

WHAT'S ON

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water is life

TAP?

NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS | VOL. 14 ISSUE 9

General Manager's message: Make a difference this holiday season



Dear Customers,

As the holiday season approaches, I like to think of all the ways that we can help our neighbors in the District. At DC Water, we have several in mind.

Some of our customers need your help. DC Water has an emergency assistance program to help low-income residents in the District. It 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.

Hundreds of DC Water employees donate to this program, called SPLASH, through a deduction on their paychecks. I am encouraging every member of our team, and our Board, to pitch in on a regular basis – even with a nominal donation.

I hope you will join them. You can make a tax-deductible SPLASH donation by rounding your bill up to the nearest \$1 or \$2, by sending a separate check with your payment, or by visiting razoo.com/splash online.

Additionally, DC Water employees participate in other local charitable drives. As you prepare to celebrate with your family, please consider helping others this season. Happy holidays to you and yours,

George S. Hawkins

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When should customers boil water before drinking?



Under normal conditions, there is no need to boil water before using it to cook or drink. On rare occasions, DC Water issues boil water advisories due to a disruption in drinking water service. Boiling water is only necessary if there is a risk of

contamination. Events that may result in boil advisories include large water outages, equipment failures, and natural disasters. In these cases, boiling the water kills potentially harmful organisms and makes it safe for consumption. If an advisory is in effect, customers will be notified through mailings, web alerts, broadcast media (TV/radio), and social media (Twitter/Facebook).

It is important to note that some metals and other water quality contaminants are not removed by boiling. For example, boiling does not remove lead. As a reminder, cold water should always be used for drinking and cooking, even when boiling water. Customers are encouraged to review the annual Drinking Water Quality Report (dcwater.com/drinkingwater) and contact the Drinking Water Division with any water quality concerns at (202) 612-3440. For a printed copy of the water quality report, contact the Office of External Affairs at (202) 787-2200.

Stay connected!



DC Water strives to provide timely and accurate customer bills. Sometimes, DC Water may need to access a customer's meter inside their property—for instance, behind a locked gate—and will contact the customer in advance for an appointment.

To contact the customer, DC Water's customer service representatives need a working phone number and/or a valid email address. The Authority can also use this contact info to give important announcements or account updates. Customers can update their account information by contacting the Customer Service Department at (202) 354-3600. It's fast, it's easy and it enhances our service to you.

Can the grease!

During the holidays, many people celebrate with traditional meals. All that extra cooking can lead to big problems when people pour grease and oil down the sink. Fats, oils and grease—also known as FOG—can lead to a sewage blockage or a sewer backup, causing property damage, environmental problems, and other health hazards.



FOG gets into the sewers and sticks to the inside of storm and sewer pipes. Over time, it builds up and eventually blocks the pipe, causing sewage backups and overflows. Clogged sewers can lead to overflows into the street which eventually enter the storm drain system. At that point, the overflow may be carried to local waterways, creating health risks for people and marine life.

What should you do instead? Pour grease and oil into a can with a lid. You can store it in your refrigerator or freezer and throw it out in the garbage when it is filled. Restaurants should have grease traps installed and regularly cleaned. For more information, please call DC Water's Sewer Services Department at (202) 264-3820. To report a sewer emergency, please call the 24-hour Command Center at (202) 612-3400.

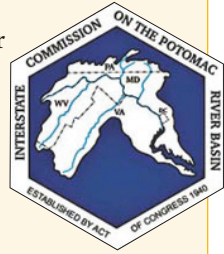
Avoid frozen pipes this winter

As cold weather approaches, there are steps you can take to help prevent pipes from freezing or breaking. Those that freeze most frequently are the ones exposed to the outside, such as outdoor hose outlets, water sprinkler lines and those in unheated interior areas such as kitchen cabinets, attics, garages, basements and crawl spaces. Before cold weather arrives, you may want to follow these recommendations:

- Remove, drain, and store garden hoses.
- Close the inside valves that control the water supply to outside hose attachments (hose bibs).
- Open the outside hose bibs to allow any water to drain.
- Install a pipe sleeve for water pipes that are not insulated. Find them at building supply stores.
- If you go away for an extended time during cold weather, leave the thermostat set above 55 degrees before you leave.
- In severely cold weather, allow cold water to drip from faucets served by exposed pipes. The cold water is still above freezing and will help prevent the pipe from freezing. Prepare now for winter weather!

Spotlight on the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB)

DC Water pumps and distributes drinking water to Washington DC's taps, but did you know that DC Water buys that water, already treated, from the US Army Corps of Engineers Washington Aqueduct? And the Aqueduct gets it from the fast-flowing Potomac River at intake facilities at Great Falls and Little Falls, just north of Washington, DC.



The Aqueduct isn't the only metropolitan area water supplier that gets its drinking water from the Potomac River. Four others do as well. And they all work cooperatively to protect the quality and the quantity of that water through an organization known as the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB).

The ICPRB was established in 1940 by Congress and the basin states, and is served by Commissioners from Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, the District of Columbia, and the federal government. DC Water has a role on two of ICPRB's working groups:

Potomac River Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership

DC Water participates with the Potomac River Drinking Water Source Protection Partnership (DWSP), a voluntary group that arose from a US EPA recommendation to regional utilities that use the Potomac to band together. More than 20 water suppliers and government agencies participate and meet regularly on the challenges to source water quality, such as: emerging contaminants, disinfection byproducts, early warning and emergency response, urban issues (such as roadway salts) and pathogens like cryptosporidium and giardia.

ICPRB Cooperative Water Supply Operations (ICPRB Coop)

Utilities that get their water from the Potomac River (MD, VA, DC) coordinate water supply during times of drought. This includes water withdrawals from different sources and releases of reservoir water that are coordinated by ICPRB. The operations allow the utilities to meet their water demands without restriction while providing adequate flows for ecological purposes. The ICPRB also assesses future water demands and system status and participates in emergency planning and preparedness exercises.

Says Carlton Haywood, ICPRB executive director, "The ICPRB is vital to protecting the Potomac River and helping to provide safe drinking water for the region. It's a credit to all involved that the Washington area will have adequate, safe drinking water for decades to come." More information can be found at: potomacriver.org



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