



A Note from WSSC Water's Intergovernmental Relations Office

Saturday, February 24th marked the halfway point for the 2024 Maryland General Assembly's Legislative Session; to date, 2,688 bills have been introduced. March 4 is the final date for introduction of bills without suspension of Rules.

On Friday, February 23rd, Senate President Bill Ferguson marked the occasion by delivering a mid-session update and shared a look ahead at the remaining 45 days of the legislative session. Ferguson noted the historic number of bills introduced and the need to remain focused on bills that were introduced in a timely fashion. If a bill was not put in on time it is not likely to move this year. Mondays and Fridays, traditionally quieter, will now be used to hold hearings and committee work sessions. Revenue estimates are expected on March 7th, and according to Senate President Ferguson "things are tight, but it is not a crisis".

In addition to the budget, the priorities that were highlighted included juvenile justice, end-of-life, and tax assessments. Ferguson emphasized that there is no need to increase general fund taxes.

In the coming days, lawmakers will be working hard to pass bills out of their respective chambers prior to the March 18th Crossover Date. In addition to vetting bills, the budgetary committees continue to host budget briefings as they work to pass a balanced budget for the upcoming 2024 fiscal year.

IRO is on the front-line advocating for legislation that impacts our work. We cover a variety of subject matters and focus 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 events 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 2024 Legislative Session, [HB 1024 - Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Connection Pipe Emergency Replacement Loan Program – Expansion](#). The proposed legislation will allow for the expansion of the Connection Pipe Emergency Replacement Loan Program authorized by Section 23-205 of the Maryland Annotated Code Public Utilities Article to include sewer service line repair or replacement, sewer line camera investigation or snaking, as well as increase the maximum loan amount to \$10,000.

Both the Prince George's County and Montgomery County Delegations voted in favor of the bill and it will now move to the House Environment and Transportation Committee.

HB 1024 had its first reading in the House Environment and Transportation Committee and a hearing has been scheduled for March 8, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

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

Around WSSC Water

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)

The MD Department of Human Services, Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP), is a water assistance program that provides funds to assist low income households pay their past due water/sewer bills. Funds are limited so please apply now through March 31, 2024 using one of the following methods:

- Online at the [Maryland Department of Human Services website](#).
- In-person at the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services office located at 1301 Piccard Drive, Rockville, MD 20850. Telephone 240-777-4450.
- In-person at the Prince George's County Department of Social Services office located at 425 Brightseat Road, Landover, MD 20785. Telephone 301-909-6300.

BEHIND ON YOUR WSSC WATER BILL?

The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) has funding for customers in Montgomery & Prince George's counties.

You may qualify for up to **\$10,000** to help pay your past due water/sewer bill.

Apply now through **March 31, 2024**, or until the funds run out

[Click here to see if you qualify](#)

or visit dhs.maryland.gov/OHEP

Apply online at dhs.maryland.gov/OHEP or in person. Hurry, funds are running low.

Montgomery County
Dept. of Health and Human Services
1301 Piccard Drive
Rockville, MD 20850
(240) 777-4450
ohcp@montgomerycountymd.gov

Prince George's County
Dept. of Social Services
425 Brightseat Road
Landover, Md. 20785
(301) 909-6300
pgcdss.energy@maryland.gov

Your Water Usage

What is your ADC? That is, your Average Daily Consumption of water? You would be surprised to learn just how quickly your everyday water usage - taking a shower, brushing your teeth, washing your hands - can really add up. The average family of three uses about 150 gallons of water per day! And that is just inside the home. Outdoor water usage at certain times of the year - such as watering lawns in the summer - can really increase the amount of water you use.

Click [here](#) for more details on indoor and outdoor water usage, property inspections, resolving high bills, and a video on understanding your WSSC water usage.

Would Your Organization Like WSSC Water to Attend an Event?

WSSC Water loves to get out in the community and meet our neighbors. If you would like WSSC Water to attend your event, please fill out our community event request form at wsscwater.com/outreach. Our team will review the request and follow-up within two weeks.

Please submit your request at least eight weeks in advance of your event.

Identifying WSSC Water Employees

We want you to be assured that someone who says they are a WSSC Water employee is in fact one of our workers. To identify our employees, ask to see their *Employee Identification Badge*.

WSSC Water employees rarely need to enter your home, but when we do, we will schedule an appointment with you. We will never ask to enter your home without you expecting us.

Please call WSSC Water Police at 301-206-8888, if you see suspicious activity by someone who says they are a WSSC Water employee. If for any reason you fear for your safety, please call 911. For more information on tips on how to identify our employees, please visit wsscwater.com/identification.

HOW TO IDENTIFY A WSSC WATER EMPLOYEE

All WSSC Water employees carry an employee identification badge.

WSSC Water employees drive marked vehicles.



Receive alerts about WSSC Water-related incidents near your home, office, school, or other important addresses.



Register for *text or email* alerts on up to three addresses.

REGISTER AT WSSCWATER.COM/CNS

Customer Notification System (CNS)

In our continuing effort to provide excellent customer service, WSSC Water offers a Customer Notification System (CNS) to alert you about our work in your area that may affect your service or daily routine.

Once you sign up, you will receive email or text alerts about water main breaks, sanitary sewer overflows, road or lane closures caused by WSSC Water work, boil water advisories and occasionally other important messages from us.

Sign up [here](#) for CNS and never be in the dark about water main repairs and water emergencies in your neighborhood.

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 Financial 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

Southern Montgomery County (areas south of Randolph Road)

Brandon Stewart

Brandon.Stewart@wsscwater.com

301-642-1712

Northern Montgomery County (areas north of Randolph Road)

Phil Callahan

Phil.Callahan@wsscwater.com

240-204-2123

Find your Customer Advocate [here](#).

Calendar

- March 18, 2024 – Crossover
- April 1, 2024 – Budget bill to be passed by both Chambers
- April 8, 2024 – 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

Monica Marquina – *Government Affairs Director*

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.



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