

# A Guide for Customers

2019

PHILADELPHIA  
**WATER**  
— DEPARTMENT —

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# Contact Numbers & Hours

## PWD Customer Hotline:

**All Concerns— 8 a.m. –5 p.m., Monday – Friday**

**Emergencies— 24/7**

215.685.6300

Customer Service Centers	Location	Office Hours	Days of Operation
<b>Center City</b> Municipal Services Building, Water Revenue Bureau	1401 J.F.K. Boulevard Philadelphia, PA 19102 Public Services Concourse	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Monday – Friday
<b>North Philadelphia</b> Hope Plaza	22nd & Somerset St. Philadelphia, PA 19132	8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Monday – Friday
<b>Northeast Philadelphia</b> Northeast Municipal Services Center	7522 Castor Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19152	8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Monday – Friday

## PWD on the Web & Your Mobile Device

### Helpful info and forms

[www.phila.gov/water](http://www.phila.gov/water)

### Water bill payment and assistance

[www.phila.gov/revenue](http://www.phila.gov/revenue)

### @PhillyH2O Blog: timely stories, tips, and news

[water.phila.gov/blog](http://water.phila.gov/blog)

### Subscribe to PWD text and email updates

[phillyh2o.info/signup](http://phillyh2o.info/signup)

### Find us on social media

@PhillyH2O

### Solicite una versión en español de este documento:

Llame al 215.685.6300 o envíe un correo electrónico a [waterinfo@phila.gov](mailto:waterinfo@phila.gov)

# Introduction

This guide provides you with the information you need to get the most out of PWD services—from knowing what the pipes in your home are made of to keeping your water flowing with timely payments. You'll also find information about a variety of PWD customer assistance programs, our green infrastructure investments, and more.



*Dedication to providing clean drinking water and healthy rivers has driven PWD throughout our 200-year history. We want to ensure you benefit from that hard work.*

## About the Philadelphia Water Department

The Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) maintains thousands of miles of water mains and sewer pipes and operates three drinking water and three wastewater treatment plants. We employ scientists using the latest technology to sample our water, and more, all so our 1.5 million customers have access to top-quality water 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

We take the responsibility of protecting and delivering your water seriously: it is the mission that drives what our employees do every single day. Making sure your water stays safe all the way into your home is a responsibility that PWD shares with every customer.



## About the Water Revenue Bureau

The Water Revenue Bureau (WRB) handles billing and collection functions for the Water Department, including creating bills and collecting payments. To meet our joint pledge of improving customer service, PWD and WRB merged our customer contact centers so that customers only need to call one number – 215.685.6300 – for billing questions, emergencies and general services.

## How to Become a Customer

For most people who purchase a property, becoming a customer of the Philadelphia Water Department is as simple as faxing the first page of your deed to 215.686.6109 or emailing us at WRBhelpdesk@phila.gov. Many title companies will do this for you as part of the services provided while purchasing a home, but it's a good idea to ask to ensure you have water service when you move in. Once that record is received, the existing account at the property will be transferred into your name and you will then be an active PWD customer.

If you are a new property owner, you may also have to take the following steps to turn on water service, depending on your situation:

- If your deed is recorded, your account will be updated by the City and you will begin to receive bills in your name.
- If your deed is not recorded yet and it is essential that you receive water bills in your name, present your settlement sheet to the Water Revenue Bureau at a payment center. See the **Billing** section (page 27) for locations.
- If there is no meter on the property, a meter must be installed within 30 days of the settlement date. Call 215.685.6300 to get a water meter installed.
- If you are purchasing a property with the intention of renting it to tenants, the bill may remain in your name, or can be transferred to your tenant with your permission.

## TENANTS OR OCCUPANTS

If you pay rent to live in your apartment, house, or condominium, you can apply to receive water service in your name. Call 215.685.6300 or visit: <https://beta.phila.gov> and search for "become-a-water-customer."

Questions about your account can be answered by calling 215.685.6300.

# Responsibilities of the Water Department & Homeowners

## Philadelphia Water Department Responsibilities

The Philadelphia Water Department is responsible for the maintenance and operation of all public water mains and public sewer pipes in the City of Philadelphia. PWD also maintains more than 72,000 storm drain inlets and over 25,000 fire hydrants across the city.

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## Homeowner Responsibilities

As a customer, your responsibility for pipes and related plumbing begins at the City-owned water mains and sewers beneath the street and extends into your property and building. This includes:

- All pipes and fixtures within your home or building.
- The supply line, which runs from the curb stop shut-off valve and connects to your water meter (usually in your house).
- The service line, which runs from the City's water main in the street to the curb stop, usually located under the sidewalk in front of your home.
- The sewer lateral, which connects your home to the sewer system and takes wastewater away from your property.

See the *"Homeowner's Responsibilities"* diagram on page 8, or the *"Maintaining and Understanding Your Plumbing"* section (page 10) for more details.

### PRIVATE SEWERS & WATER MAINS

While most Philadelphia homes are connected to the City's water mains and sewers, some homes or developments may have privately owned systems. Before purchasing a property, confirm the home is connected to the public system and does not share a common private water service or sewer lateral with other properties. This information is important, as it will determine what you are responsible for. All private water mains and sewer pipes are the shared responsibility of the property owners who are connected to them. If they break, customers will be responsible for the cost of the repairs.

## What to Do If You Suspect a Problem



If you believe you have a problem with your supply line, service line or sewer lateral, call PWD to schedule an inspection immediately. A small problem can quickly become a large one by flooding neighboring properties or causing depressions in the sidewalk or street.

