

# WHAT'S ON



# TAP?

NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS | VOL. 15 ISSUE 9

## General Manager's message: Toast To Tap



Dear Customers,

This fall marks the 40th Anniversary of a landmark piece of legislation that impacted every one of our lives for the better: the **Safe Drinking Water Act**. The mere fact that this milestone

will go unnoticed by many is a testament in itself to how far we've come since 1974 when Congress authorized the EPA to regulate drinking water supplies by setting water quality and delivery standards. We now take safe, clean drinking water for granted in this country, which is a remarkable achievement.

Today, the water that flows out of your tap is tested repeatedly by both the Washington Aqueduct, which treats the District's drinking water, and by DC Water which distributes it across the city. The stringent regulations mandated by the Safe Drinking Water Act ensure that tap water is held to a higher standard than most products you use at home – including bottled water.

Tap water also is the right choice for your wallet, costing about a penny per gallon. Bottled water can cost more than 100 times that.

So, why not choose the better product for less money? Tap water is the obvious choice and that's thanks in no small measure to the Safe Drinking Water Act. Cheers!

George S. Hawkins  
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## DC Water celebrates safe drinking water



We often take for granted safe drinking water and all its benefits. Products we use every day – a cup of coffee or a delicious pastry – are not possible without safe and reliable water. On October 2, DC Water

joined water utilities from around the metro region and national water organizations to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the **Safe Drinking Water Act**. The Act was passed by Congress in 1974 to protect public health by regulating drinking water. The interactive event, "Toast to Tap," featured local food vendors, live music, games and giveaways, including free water poured from the taps of a water bar. Officials from the Environmental Protection Agency led a toast to tap water with reusable water bottles and local tap water. The celebration highlighted the value of safe water for public health and a strong economy in the metro region.

## Can the grease!

During the holidays, many people celebrate by cooking large traditional meals. If all that extra cooking leads to more grease being poured down the sink, big problems can result. Fats, oils and grease—also known as FOG—can cause a sewage blockage or a sewer backup, resulting in property damage, environmental problems, and other health hazards.

FOG gets into the sewers from residential and commercial kitchens. It sticks to the inside of storm and sewer pipes on both

private land and in public space. Over time, this builds up and eventually blocks the pipe, causing sewage backups and overflows. Clogged sewers can lead to overflows into the street where the sewage eventually enters 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 and throw it in the garbage when it is filled. Restaurants should



have grease traps installed and regularly cleaned. For additional information, please call DC Water's Sewer Services Department at (202) 264-3820. To report a sewer emergency, please call DC Water's 24-hour Command Center at (202) 612-3400.



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## Weatherproof your home for winter

As cold weather approaches, there are steps you can take to help prevent your pipes from freezing or breaking.



Pipes that freeze most frequently are those that are exposed to the outside, such as outdoor hose outlets, water sprinkler lines and water pipes in unheated interior areas like 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 (called hose bibs).
- Open the outside hose bibs to allow any water remaining in the line to drain out. Keep this valve open so that any water still in the pipe can expand without causing the pipe to break.
- You may want to install a pipe sleeve for water pipes that are not insulated. Building supply stores carry these and other supplies for insulating pipes.
- 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 slowly drip from faucets, especially those served by exposed pipes. The cold water is still above freezing and will help prevent the pipe from freezing.

For more information, please visit [dcwater.com/frozenpipes](http://dcwater.com/frozenpipes).

## Community Spotlight: Anacostia Community Museum



Smithsonian  
*Anacostia Community Museum*

The Anacostia Community Museum – first known as the Anacostia Neighborhood Museum – opened in 1967 as an outreach effort by the Smithsonian to the local community. Its mission was to bring local exhibitions and public programs centered on African American history, community issues, local history, and the arts.

In recent years, the museum exhibitions demonstrate broader national and international themes reflecting issues of concern to contemporary urban communities. Often, a locally themed exhibit includes a secondary national or global exhibit on the same topic. Last year, the museum housed “Reclaiming the Edge: Urban Waterways” with a look at issues affecting the health, access and vitality of the Anacostia River. In tandem, the museum took a look at similar cities with major waterways running through them—namely Los Angeles, California and Shanghai, China.

The museum continues its dedication to the Anacostia River through research and education. Museum staff launched an intensive Citizen Science Program—an educational program with local schools to introduce middle and

“My Sea, My Sister, My Tears, 2011” by Ntombephi “Induna” Ntobela who says, “We are made of water; we exist because of water. It is the connection between all that lives... and water is the source of all life.”

high school students from Wards 7 and 8 to the watershed in their communities. These same students will continue their watershed studies for the next six years, using scientific research, documentation, writing, video and art. “The goal is to engage youth early in science, technology and the environment,” says Gail S. Lowe, Ph.D., Historian at the museum. “In addition to the science skills they develop, we also want to instill an awareness of their impact on, and a responsibility to, their watershed.”

Currently, the museum is exhibiting the exquisite artwork of the Ubuhle women of South Africa who specialize in the *ndwango* art form, using glass beads to produce spectacular works of art. The exhibit has been extended to January 4, 2015. For more information on the exhibit or the museum, please visit [anacostia.si.edu](http://anacostia.si.edu) or call (202) 633-4820. Admission is free.



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