



The Maryland General Assembly continues their work on over 2,400 bills that have been introduced to date.

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** advocates for legislation that helps WSSC Water fulfill our mission to provide safe and reliable water, life's most precious resource, and return clean water to our environment, all in an ethical, sustainable, and financially responsible manner.

The Annapolis Observer is IRO's weekly update on happenings in Annapolis and provides updates on key bills of interest to WSSC Water.

Legislative Updates

All WSSC Water sponsored bills have passed unanimously out of the House Delegations of Montgomery and Prince George's counties, and are moving through their assigned House standing committees.

Two bills, HB 399 and HB 400, have received favorable recommendations from the respective subcommittees, and will be sent to the full standing committees for consideration:

[HB 399](#) *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Minority Business Enterprise Utilization Program – Termination Extension*, extends the statutory authority for the WSSC Minority Business Enterprise Utilization (MBE) Program for a period of one year ending on June 30, 2023. The authority to conduct the MBE program is set to end on July 1, 2022. The bill was heard before the House Health and Government Operations Committee on February 8th. The Government Operations and Health Facilities Subcommittee issued a unanimous favorable recommendation on HB 399 on February 16th. The bill will be presented to the entire Committee before it is sent to the House floor for a final vote.

[HB 400](#) *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Hiring and Promotion Preferences – Veterans and Their Spouses*, repeals the current statute pertaining to the WSSC Water competitive selection process for appointments of veterans and adopts the processes utilized by the State of Maryland. The bill was heard before the House Environment and Transportation Committee on February 15th. The Local Government and Bi-County Agencies Subcommittee met on February 17th and unanimously voted for a recommendation on HB 400. The bill will be presented to the entire Committee before it is sent to the House floor for a final vote.

The third bill, [HB 526](#) *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Plumbing and Fuel Gas Services – Licenses and Penalties*, was heard on February 22nd in the House Economic Matters Committee.

Find the status and position on WSSC Water-related bills in our [Legislative Update](#).

Around WSSC Water

One Water Regional Art Contest

Calling all high school-aged artists! Help WSSC Water highlight the importance of protecting our source water by submitting artwork focused on one or all of the following themes:

- The connection between human actions on land impacting water quality
- A community's connection to local waterways – in terms of drinking water sources as well as places for recreation and enjoyment
- The role of water utilities to protect our sources of water through environmental stewardship and responsible wastewater treatment

One grand prize winner in each category will receive \$100 in April. The two winners will have their work entered in a regional contest with other Washington, D.C. metro-area water and wastewater utilities. **Submissions are due by Friday, March 18, 2022.** Get complete details at wsscwater.com/artcontest.

Water Service Line Emergency Replacement Loan (PipeER)

PipeER is a loan to help finance the replacement of a leaking residential water service line. Qualified customers are eligible to receive a loan up to \$5,000. PipeER is administered by the WSSC Federal Credit Union (WSSC FCU) in partnership with WSSC Water.

Each year, up to \$100,000 in total is available on a first-come, first-served basis until the fund is depleted. On July 1st of each year, any remaining funds are donated to the WSSC Water Fund.

For more information and to begin your application process, contact WSSC FCU at 240-459-8022 or online at www.wsscfcu.org/pipeER.

H2O Alerts Map

[H2O Alerts](#) displays all active water main shutdowns (planned and unplanned) in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. Customers can get details of the shutdown, and the map is updated every 15 minutes.

Start or Stop Service

Do you need to start an account with WSSC Water, or finalize billing on an account because you're preparing to move? For your convenience, WSSC Water now provides customers an online webform to make submitting your start/stop service request quicker and easier! Click [here](#) for more information.

Customer Assistance and the Water Fund

Sadly, approximately one in five customers is past due on their bills. WSSC Water remains committed to making water and sewer bills more affordable by offering financial assistance programs. We want to help customers avoid a water service turnoff and ensure our safe, clean water continues to flow to your tap. Learn more at [WSSC Water's Customer Assistance Programs](#).

You may also help by making a tax-deductible donation to the Water Fund to help more neighbors have access to clean, safe water. Since 1994, the fund has helped nearly 20,000 people throughout Montgomery and Prince George's counties. The Water Fund is administered by The Salvation Army. Every dollar of your donation goes directly to local families who need financial assistance paying their water/sewer bills. Click [here](#) to learn more and donate online.

CUSTOMER ADVOCATES:

Our Customer Advocates are in your communities every day, carrying out their mission to serve as liaisons between you and WSSC Water, and ensuring that we are providing a high level of customer service.

Northern Prince George's County (areas north of Central Avenue, MD 214)
David Wilkins

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301-648-6953

Southern Prince George's County (areas south of Central Avenue, MD 214)

Stephen Billingsley

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Montgomery County

Brandon Stewart

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301-642-1712

Find your Customer Advocate [here](#).

Calendar

- March 21, 2022 – Crossover
 - April 3, 2022 – Budget bill to be passed by both Chambers
 - April 11, 2022 – Sine Die
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Related Links

[Maryland General Assembly](#)

- [Session Calendar \(PDF\)](#)
- [Track Legislation](#)

[Montgomery County Delegation](#)

[Prince George's County Delegation](#)

[Maryland Association of Counties](#)

[Maryland Municipal League](#)

About IRO

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** team works to promote the *value of water* and the *value of WSSC Water*; engage *federal, state, county and local government* and elected stakeholders and advocate for WSSC Water's strategic interests and priorities; and foster *relationships* with organizations and promote collaborative interests.

In Annapolis, the IRO team works with members to support administratively and fiscally responsible legislation, in addition to championing policy that benefits all water utilities throughout Maryland. WSSC Water is committed to increased statewide investment in water and wastewater infrastructure and sound regulatory initiatives.

Meet the IRO Team

Karyn Riley, Esq. – *IRO Director*

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Please click [here](#) for a printable sheet of our key contacts.



Subscribe to the Annapolis Observer here!

For over 100 years, WSSC Water has proudly served the citizens of Prince George's and Montgomery counties – providing drinking water that has always met strict Safe Drinking Water Act standards and protecting the environment through vital water resource recovery services. Our vision is to be THE world-class water utility, where excellent products and services are always on tap. www.wsscwater.com