If an issue is found, you may be issued a **Notice of Defect**. This notice describes the problem and provides up to 10 days for repairs. In extreme cases, such as a broken service line or sewer lateral that is causing property or street damage, PWD may take actions including shutting off your water service.

Because these pipes are the homeowner's responsibility, repairs must be made by a private licensed and registered plumber. If you receive a Notice of Defect, you may be eligible for the zero-interest Homeowner's Emergency Loan Program (HELP).

More information on the HELP loan can be found in the "**Customer Assistance Programs**" section (page 28).

### AVOID SPRING SHUTOFF

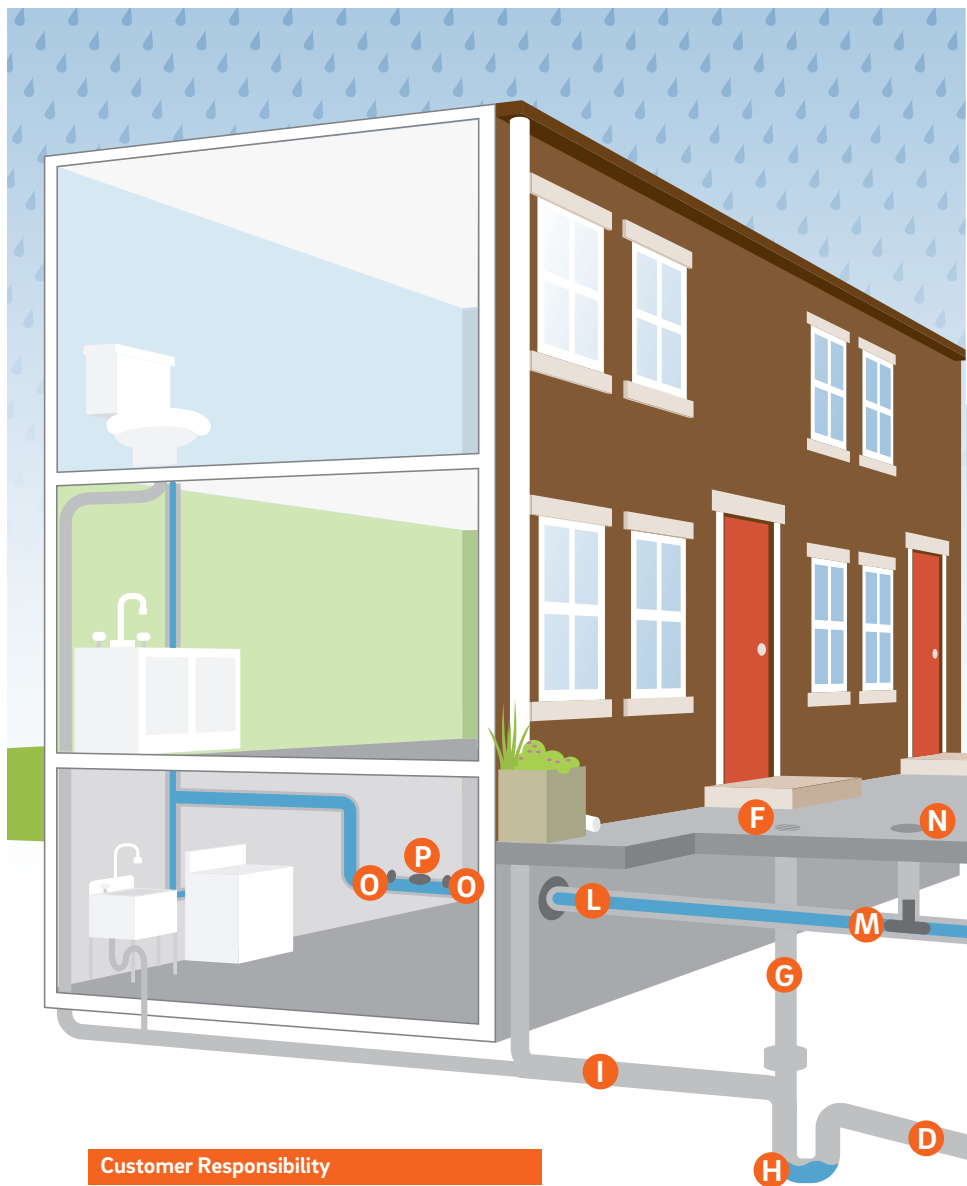
Because many homes are heated using water, we pause most water shutoffs from unpaid bills during the winter. However, unpaid water bills that accumulate over the winter may result in water being turned off when spring arrives.

**If you fall behind on your water bill over the winter, apply for help or enter a payment agreement before March 15.** Your water won't be turned off as your application is processed. Even if you don't qualify,

we'll let you know if another program can help. **See page 28** to learn about programs that can help you pay your bill or call us at 215.685.6300.

**Tip:** Calls to our hotline increase when spring shutoffs start, and so can the wait times. **Take action before April.** Applications for lower bills can be completed online, printed or requested in the mail.





### Customer Responsibility

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>D</b> Sanitary and Stormwater Lateral | <b>J</b> Ferrule            |
| <b>E</b> Slant                           | <b>K</b> Water Service Pipe |
| <b>F</b> Vent Cover                      | <b>L</b> Water Supply Pipe  |
| <b>G</b> Vent Pipe                       | <b>M</b> Curb Stop          |
| <b>H</b> Curb Trap                       | <b>N</b> Curb Stop Box      |
| <b>I</b> Main House Drain                | <b>O</b> Supply Valves      |
|  | <b>P</b> Water Meter        |

# Our Plumbing & Your Plumbing:

## Understanding Your Responsibilities

This illustration shows a home water supply and drainage system. Items labeled in **orange** are the responsibility of the homeowner. If these items need repairs, you may need to engage the services of a licensed and registered plumber.





