

WHAT'S ON TAP



NEWS FOR DC WATER CUSTOMERS • FALL 2022



Potomac River

CEO's Message

Dear Customers,

It has been hard to witness the disasters playing out on the news—hurricane damage to Puerto Rico, Florida, and the Carolinas. Area flooding in Boston, Alaska and right here in Washington, D.C. The west is in drought and down south, water quality problems prompted a lengthy boil water advisory in Jackson, MS.



There is a unity among utility workers. When we see disasters like these, we feel compelled to help. This lends to an industrywide practice of deploying resources to assist when disaster strikes. DC Water and our regional counterparts are offering up expertise to these locations when support is requested. While we are mindful that we still need staff right here at home, those in impacted areas have our compassion and, in some cases, our skilled staff.

This is also a timely reminder that we need to continue investing in our response capabilities and infrastructure to be resilient, secure, and modernized. It is critical in protecting public health and safety. Robust infrastructure will help this region continue to thrive.

Warm regards,
David L. Gadis, CEO

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EPA issues advisory on PFAS

PFAS are manmade compounds found in industry and in residential households. They have been in commercial use since the 1940's and are abundant in the world today. They resist heat, water, and oil. For this reason, they are used in firefighting foam and in everyday items.

PFAS are a health hazard. Therefore, two of the most common types (PFOS and PFOA) were phased out of U.S. production in 2002 and 2015 but are still in some imported products. PFAS are found in every American person's bloodstream, though the levels have decreased significantly since the U.S. ban.

The largest sources in the environment are sites where PFAS are manufactured, or places that use large amounts, such as firefighting training facilities. When the chemicals run off, or are flushed into the stormwater or sewer system, they enter the nation's waterways. **Of course, those waterways can be drinking water sources.**

The EPA recently announced health advisories for PFAS in drinking water. At this time, the EPA gave no recommended action, but plans to issue a proposed regulation for drinking water this fall, and a final rule in fall 2023.

The EPA health advisory level of four parts per quadrillion is extremely low. The science to measure that low are outpacing the technology for removing the contaminant. Many utilities don't have methods to detect or treat to that level. Very recent university research has

PFAS are commonly found in everyday items:

- Non-stick cookware
- Stain-resistant furniture
- Water-repellant clothing
- Paint
- Cosmetics
- Pizza boxes
- Popcorn bags

found methods to break down PFAS; however, it requires more research and development.

The cost could double or triple customer water bills. DC Water is committed to affordability and easing the cost burden for our most vulnerable customers. It seems more logical for the financial investment to come from the manufacturers and those who contribute the most PFAS to the environment.

For now, DC Water joins the water sector in learning more, bringing together people and resources from around the country. While scientists and engineers figure out the best ways to address PFAS, you can reduce your exposure by avoiding sources such as those listed above. More information can be found at dcwater.com/pfas-and-drinking-water.

Emergency customer assistance is still available

Everyone must recertify with DOEE

The pandemic may be behind us, but concerns about the economy remain high. DC Water still has some emergency funding left to help erase current and past due balances for income-eligible customers. The Authority will continue to disburse emergency funding until it runs out. There are a number of ongoing programs that provide credits, discounts or funding for those who are eligible. To get on a payment plan, visit dcwater.com/cares or call 202-354-3600.

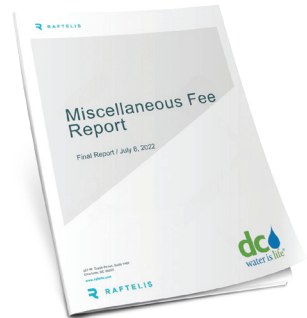
Everyone who receives customer assistance, or wants to apply for the first time, MUST APPLY this year. Visit or call at doee.dc.gov/liheap or call 311.

Housing Providers – Learn more about the innovative program that provides financial assistance to your income-qualified occupants and to you. View the informative webinar found at dcwater.com/map.



Connections to systems begin with Permit Operations

Every three years, the Authority contracts with an independent consultant to perform a cost-of-service study, interpret the results and provide recommendations. Ensuring that fees cover the cost is important. It prevents that revenue from being unfairly recovered from everyone in the customer base. This protects customers from having to pay more than their fair share.



Once the rate consultants determine the proper fee adjustments, they verify that the fees are reasonable and consider the level of fees in comparison to peer utilities in the region.

The most recent report in late 2021 revealed that fees were *not in line* with the cost of providing some of the services. Consequently, many of our miscellaneous fees were adjusted earlier this year and went into effect July 22. The Permit Operations Department had a significant number of review fee changes and some additions this year. They can all be viewed at: dcwater.com/fees-charges. Many remained the same, some increased to support expedited services and to factor in inflation. Some fees have been on the books but not charged, and they will now be charged.

The Permit Operations Department will start offering an **optional construction phase customer service**—a proactive approach to assist contractors. It should streamline applications for taps, connections, meter sets, and inspections. The concierge will check on work order preparation and status and follow the contractor through the process.

DC Water hosted a webinar in September to discuss these changes and the upcoming switch to an online portal. The webinar can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/oj91NP9QzgU>. More information can be found at dcwater.com/permits or by calling 202-646-8600.



Savor the gravy, but save the pipes

As you prepare holiday meals, or a regular family dinner, remember that allowing grease and food to go down the sink can cause blockages and backups that are costly and disruptive. Keep in mind the 4 C's of sink safety: **Cool, Contain, Can, Compost**:

- **Cool:** After cooking, allow grease to cool and solidify in the pan.
- **Contain:** Scrape FOG and excess food scraps into a secure, sealable container like a peanut butter jar. Before washing, wipe down pots and pans with a paper towel.
- **Can:** Throw the full container of FOG and your paper towel into a trashcan.
- **Compost:** If possible, compost food and vegetable scraps (don't compost grease or meat).



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