



A Note from WSSC Water's Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO):

Activity is ramping up quickly as lawmakers are busy at work in Annapolis. To date, legislators have introduced 1,236 bills for consideration. One bill of interest is [SB 246 Salt Applicator Certification Program - Establishment](#). This legislation creates a program to encourage the efficient use of salt while maintaining roadways, parking lots and sidewalks. WSSC Water reminds everyone to do their part to protect drinking water sources by being "salt wise" and minimizing the amount of salt used during winter events. Learn more below.

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** advocates for 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 highlights the progress of key bills and updates of interest to WSSC Water.

Legislative Updates

On January 28th, the Prince George's County House Delegation gave a unanimous "favorable" vote on [PG/MC 109-22 Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Plumbing and Fuel Gas Services – Licenses and Penalties](#). This bill will now move to the Prince George's County Delegation for consideration.

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

Around WSSC Water

Prepare Your Home So It Can Be Winter Ready

Before snow and frigid temperatures arrive, it is important to protect your home and pipes from the cold and prevent the pipes and your inside water meter from freezing or possibly bursting.

Here are some key steps to take before freezing weather hits:

- Turn off the water to outside faucets, remove hoses and drain the pipes
- From the inside, cover any open vents with insulation, plastic or cardboard
- Tightly close all doors and windows, repair as necessary to seal out drafts
- Insulate and repair outside-facing walls
- On colder nights, open cabinet doors to expose pipes to your home's warmth
- The temperature where water meters and interior pipes are located must be a minimum of 55 degrees Fahrenheit from November 1 through April 1
- On very cold nights, let your kitchen or bathroom faucets drip slowly to keep water moving

If a pipe in your home freezes:

- Completely open the cold and/or hot water faucet closest to the frozen pipe. This will relieve pressure and reduce the chance of breakage
- If you decide to try thawing the pipe yourself, use a hand-held electric hair dryer

- If in doubt, call a registered plumber for help

There are three simple ways to report a break or leak to WSSC Water's 24-hour Emergency Services Center: by phone: 301-206-4002; by email: emergencycallcenter@wsscwater.com and via [WSSC Water's Mobile App](#).

As a reminder, WSSC Water maintains the pipes in the streets and the connections up to the property line. If a pipe in a home freezes, it is the homeowner's responsibility to repair. For more information, including tips on what customers can do to help winterize their homes, visit www.wsscwater.com/winterready.

Be Salt Wise This Winter

Did you know that the salt we use to melt snow and ice on walkways, driveways and roads is harmful to the environment? That includes drinking water sources and the pipes and pumps needed to supply water to our customers.

The salt does not go away when the snow and ice melt. It seeps into the ground and into wells, travels with stormwater into streams and drinking water reservoirs, and corrodes pipes.

Do your part to keep excess salt out of local waterways:

- Choose a de-icer with calcium magnesium acetate, which is environmentally friendly
- Shovel snow and clear the pavement before snow turns to ice
- Use salt only if there is ice
- Apply the least amount of salt or de-icer necessary
- A 12-ounce coffee mug full of salt is enough to treat a 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares
- Scatter the de-icer – leave space between the grains
- Remember, when the temperature of the pavement drops to below 15 degrees, salt will not work
- Consider using sand for traction

Do not pretreat your walks or driveways. Salt placed on the pavement before it snows does not melt the snow and does not prevent it from sticking. And, if the weather changes and you apply salt again, you'll end up applying twice the amount of salt.

For more information on how you can be salt wise, visit www.wsscwater.com/saltwise.

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)

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Find your Customer Advocate [here](#).

Calendar

- February 4, 2022 – House Bill Introduction Date
 - February 7, 2022 – Senate Bill Introduction Date
 - February 7, 2022 – Prince George's County Delegation Late-file Bill Hearing
 - March 21, 2022 – Crossover
 - 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

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Contact Us

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



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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