# Maintaining and Understanding Your Plumbing

## Always Drink Fresh Water

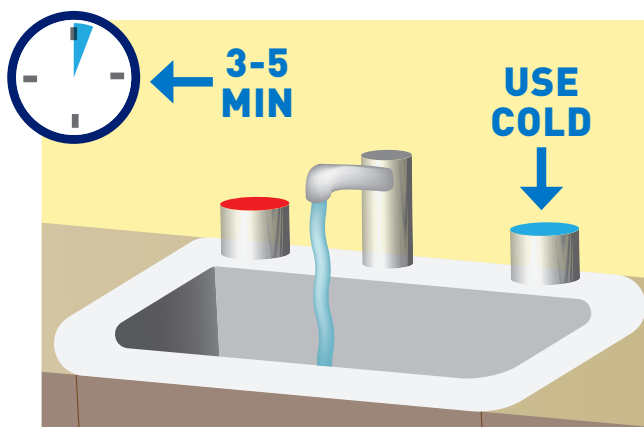
There is always rigorously tested, clean fresh water flowing through City water mains, but sitting in your home's pipes for a few hours may affect water quality. Whether you have lead pipes or not, all households should follow the tips below.

### 3 TIPS FOR EVERYONE

#### 1 Daily Pipe Flushing

If you have not used your water for a few hours, turn on the cold water faucet at the sink that you drink from, and let the water run for three to five minutes.

*Why Flush?* It's good to avoid drinking water that has been sitting in your home's pipes for several hours.



#### 2 Always Use Cold!

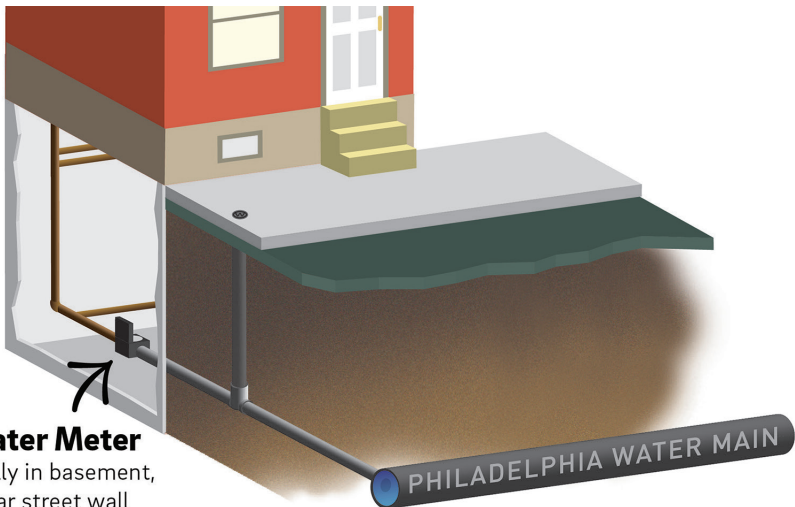
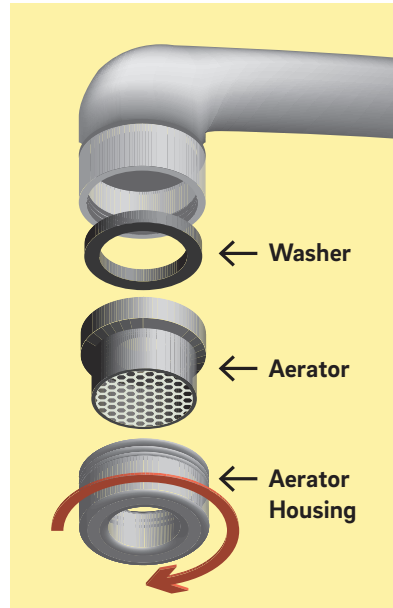
Never drink hot water from the tap, or use that water for cooking. Water heaters aren't made for drinking water.

### 3 Check Your Aerators

Clean aerators (also called screens) yearly to remove debris from any taps used for drinking water.

## How Your Water Meter Works

Your meter is very important. It's your responsibility as a homeowner to safeguard it from theft, vandalism, freezing, tampering and other damage. Mishandling the meter or failure to protect it could result in fees or fines billed to the property owner. It is also important to maintain access to the meter, should you or PWD ever need to inspect, repair, or replace it. By keeping the meter in good condition, you will help make sure you maintain uninterrupted water service.

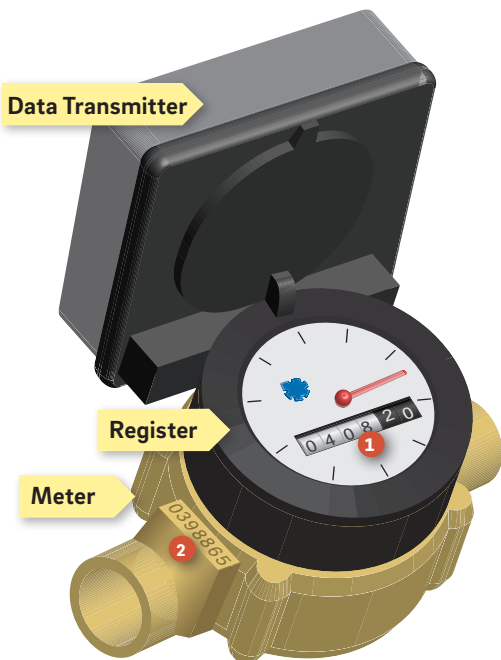


### Water Meter

Usually in basement,  
near street wall

Please see the diagram on the next page for more information.

