquatic pet owners, should continue to take the appropriate precautions to remove chloramines. The temporary switch to chlorine disinfection is an annual program that deep cleans the pipe system and helps to maintain water quality throughout the year. DC Water continuously monitors disinfectant concentrations to ensure that water meets safe levels. The Washington Aqueduct continues to add a corrosion control inhibitor during this temporary switch to prevent lead release.

For more information, contact the Drinking Water Division at (202) 612-3440.

District Student wins DC Water Research Award

The District of Columbia STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Fair was held in March at Dunbar High School. There were numerous water-related science projects and the Special Award from DC Water was presented to **Hannah Thomas**, an 11th grader at Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School (DC). Her research focused on water quality at Glenowen Farm and the impact farm runoff has on surrounding water bodies.



Additionally, Miss Thomas developed an app to combine the numerous water quality components into a single rating. This can enable farmers to share useful water quality information to manage farm runoff that can harm receiving waters. Miss Thomas mentioned that she was a "farm girl," and wanted to explore a topic that was close to her heart. Using her personal iPad, Miss Thomas demonstrated the user-friendly app and explained its functionality, impressing the judges in the process. Congratulations!





Get accurate bills by keeping your meter clear

DC Water bills customers based on their water usage which is recorded by the water meter. Since DC Water installed automated readers a decade ago, in most cases, the meter is read remotely by the use of radio frequency and satellite technology. Two readings a day are uploaded to DC Water.



With this data, DC Water can monitor your water usage to help identify possible water leaks using the High Usage Notification Alerts (HUNA) system. But that is possible only if the readings are received, and we have a way to reach you. To ensure you are billed for only the amount of water you consume, and to be able to receive HUNA alerts, it is important that your meter cover remains unobstructed. Also, make sure DC Water has your latest phone number and email address to contact you with alerts.

Garbage cans, parked cars, trees, plants and shrubs are some of the common items that can interfere with electronic meter readings. In the instances when a manual meter reading is required, DC Water technicians need easy access to meters to get accurate readings. If your meter is blocked or not accessible, you will receive an estimated bill based on past usage. If you have questions about your meter or to schedule a meter reading, call the Meter Operations Division at (202) 612-3500.

Hydrants are for fighting fires

Fire hydrants are specifically made for use by firefighters to save people, property and homes from fires. Opening a hydrant requires special tools to protect the hydrant and the water main to which it is attached. Sometimes, people are tempted to open a hydrant in order to cool off, but this can be dangerous. For one, the water comes out with great force—it can knock a person over or cause injury, especially to children.

Opening a hydrant releases more than 1,800 gallons of water per minute, lowering water pressure in the area, which can also hinder firefighting. Finally, all that water on the streets can wreak havoc with traffic and put the people playing in the water in harm's way.

There are plenty of ways to stay cool. Go to an air conditioned library, theater, museum or mall. DC's Department of Recreation offers free aquatic facilities across the District. To find one, visit dc.dpr.gov. Save yourself from harm and your neighbors from danger. Make this summer a safe one!

Dial before you dig

Each time you begin an outdoor project that involves digging, you must call "Miss Utility" first. Call (800) 257-7777 to get your underground utility lines marked to avoid damage. Accidentally hitting utility lines is extremely dangerous and can cause a disruption in service, harm to the environment or life-threatening personal injury. "Miss Utility," a one-call notification center, will locate and mark all of your lines, including water, sewer, gas, electric, and cable. Homeowners or professional excavators are required by law to call "Miss Utility" at least two working days (48 hours) before digging in the District. You can check the status of your request at missutility.net.



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like using technologies to repair our sewer lines without having to do disruptive digging. I pledge to you that there is more to come!

If you didn't have a chance to attend one of the Town Hall meetings this year, we still want to hear from you. You can always email me at the address below, call us at (202) 787-2000, or connect with us on social media.

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