



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

Earlier this week, legislators rushed to have their bills introduced prior to their respective Chamber's Bill Introduction Deadlines. Bills introduced after these deadlines will be referred to their respective Chamber's Rules Committees. To date, legislators have introduced 2,293 bills.

Lawmakers deliberated on a number of bills that were passed last Session, but later vetoed by Governor Hogan. Among the vetoed bills that were overturned was the bill pertaining to the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future ([HB 1300](#)) which alters State aid and policies for public schools. Later in the week, House lawmakers shifted their focus and passed the Recovery for the Economy, Livelihoods, Industries, Entrepreneurs, and Families ([RELIEF Act \(SB 496\)](#)) which the Senate passed the week prior. This emergency legislation is being sent to the Governor and will provide income tax relief to qualified taxpayers, economic impact payments to certain taxpayers, and other forms of more immediate assistance to businesses and employers impacted by the health pandemic.

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** will continue to advocate for legislation that supports WSSC Water's 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. IRO looks at all legislation that impacts WSSC Water's administrative, operational and financial capability.

The Annapolis Observer is **IRO's** weekly update on happenings in Annapolis and highlights the progress of key bills of interest to WSSC Water, as well as other information.

Legislative Updates

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

[HB 501 \(MC/PG 102-21\)](#) – *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Board of Ethics – Financial Disclosure Statements – Late Fees*: SUPPORT. The Montgomery County House Delegation and Prince George's County House Delegation unanimously passed this bill. This WSSC Water-sponsored bill will authorize the WSSC Water Board of Ethics to impose a fee to individuals who file late or fail to file a financial disclosure statement. The House Environment and Transportation Committee's bill hearing is scheduled for February 23rd at 1:30 p.m.

[HB 789 \(MC/PG 100-21\)](#) – *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Video Streaming and Archiving Meetings and Late Payment Charges*: SUPPORT w/ Amendment. Staff thanks the bill sponsor for the opportunity to work with them to address our concerns. The bill has passed the Montgomery County and Prince George's County House Delegations unanimously, and will be heard in the House Environment and Transportation Committee on March 2nd at 1:30 p.m.

Around WSSC Water

As Temperatures Drop, Water Main Breaks Increase

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed many aspects of our lives, but one constant for residents of the DMV remains: winter is water main break season. As colder temperatures settle into the region, WSSC Water crews are prepared for the increase in breaks and leaks with people, pipes, trucks and tools at the ready. Every year, WSSC Water responds to approximately 1,800 water main breaks; 1,200 of them between the months of November and February. Crews have repaired nearly 200 breaks and leaks in November and are seeing a steady increase over the past few days due to the dropping temperatures.

WSSC Water experiences an increase in water main breaks and leaks as the temperature of the Potomac River falls. The river is the primary source of drinking water for 1.8 million WSSC Water customers in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. The colder water can shock pipes, increasing the number of breaks and leaks.

Customers are encouraged to report water main breaks and leaks as quickly as possible. 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
- Via [WSSC Water's Mobile App](#)

The "Report a Problem" feature on the mobile app allows customers to easily snap a picture of a possible water main break or leak and send it directly to the Emergency Services Center. The app uses GPS to pinpoint the location of the image, which allows dispatchers to send an inspector to the site.

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.

WSSC Water is Here to Help – Assistance Programs

WSSC Water's commitment to assist our customers when they need it most is stronger than ever. WSSC Water offers financial assistance programs including flexible payment plans and the Customer Assistance Program (CAP) that waives quarterly fees, as well as The Water Fund, which provides direct financial assistance. Click [here](#) for a printable flyer that you can provide to your constituents.

Additional information is available at wsscwater.com/assistance. Our Customer Service Advisors are available Monday to Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. to customize a solution for you. Get started by calling 301-206-4001 or email us at custserv@wsscwater.com. **Se habla Español.** We are **Here to Help!** Stay safe and be well.

WSSC Water Fund

Help your neighbors in need! Give the gift of water by donating to the Water Fund. The WSSC Water Fund was established by our employees to help customers with their water bills, and is administered by The Salvation Army. Donating to the Water Fund means more neighbors can have access to clean, safe water. Anyone can donate, and any amount helps. Click [here](#) to learn more and donate online.



WATER FUND
Sharing the Essential

Calendar

February 8 – Senate Bill Introduction Date

- Senate bills introduced after this date will be referred to the Senate Rules Committee

March 22 – Crossover

- Opposite Chamber bills received after this date are subject to referral to Rules Committees

April 5 – Sine Die

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*

Karyn.Riley@wsscwater.com

Guy Andes – *Government Relations Manager*

State Affairs and Prince George's County Affairs

Guy.Andes@wsscwater.com

Monica Marquina – *Government Relations Manager*

Municipal Affairs and Montgomery County Affairs

Monica.Marquina@wsscwater.com

Terry Walker-Morris – *Administrative Professional*

Terry.Walker-Morris@wsscwater.com

Contact Us

(301) 206-8228

iro@wsscwater.com



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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