## Parts of Your Water Meter



- 1 This six digit number (example: 0408.20.) reflects the meter's current **Usage Reading**. Be sure to record all six digits including any leading zeros, if you need to share this number.
- 2 This seven digit number (example: 0398865) is the **Meter Number**. It is engraved into your meter and is also available on a white sticker on the side of the device.



### What do the dials tell us?

The large red needle will move around the face of the meter one time for every 10 gallons you use. The small blue dial will move even if you have a very small leak.

### Checking for Leaks

To check for a leak using your meter, turn off all water inside and outside. Record all numbers displayed. Stop all water usage for at least several hours, either overnight or while you are at work. Read your meter again, and compare to the numbers you recorded to determine how much water is leaking. A registered plumber can help you detect the source if it isn't apparent.

## Seasonal Tips

We work hard to make sure our customers are informed about common issues customers face each season. Here are a few tips to help you maintain your property and plumbing throughout the year.



### FALL

Falling leaves can block the storm drain on your street. Inlets allow rain or melting snow to drain from the street and enter the sewer system. Avoid flooding on your street: keep inlets clear and never place a pile of leaves in an area where it could clog the inlet. Likewise, never pile snow in front of inlets when shoveling.



While PWD inlet cleaning crews work night and day to keep our more than 72,000 inlets clear, residents can help when leaves are falling quickly or if trash accumulates.

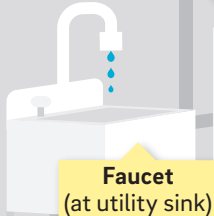
Make clearing inlets of trash, leaves and other debris a regular part of your community's efforts to keep neighborhood streets clean. When reporting blocked inlets, call 215.685.6300 with the **exact location**. Example: "**31st Street and Wharton Street, Southeast corner,**" or "**in front of 1012 Main Street.**"

### WINTER

Meters and water service lines can freeze when the temperature drops below 32 degrees. Pipes may also freeze in poorly insulated areas of homes. This can cause water to stop flowing or pipes to burst.

## How to prevent frozen pipes, and avoid costly repairs:

Winterize your property in these areas:



Water Pipes

Windows

Water Meter Area

Shutoff Valves

OUTSIDE:

Garden Hose / Faucet

If you don't have water during extreme cold, check your pipes before calling PWD. Many customers mistakenly assume a water main is broken when their home's pipes freeze and spend valuable time on the phone.

Unfortunately, PWD cannot thaw your frozen pipes. You may have to wait for the line to thaw or call a plumber. However, if you take the proper precautions and winterize your house, you will likely be able to keep your pipes inside from freezing. You will receive cold weather tips in the mail from PWD each year, and more information is available at:

[Phillyh2o.info/KeepColdOut](http://Phillyh2o.info/KeepColdOut).

### SPRING

The start of spring is a good time to make sure your home's gutters are clear and that water from your roof is draining properly from the downspout and into the sewer system or an area away from the foundation of your home. If you have a rain barrel or downspout planter provided through our Rain Check program, reconnect your downspout in the spring after the threat of freezing temperatures passes. For more information about managing stormwater on your property, visit: [www.pwdraincheck.org](http://www.pwdraincheck.org).

### SUMMER

In the warmer months, residents should be on the lookout for illegal use of fire hydrants. Hydrants are only for fighting fires, and misusing them can cause serious safety threats. We ask residents to keep their eyes out for open hydrants, especially in the summer. If you see an open hydrant, call our hotline right away at 215.685.6300 and we will respond as soon as possible.

#### Did You Know:

- Open fire hydrants can waste approximately 2,000 gallons of water each minute.
- The extreme force of water coming from an open hydrant can cause bodily harm or death. These jets of water are strong enough to push a child or adult into oncoming traffic.
- Open hydrants can cause flood damage to public and private property, including flooded basements.
- Opening hydrants without the Fire Department can cause damage that makes the hydrant unavailable when it's needed to put out fires.

**Remember, fire hydrants only serve one purpose: to fight fires.** Not having a working fire hydrant can seriously slow down firefighters working to save lives. Opening a hydrant illegally isn't worth putting lives at risk.



## Drinking Water Quality

Our nearly 2,000 employees work around the clock to ensure safe, high-quality drinking water is always on tap. Providing a safe and abundant supply of water is our commitment to customers large and small. We use proven treatment practices and participate in groundbreaking research to provide drinking water that exceeds state and federal quality standards. **Philadelphia's drinking water sources are the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers. We work with upstream partners to protect water quality.**

### WATER QUALITY CONCERNS: TASTE, ODOR, & COLOR

If your water has an unusual taste, smell or color, report this to our hotline immediately at 215.685.6300. We will send someone to investigate and determine possible causes. A sample may be collected for testing by our lab experts. Reporting these issues immediately allows us to respond quickly.

### DRINKING WATER QUALITY REPORT

Each year, we release a complete Drinking Water Quality Report, also known as a Consumer Confidence Report. In it you will find detailed information on the water treatment process and the health and safety of your water. Online versions are available before July 1 each year at [www.phila.gov/water](http://www.phila.gov/water). You may request a paper copy by calling 215.685.6300.

