

WHAT'S ON TAP



NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS • FALL ISSUE



CEO David Gadis and Mayor Muriel Bowser speak with residents impacted by recent flooding.

DC Water assists customers impacted by historically heavy rainfall

The surprisingly strong storm that struck our region on September 10 did not spare the District of Columbia. Our city experienced widespread flooding, and the heavy down-pour overwhelmed creeks, storm drains and our combined sewer system as well. More than 2 inches of rain fell in barely 75 minutes, and some parts of the District got enough rain to match a 100 year storm for a few minutes.

You've probably heard about the network of deep underground stormwater and sewage diversion tunnels DC Water is building as part of our Clean Rivers Project. Those tunnels likely prevented the flooding across the city from being even more devastating and destructive. But those tunnels can't prevent all floods and DC Water is now working to help the many customers impacted on September 10.

We want you to know there are plenty of resources available, both to address the most recent flooding but also to help you prepare for and prevent future floods. Our Board of Directors approved a \$1.5M Emergency Clean-up Relief Program to help anyone who needed immediate assistance to de-water and sanitize their homes. If you already paid to have your property cleaned-up, you may be eligible for reimbursement up to \$5,000. You can file a claim via dcwater.com/claims.

DC Water is also helping customers install backwater valves in their basements to help prevent stormwater and sewage from backing up during heavy rainstorms. This has proven to be very effective in years past and for that reason DC Water often provides up to \$6,000 towards the cost of these devices in certain neighborhoods. Call 202-354-3600 to see if you are eligible.

continued

CEO's Message

Dear Customers,

Two years ago, I was named CEO and General Manager of DC Water, and it has been an honor and a tremendously rewarding experience to lead the Authority in delivering essential water and wastewater services for our community.



Those services have never been more vital to the community, whether to hospitals, health clinics or to our residential customers. Our tag line is 'Water is Life,' and as we approach the winter months with no end to the pandemic in sight, it has never been more apt. I want to assure you that DC Water staff are diligently working on your behalf every day, from water quality testing to restoring our environment to repairing and maintaining critical infrastructure.

Along those same lines, DC Water is committed to earning your trust, one interaction at a time. My commitment to each of you is that the Authority will continue to find ways to provide responsive service wherever our customers may be – from social media to Town Hall Meetings or through calling our customer contact center.

Please stay safe and healthy this Holiday season.

Warm regards,

David L. Gadis, CEO

ceosuggestions@dcwater.com



Expanded helping hand for DC Water customers impacted by COVID 19

On October 1, new rates went into effect for DC Water customers but the authority cushioned the impact by pairing that decision with two new ways to assist low income or fixed income customers.

The changes include:

- increasing the discounts for impervious area;
- making permanent a separate assistance program on top of the current one;
- and partnering with the District government on a new 'helping hand' program to forgive past due amounts for low income customers and those negatively impacted by COVID.

"Helping customers in their time of need is the right thing to do and the only thing to do," said Chief Executive Officer and General Manager David L. Gadis.

The average household customer will see an increase of 6.6% for FY 2021 in their water bill and 6.7% for FY 2022.

Those charges are primarily to pay for repairs to aging infrastructure, along with the ongoing Clean Rivers initiative to restore the health of the Anacostia and Potomac rivers by reducing sewage overflows.

DC Water met with more than 4,000 customers during the summer in virtual town hall conversations to discuss the rates and the assistance programs.

As always, customers with questions about their bill or the new assistance programs can call 202-354-3600 for more information or go online to dcwater.com/rates-and-billing to learn more.

DC Water assists customers impacted by historically heavy rainfall continued

We also recommend you call your homeowners insurance company to see what kind of coverage you have in the event of a flood or surcharge of the sewer system. Finally, we have created a special section on our website with resources and helpful links. You'll find it on our homepage or by visiting dcwater.com/September10Flooding.

Open fire hydrants are open for a reason

Sometimes customers see a fire hydrant spraying water into the street and wonder what the heck is going on. Why is that hydrant open and unattended and splashing perfectly good water into the street? It's a good question; there are only a handful of times hydrants should be open that way and here they are:

The first is when a firefighter opens a hydrant to fight a fire. DC Water maintains 9,000 hydrants and shares the database of hydrant performance with the Fire Department. That's the most important user of hydrants; putting out fires.

Hydrants are sometimes opened to move around water that has become stagnant in parts of the city with less water usage; on cul de sacs for example. Or they are opened by our water quality experts, to take samples.



Further, sometimes hydrants are opened to blow off excess water so repairs can be made to a valve. The water pipe has to be empty in order for the repair to happen, so excess water is diverted away, usually into the street and down the storm drain.

And finally, we will occasionally open a hydrant to test water pressure. No customer is charged for that spilled water; when we open hydrants the authority bears that necessary cost. As a reminder – its illegal to tamper with a fire hydrant and despite what your parents may have told you, opening up a hydrant in warm weather is a bad idea!



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY
Customer Service Department • (202) 354-3600
1385 Canal Street, SE, Washington, DC 20003 • dcwater.com



@dcwater



@dc.water



fb.com/DCWaterSewerAuth



RECYCLED
Paper made from
recycled material
FSC® C021348

