



Pipeline

JANUARY–MARCH 2009

WSSC LAUNCHES CUSTOMER NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) customers can now receive e-mail and text alerts about WSSC-related situations—emergencies, water main breaks, traffic backups caused by Commission work—that may affect their service or daily routines.

This is all due to a new Customer Notification System (CNS) that was launched in November. Customers and residents of Montgomery and Prince George's counties, or anyone with an address of interest in our service area like a school or office can register for this new service by clicking on the CNS logo on the Commission's home page at www.wsscwater.com.

Anyone who signs up for CNS alert can choose the WSSC-related news they want to receive. If a water main break occurs in their neighborhood, they can get an alert. If traffic is backed up near their office because of WSSC repairs, they can get an alert. When WSSC plans a meeting about its latest budget proposal, people who register for CNS can get an alert.

CNS uses a neighborhood mapping system allowing WSSC staff to pinpoint the area affected by the situation so only the customers who might be impacted by the incident are alerted.

"We work every day to deliver great service, but our aging infrastructure is disrupting the lives of the people we serve more often and for longer periods of time," said Teresa D. Daniell, WSSC Interim General Manager. "Because our customers' time is valuable, we created CNS to provide them with vital information about WSSC work that could disrupt their daily routines."

In addition, CNS is another example of WSSC using the latest in technology to serve customers. To sign up, you can use any combination of cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses for any street address within the WSSC service area.



Commissioners

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www.wsscwater.com

General Numbers:
301-206-WSSC (9772)
1-800-828-6439
TTY: 301-206-8345

To report a water or
sewer emergency:
301-206-4002

WSSC provides water
and wastewater services
to Montgomery and
Prince George's counties.

*We are entrusted
by our community
to provide safe
and reliable water, life's
most precious resource,
and return clean water
to the environment,
all in a financially
responsible manner.*



20% post-consumer content

WSSC AND OTHER UTILITIES TEST FOR EMERGING CONTAMINANTS

WSSC, Fairfax Water and Washington Aqueduct carried out independent tests in June of 2008 to determine if the area's water supply possibly contains emerging contaminants (ECs). Emerging contaminants are commonly described as chemicals or materials that have a real or perceived threat to human health or the environment or have a lack of published health standards. They include endocrine disrupting compounds (EDCs), pharmaceutical drugs and personal care products (PPCPs).

WSSC drew source water samples from both the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers, and drinking water samples from the Potomac and Patuxent Water Filtration Plants. The samples were analyzed by Underwriters Laboratories (UL) for 19 EC compounds and the results indicated the presence of extremely small amounts of three EC compounds in the Potomac River source water samples and two EC compounds in the Patuxent River source water samples.

The ECs that were found in WSSC's source water are: atrazine, a commonly used herbicide for maize crops; carbamazepine, an anti-epileptic drug; and sulfamethoxazole, an antibacterial antibiotic. Atrazine and carbamazepine were found in WSSC's drinking water.

Story continues on back

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RECREATIONAL PERMIT FEES INCREASE IN 2009



On January 1, the cost of boating and fishing on WSSC reservoirs increased. The new fees are as follows:

- Seasonal watershed use pass—\$60.00
- The one-day pass—\$5.00
- Boat mooring [sticker]—\$75.00

Anyone 16 years and older

must possess and carry a WSSC Watershed Use Permit while boating, fishing, hunting or horseback riding in the WSSC recreational areas. No one under 16 years of age will be permitted on the reservoirs in a boat unless accompanied by a person who is at least 16-years-old and holds a valid WSSC Watershed Use Permit.

People who are 65 years of age or older, disabled or handicapped are exempt from the fees.

For questions regarding WSSC recreation areas or required permits and activity fees, please contact the Brighton Dam Visitor's Center at 301-774-9124.

Customer Notification System (cont'd)

The service is FREE. However, text messaging rates DO apply. WSSC cannot automatically sign up our customers, so we invite everyone who wants to take advantage of the service to visit www.wsscwater.com and click on the CNS logo on the left-hand side of the page. To speak with a WSSC representative about the system, contact WSSC's Communications and Community Relations Office at 301-206-8100 or via e-mail at communications@wsscwater.com.

WSSC Drinking Water (cont'd)

Although a few EC compounds were detected, WSSC drinking water is safe to consume. The compounds detected were found at the part per billion or part per trillion levels. The best research to date does not demonstrate that there is a human health risk due to the extremely low levels that were found in WSSC's drinking water. One part per billion is equal to ½ teaspoon in an Olympic-size swimming pool. One part per trillion is equal to one drop in 26 Olympic-size swimming pools.

WSSC routinely monitors for nearly 180 contaminants in drinking water supplied from the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers. These results are reported annually in the Commission's Water Quality Report and Tap Water Analysis Report. For more information about recent tests, go to www.wsscwater.com and click on "Water."

The results of the tests conducted by the WSSC, Fairfax Water and the Washington Aqueduct are consistent with a much larger study released December 5 by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The USGS study tested for 277 potential ECs in selected drinking water sources nationwide, including the Potomac River. Six of these ECs were part of WSSC's June 2008 testing.

"While these regional efforts are essential, we need national resources, research and coordination," says Teresa D. Daniell, WSSC's Interim General Manager. "These are complicated issues and these testing techniques are expensive. The EPA and other government agencies can better determine whether these man-made compounds have an adverse effect on people, and at what level. Then, if needed, they can determine the best strategy to eliminate or reduce them, whether it is through water treatment processes or by putting more emphasis on keeping these compounds out of the water in the first place."

Commissioner's Corner

Greetings to all of the WSSC customers and to our staff and their families. I am wishing you a happy, healthy and safe New Year. As we head into our 91st year, we will continue to be committed and dedicated to providing safe and reliable clean water and return clean water to our environment.

WSSC, like many other utility companies is concerned about the state of our economy and the impact it has on our customers. If you are having difficulty paying your water bill, call our Customer Care agents at 301-206-4001 or 1-800-634-8400 between 7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, to see about arranging weekly, biweekly, or monthly installment payments to ensure uninterrupted service.

Residential customers with delinquent water bills may apply for assistance through the WSSC Water Fund.

The fund receives donations from WSSC employees, ratepayers and the community members. It is administered by the Salvation Army, which reviews the applicants' qualifications for assistance. Typically, the maximum that any customer may receive is one yearly award of \$300. Call the Salvation Army offices in Montgomery County (301-515-5354), or Prince George's County (301-277-6103) for more information. If you would like to donate to the water fund please send your donation to the WSSC Water Fund, c/o WSSC, 14501 Sweitzer Lane, Laurel, MD 20707. Donations are always needed and appreciated. You may make a donation when you pay your water bill by checking off the appropriate box on the statement.

We are planning a gala to endow the water fund so we can respond favorably to the increasing requests for financial assistance.

—Joyce Starks, *Chair*, WSSC