### BUREAU OF LABORATORY SERVICES

Philadelphia has a long history of water treatment and sampling, and our Bureau of Laboratory Services division is at the forefront of the industry. A large component of our Drinking Water Quality Report is put together by the Bureau of Laboratory Services staff, the team of scientists responsible for monitoring the health of our rivers and testing our drinking water around the clock. Our lab is award-winning in both innovation and technology, and our employees are recognized worldwide for their work.

## CONCERNED ABOUT LEAD?

When high lead levels are found in tap water, the lead comes from plumbing on the customer's property. The drinking water delivered to your home meets or exceeds state and federal water quality standards. These standards include treating water to reduce corrosion and make it safer for homes with lead plumbing. However, there is always a risk of lead getting into water when you have lead in your plumbing. This makes knowing what your pipes and fixtures are made from a key part of having the best-possible water.

Customers are responsible for all home plumbing, so the Water Department cannot control pipes and fixtures used within your home. Homes built before 1950 may have a service line, the pipe connecting home plumbing to the water main in the street, that is made from lead. Copper pipes inside homes may also be joined by solder containing lead, and older brass pipes, faucets, fittings and valves may have some lead.

### HOW TO CHECK IF YOUR WATER SERVICE LINE IS MADE OF LEAD:

#### You will need:

- Key or a coin
- Strong refrigerator magnet

1. Find the water meter in your basement. Look at the pipe that comes through the outside wall of your home and connects to your meter.
2. Carefully scratch the pipe (like you would a lottery ticket) with a key or a coin. Do not use a knife or other sharp tool. Take care not to make a hole in the pipe. If the scratch turns a shiny silver color, it could be lead or steel.

**NOTE:** If pipe is painted, use sandpaper to expose the metal first.

3. Place the magnet on the pipe. If a magnet sticks, it is a steel pipe.

### Other ways you can check for lead:

- **Lead test kits can be purchased at your local hardware or home improvement store.** These kits are used to test what the pipe is made from — not the water inside. Look for an EPA recognized kit.
- **A licensed and insured plumber can inspect your pipes and other plumbing for lead.** Replacing an older brass faucet or valve may be a simple way to reduce the lead in water.



There are two main ways lead can get into water:

- When water sits in plumbing made from lead
- When pieces of lead plumbing or solder break off inside drinking water pipes

It is important for customers to check their home for lead plumbing and take steps to ensure safe water if lead is discovered. Lead test kits can be purchased at your local hardware or home improvement store. These kits are used to test what the pipe is made from—not the water inside. Look for an EPA-recognized kit. Whether your home has lead plumbing or not, there are some simple steps you can take to make sure you're getting the cleanest, freshest water possible. See the ***"Maintaining and Understanding Your Plumbing"*** section (page 10) for tips on making sure you're getting the best water possible.

#### IF YOU FIND A LEAD SERVICE LINE

If you find that you have a lead service line, you can call 215.685.6300 to have your water tested for lead or to take part in the Philadelphia Water Department's lead and copper sampling program. We offer interest-free loans to assist with the cost of replacing lead service lines (see page 29).

**Please note that simply having a lead service line does not mean your home's water has high levels of lead.** Corrosion control treatment, performed in Philadelphia for more than 20 years, is effective in keeping lead levels in 90 percent or more of the city's homes below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standard of 15 parts per billion (15ppb).

Where high lead levels in water have been detected, the source has usually been traced to a plumbing fixture.

**It is always recommended that homeowners remove all potential sources of lead in plumbing when possible.**

Visit [www.phila.gov/water/lead](http://www.phila.gov/water/lead) for more information on topics such as flushing your pipes after water main replacement or road construction, water filters approved for lead, and more.

## PROTECT YOUR DRINKING WATER: PREVENT CROSS CONNECTIONS AND BACKFLOW!

*Cross connections* can allow dirt, unsafe water and chemicals to get sucked into your drinking water. This is called “*backflow*,” and it can make you and your neighbors sick. While mistakes that cause backflow are easy to make, they are also easy to fix.

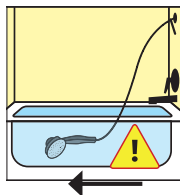


Creating a cross connection at your home isn't just dangerous: it's **against the law!** If a cross connection is found at your home, it can lead to your water being shut off.

### WHERE CAN CROSS CONNECTIONS OCCUR?

#### Bathroom

A detachable showerhead sitting in a tub can pull unsafe water into your drinking water. Make sure your showerhead is never under the water.



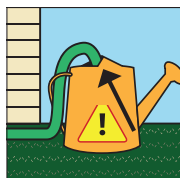
#### Sinks

A hose connected to your kitchen or basement utility sink can let dangerous water get sucked in. Make sure the hose stays out of the water. If you have a hose screwed into a utility sink faucet, take it off after use.



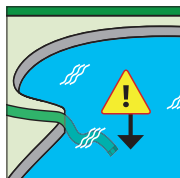
#### Garden

Leaving a hose attached to a pesticide or fertilizer sprayer may cause those chemicals to enter your drinking water. A garden hose sitting in a puddle or watering can also make a cross connection. Tip: always unscrew the hose at the spigot after use.



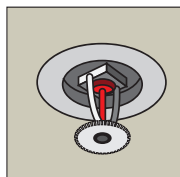
#### Pool

Although it may be easy to leave a hose under water when filling a pool, this can bring dirty water into your drinking water pipes. Instead, set up your hose so it stays out of the pool and above the water.



