



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

The [Maryland General Assembly began its 445th Legislative Session](#) January 11, 2023 with a greater sense of normalcy. The 47-member Senate has eight new members, and the 141-member House has 40 newcomers. Both chambers have vacancies with more expected in the coming weeks due to appointments to Governor-elect Wes Moore's administration. Wes Moore and Aruna Miller will be sworn in as the next Governor and Lieutenant Governor of Maryland on January 18, 2023. House Speaker Adrienne Jones (D-Baltimore County) and Senate President Bill Ferguson (D-Baltimore City) will both preside over their first year of a full four-year term.

Both the House and Senate have implemented a hybrid system for public testimony to allow for in-person and virtual testimony for the 2023 legislative session. Lawmakers pre-filed over 250 bills before the start of the 90-day session. The General Assembly is expected to tackle issues left unaddressed from last year that include establishing a legalized recreational cannabis industry, implementing a paid family and medical leave insurance program and responding to U.S. Supreme Court decisions on abortion rights and gun control. Other topics expected to be addressed by lawmakers include renter's protections, election reform, and mental health care access.

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** is on the front-line advocating for legislation that impacts our work. **IRO** covers a variety of subject matters and focuses on 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 highlights the progress of key bills of interest to WSSC Water, as well as provide timely updates and calendar of important dates.

Legislative Updates

WSSC Water has proposed one bill for the 2023 Legislative Session. [MC/PG 101-23 - Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission - Minority Business Enterprise Utilization Program - Revisions and Extension](#). This bill updates, modernizes, streamlines, and strengthens provisions pertaining to WSSC Water's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Utilization Program, including extending the Office of Supplier Diversity and Inclusion's statutory authority to have an MBE program for five (5) years, ending on June 30, 2028.

The Montgomery County and Prince George's County House delegations held their respective public bill hearings on December 15, 2022, and January 3, 2023. The Montgomery County Metro Washington Area Committee will hold a [work session](#) at 7 PM on January 16, 2023 to discuss MC/PG 101-23.

WSSC Water will continue to champion policies that provide safe and reliable water and return clean water to our environment, all in an ethical, sustainable and financially responsible manner.

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

Around WSSC Water

WSSC Water Welcomes New GM/CEO Kishia L. Powell

On January 1, 2023, [Kishia L. Powell joined WSSC Water as the new General Manager/CEO](#) from DC Water, where she served as the Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President, overseeing Shared Services, IT, Engineering, Water, Wastewater, Pumping and Sewer Operations and Customer Care.

During her tenure at DC Water, Ms. Powell championed several initiatives, including a focus on operationalizing equity and environmental justice. She provided oversight for DC Water's 10-year \$6.4 billion capital improvement program, including the DC Clean Rivers program, improvements to Blue Plains, water and sewer system improvements and Lead Free DC, an initiative to replace all lead service lines in the District of Columbia. She was also responsible for leading the implementation of workstreams under the utility's strategic plan imperative for reliability. Most notably, she led the COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery efforts and introduced the campaign to recognize DC Water's frontline team as Water Heroes.

General Manager Powell has 24 years of public and private sector water and wastewater utility experience serving clients across the United States and London, England. She is recognized as a global leader in the water sector – improving service delivery, driving equity and inclusion and implementing strategies to address affordability concerns, climate change, resilience and innovation.

WSSC Water January Commission Meeting

WSSC Water will hold its monthly Commission Meeting on January 18, 2023 at 8:30 AM. As part of WSSC Water's commitment to public engagement and transparency, the live broadcast of this meeting allows viewers to observe agency business, including the review of contracts and policies, and a monthly synopsis of WSSC Water's operations. The complete agenda with links to all presentations, public viewing and participation details may be accessed [here](#).

As with previous virtual Commission meetings, there will be a call-in option to ensure interested stakeholders can provide input during the meeting. The public comment period will take place shortly after the meeting starts. *Call-in number to provide comment: 1-240-800-7929 / Conference ID: 252 270 651#.*

WSSC Water FY 2024 Proposed Budget Hearings

WSSC Water wants you to know all the facts and figures about our budget and our Capital Improvements Program. This budget details the projects and initiatives we plan to undertake that will enable us to deliver safe, seamless and satisfying water services to our neighbors in Montgomery and Prince George's counties.

You are invited to attend and learn about our plans to invest in clean-water projects at our two public hearings:

January 31, 2023 at 7 PM

Montgomery County

Stella B. Werner Office Building, 7th Floor Hearing Room
100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850

February 2, 2023 at 7 PM

Prince George's County

Department of the Environment Building, Conference Room 140
1801 McCormick Drive, Largo, MD 20774

The public will have an opportunity to comment at the hearings. For more information, please visit wsscwater.com/fin.

Customer Assistance and the Water Fund

WSSC Water remains committed to making water/sewer bills more affordable. We want to do everything in our power to help you 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](#).

Customers 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

David.Wilkins@wsscwater.com

301-648-6953

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

Stephen Billingsley

Stephen.Billingsley@wsscwater.com

240-444-5803

Montgomery County

Brandon Stewart

Brandon.Stewart@wsscwater.com

301-642-1712

Find your Customer Advocate [here](#).

Calendar

January 16, 2023 – Metro Washington Area Committee Work Session – 7 PM

February 6, 2023 – Senate Bill Introduction

February 10, 2023 – House Bill Introduction

March 20, 2023 – Crossover

April 10, 2023 – 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

Guy Andes – *Acting Director*
Guy.Andes@wsscwater.com

Monica Marquina – *Government Affairs Manager*
Monica.Marquina@wsscwater.com

Terry Walker-Morris – *Administrative Professional*
Terry.Walker-Morris@wsscwater.com

Contact Us

(301) 206-8228
iro@wsscwater.com

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

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