#### Fire Sprinklers

If you have a fire sprinkler system in your home, you may require a **backflow preventer**.



Please read our Frequently Asked Questions at:  
[phillyh2o.info/cc-backflow](http://phillyh2o.info/cc-backflow).

## GREASE DISPOSAL: AVOID CLOGS, FINES AND DAMAGED PIPES!

It's a little known fact that common grease, oil, and fats from cooking are behind some of the biggest problems in our sewer system. Much of that grease gets into sewers from kitchen cleanups and hosing down restaurant floors. Pouring cooking grease into sinks, tubs or sewer inlets can cause problems as well.

Grease, oils, and fats will not break down in water. That means the grease that goes into the sewers doesn't go away. Instead, grease builds up inside sewers, eventually blocking them. Once sewers are blocked, sewage can back up and spill out into homes and businesses. Cleaning up grease buildups and blockages in the sewers can be very costly and leads to higher water and sewer bills for everyone.

### Dispose of Your Grease the Right Way

So how should you deal with your grease? Here are some steps you should take.



Make sure that all animal fats and other grease are disposed of as solid waste.

*Dispose of fats or grease in garbage bags so it can be hauled away by the Streets Department.*

**PWD does not recommend** using soaps, detergents, bacteria-based solutions and caustic agents like drain cleaners because they do little to combat grease and can cause serious damage to your drains and plumbing.

### Don't Pay the Price for Improper Grease Disposal!

If a container of cooking oil or grease that has been disposed of improperly is traced back to a business that you own, you may have to pay hefty fines, and you may be billed for the cost of facility repair, sampling, and clean up.



# Billing

## How to Read Your Bill

Once you have signed up as a customer with PWD, you will begin to receive a monthly bill. If you are a typical residential customer, your water bill will tell you if you are receiving accurate meter readings and will show your service charge, usage charge and stormwater fee.

## Definition of Terms

### SERVICE CHARGE

This charge pays for the service of supplying you with water. It is a fixed cost and is based on the size of your water meter. Fixed cost items include stormwater collection and treatment and metering and billing costs.

### USAGE CHARGE

This charge is based on the amount of water you use in your home.

### STORMWATER CHARGE

This covers the cost of systems and programs that manage the stormwater (rain and melting snow) that flows into City sewers and waterways, as required by environmental protection laws.

#### **Residential Stormwater Charge**

Residential customers pay a standard amount based on **the average surface area** of impervious cover on residential properties throughout the city.

#### **Non-Residential Stormwater Charge**

For non-residential customers, the cost to manage stormwater is based on the **specific square footage** of impervious area covering the property and the total square footage of the property.

To learn more about how stormwater charges are calculated, please visit: [phillyh2o.info/sw-mgmt](http://phillyh2o.info/sw-mgmt).

## Sample Bill: Page 1

**Water/Sewer & Stormwater Bill**Please pay **\$74.06**

Questions?

[www.phila.gov/revenue](http://www.phila.gov/revenue)

(215) 685-6300 Monday-Friday, 8a m-5pm

Customer Name: JANE DOE

Service Address: 316 Bayview Terrace, Philadelphia PA 19126

Bill Date: January 23, 2019 (Bill Period: Dec 20, 2018 - Jan 17, 2019)

Account Number: 090-12345-00316-001

Water Access Code: 909342269

Bill Number: B0705203027

Includes Payments Through: January 23, 2019

**Your Account**

Water/Sewer/Stormwater balance at last bill	\$66.33
You last paid on 01/17/19 - thank you	\$66.33
Account Balance	\$0.00

**This Bill**

Usage Charge (see below for details)	\$46.37
Service Charge	\$12.16
	\$15.53
	\$0.00
	\$74.06
	\$74.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$74.06</b>

**Usage Charge**

See a month-by-month usage history on the next page.

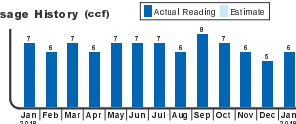
**Water Access Code**

This number can easily identify you, whether you are applying for assistance or calling about your meter.

**Meter Readings**

Meter: 0367274 ERT: 0096156947 Service: 41R

January 17, 2019	actual reading	1399
December 20, 2018	actual reading	1393
Total CCFs used		6
Approximate gallons used per day		160

**Usage History (ccf)****Paying by mail?**

Send this coupon with your payment.

See back for other ways to pay →

**Account Number**

090-12345-00316-001

**Please pay****\$74.06****Late payment penalty****\$3.70**

Total amount due if paid after Feb 22, 2019

**\$77.76**

JANE DOE  
316 BAYVIEW TERRACE  
PHILADELPHIA PA  
19126

090 CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE  
WATER REVENUE BUREAU

3337202219000053160000650011000000776000007406035000010000000000000000

## 83-T-118 W/BSW00 P2 (1/1/18)



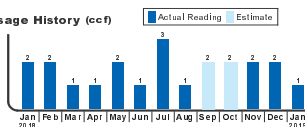
Page 2 of 2

Account Number: 090-12345-00316-001  
Water Access Code: 909342269  
Bill Number: B0705232184  
Includes Payments Through: January 23, 2019

### Meter Readings

Meter: 0367274	ERT: 0070872123	Service: 41R
January 17, 2019	actual reading	236
December 20, 2018	actual reading	235
Total CCFs used		1
Approximate gallons used per day		26

### Usage History (ccf)



Replace missing meter; Inv# 2017 01157; Service Date 09/15/2016; Lien# LN01213915	\$195.00
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>-\$152.80</b>

Meter & Repair Charge Total Balance	\$42.20
-------------------------------------	---------


Customers who have repairs performed will see these charges here.

Don't Ignore!  
Any **estimated usage**,  
shown by light blue  
bars, could lead to  
unexpectedly high  
bills in the future!  
Unusual activity  
might be due to a  
leak, seasonal water  
use changes, or even  
houseguests.


## Additional Billable Services

For customers who have additional billable services such as repairs, loans and/or payment plans, those charges will be shown in separate boxes, sometimes on additional pages such as the HELP Loan example below.

## Sample Bill: Page 3



**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE  
WATER REVENUE BUREAU



**City of Philadelphia**

Page 3 of 3

### HELP Loan Bill

**Please pay \$303.89**

---

**Customer Name:** JANE DOE  
**Service Address:** 316 Bayview Terrace, Philadelphia PA 19126  
**Bill Date:** January 23, 2019 (Bill Period: Dec 20, 2018 - Jan 22, 2019)

Questions?  
[www.phila.gov/revenue](http://www.phila.gov/revenue)  
 (215) 685-6300 Monday-Friday, 8a-m-5pm

---

**Account Number:** 090-12345-00316-001  
**HELP Loan Access Code:** 001234567  
**Bill Number:** B0705240718  
 Included Payments Through: January 23, 2019

### Your Account

HELP Loan balance at last bill	\$1,980.89
No payment received	\$0.00
<b>HELP Loan Unpaid Balance</b>	<b>\$1,980.89</b>

### This Bill

Monthly HELP Loan Due	\$303.89
Total HELP Loan Balance	\$1,980.89
<b>Please Pay Now</b>	<b>\$303.89</b>

### HELP Access Code

**Paying by Phone?**  
 Enter when prompted  
 if paying the HELP  
 balance by phone.

### HELP Loan Payment History

HELP Loan Agreement Date	May 29, 2018
HELP Loan Agreement Amount	\$1,980.00
Additional Payments	\$8.11

Total HELP Loan Balance \$1,980.89

See back for more information and contact details →

**PLEASE MAIL THE PORTION BELOW WITH  
YOUR PAYMENT FOR YOUR HELP LOAN**

### HELP Loan Payment History


**Shows:**

- Loan date and amount
- Six most recent payments
- Older payments shown as a single total

**Account Number**  
090-12345-00316-001

**Please pay by Feb 22, 2019** **\$303.89**

---

090  **CITY OF PHILADELPHIA**  
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE  
WATER REVENUE BUREAU

90000003030699960000100000000002

# What Does A Typical Residential Water Bill Pay For?

The current typical monthly bill of \$66.33 covers four charges:

## Water

The average Philadelphia household uses about 500 cubic feet (nearly 3,740 gallons) of top-quality water monthly.

## Sewer

We treat what you flush down the drain and toilet to protect our waterways.

## Stormwater

Managing runoff that flows from properties into sewers and waterways.

## Service

Billing and collection services, metering, pollution prevention services.

*Usage: These costs will vary according to the amount of water you use.*



*The cost of providing these services determines the amounts above.*

## WHAT DO YOU GET FROM PWD?

Current 2019 rates come to about \$2.25 per day for the average household. In addition to managing stormwater and treating wastewater, that pays for about 125 gallons of high-quality drinking water per day, or:



**2**  
showers  
(34.7 gallons)



**6**  
flushes  
(18 gallons)



**22**  
faucet  
uses  
(wash hands,  
brush teeth, etc.)  
(23.54 gallons)



**1**  
dishwasher  
load  
(7.5 gallons)



**1**  
laundry  
wash  
(40 gallons)



**16**  
glasses  
of water  
(1 gallon)



**Did you know?** About a third of your bill goes toward the top-quality drinking water we deliver. That means it costs a bit more than half a cent per gallon. Paying \$1.50 for your typical, 16.9-oz. plastic bottle of water at the store adds up to about \$11.30 per gallon. **That is 1,785 times more expensive than tap!**



## How Metering Relates to Your Bill

### METER READING



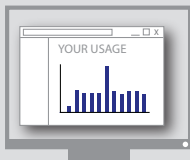
Your bill should show monthly meter readings. If your bill reflects that you are receiving estimated readings, you may be getting charged less than you should be, which could result in a large back bill for unpaid balances. If your bill shows you have estimated readings, please call 215.685.6300 immediately to schedule an appointment to have it checked.

PWD uses an Automated Meter Reader (AMR) system. Each month, vehicles collect data transmitted from customer water meters and use that information to generate monthly bills. If your bill states you are receiving estimated readings or your monthly usage chart lists usage as zero, your meter may need to have a battery replaced. Please call our hotline at 215.685.6300 if you are not receiving actual monthly readings.

### COMING SOON: SMART METERS

PWD will begin introducing Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) upgrades for our customers over a two-year period beginning soon. PWD will begin contacting customers in late 2019 to add AMI to their current water meter.

### GOOD FOR CUSTOMERS AND GOOD FOR THE CITY.



#### Enhanced Customer Service

Access to detailed water usage data to better understand and manage usage



#### Reduction in High Bills

Customers can opt in to proactive leak notifications BEFORE they become high bills



#### PWD Operational Efficiency

Real time alarms alert PWD to issues such as meter malfunctions

## How & Where to Pay Your Bill

### METHODS OF PAYMENT



#### MAIL A CHECK OR MONEY ORDER

Mail in the portion of your bill with a check or money order made payable to:

##### **Water Revenue Bureau**

P.O. Box 41496

Philadelphia, PA 19101-1496

Be sure to write for "water bill payment" **and** your account number on your check.



#### AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS WITH ZIP CHECK

You may authorize your bank to automatically transfer payment from your bank account for your monthly bills. This service is free. You will receive a billing notification before the money is withdrawn so you know the amount. Please call 215.686.6959 for a payment authorization form or for any questions.



#### ONLINE WITH E-CHECK

You can pay by e-check online. You will need your nine-digit water/sewer access code found on your water bill, your bank's nine-digit routing number and your savings or checking account number. This service is provided free of charge.



#### CREDIT CARD VIA PHONE OR ONLINE

You can pay by credit card online at [www.phila.gov/revenue](http://www.phila.gov/revenue) or over the phone. You will need your 16-digit water/sewer account number or access code—both are found on your water bill. You can also call 1-877-309-3709 to access an interactive voice response system to pay by phone. The service provider charges the following for this payment option:

**Residential Customers:** \$2.95

**Commercial Customers:** \$15.95

You may also call 215.685.6300 and select option two on the main menu. When prompted, simply enter the Water Access Code, located in the light blue box on the top right-hand side of the first page of the bill.



## IN PERSON

You can pay your bill in person with a check or money order at one of the three authorized customer service locations.

### PAYMENT LOCATIONS

#### Center City – Water Revenue

Municipal Services Building – Concourse  
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard  
215.685.6300  
Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 5 p.m.



#### North Philadelphia – Tax & Water Revenue

Hope Plaza  
22nd & Somerset Street  
Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.



#### Northeast Philadelphia – Tax & Water Revenue

7522 Castor Avenue  
Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.



### LOOK FOR NEW E-BILLING OPTIONS SOON

WRB is launching electronic billing in Fall 2019, allowing customers to receive and pay their bills electronically instead of sending by mail. The service will allow customers to eliminate paper bills and provide them with online access to their billing information 24/7. To check launch status, please go to: [www.phila.gov/pay](http://www.phila.gov/pay)

## Customer Assistance Programs

There are many programs available to help our customers afford their water bills, pay for certain types of plumbing repairs, and save water with conservation devices. Below are some of our most popular assistance programs.



### BILLING & PAYMENT PROGRAMS

#### TIERED ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)

In 2017, more Philadelphians than ever became eligible for help under the Tiered Assistance Program (TAP). We have a **one-stop application** to provide assistance through income-based payment plans to residential customers and others who can demonstrate financial hardship. Help is available even if you don't qualify for TAP.

**Anyone having trouble paying their water bill should apply at:**

[www.phila.gov/water-bill-help](http://www.phila.gov/water-bill-help) or by calling 215.685.6300.

#### SENIOR CITIZEN DISCOUNT

A 25% discount is provided for senior citizens (65 and older), with a total household income of less than \$32,300 per year. To apply, the applicant must be listed as the PWD account holder or customer.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD ENERGY CENTERS (NEC)

Neighborhood Energy Centers provide customers with resources for obtaining energy assistance grants and utility payment agreements. Contact the Energy Coordinating Agency (ECA) at 2215.609.1000 to locate your nearest center.

### PLUMBING REPAIR AND UPGRADE ASSISTANCE

#### LOW INCOME CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LICAP)

LICAP provides water conservation devices and education to low-income and high-usage customers, yielding average water usage savings of more than 25% for participants. Contact CMC Energy Services to enroll at 877.902.1888.

#### BASEMENT PROTECTION PROGRAM (BPP)

The Basement Protection Program provides customers with backwater valve installations on basement plumbing fixtures to prevent customers' properties from flooding during intense rain storms. Call 215.685.6300, or visit:

[www.phila.gov/water/bpp](http://www.phila.gov/water/bpp).



## HOMEOWNERS EMERGENCY LOAN PROGRAM (HELP)

HELP is a five-year zero-interest repair loan program only for homeowners in imminent danger of being shut off because of a **Notice of Defect**. Loans are also available for customers who wish to replace a lead service/supply line. Customers on our Tiered Assistance Program may request an extended loan payment period up to 15 years. To apply or get more information call 215.685.4901 or use our downloadable application at: [www.phila.gov/water/helploan](http://www.phila.gov/water/helploan).



## Shutoffs

### REASONS FOR WATER SHUTOFF

#### Non-Payment

You have not paid your bill, and did not respond to a prior notice.

#### Unauthorized Restoration

Your service was improperly restored after a previous shutoff.

#### Meter Non-Compliance

We have been unable to access the water meter. You must have a functioning and accessible meter.

#### Notice of Defect

These may be given due to a leak that you have failed to fix.

### TO RESTORE YOUR WATER

#### FOR NON-PAYMENT, OR UNAUTHORIZED RESTORATION:

**First**, pay the amount due. **Then**, call **215.685.6300** to verify your payment **OR** to set up a payment agreement. See charges on the next page.

#### FOR METER NON-COMPLIANCE:

Schedule a meter appointment. Call **215.685.6300**.

#### FOR NOTICE OF DEFECT (NOD):

Your broken plumbing must be repaired to protect the health and safety of you and your neighbors.

#### Options to consider before making the repair:

- **Hire a licensed plumber** without assistance from the City or visit the city's website for a list of licensed plumbers: [www.phila.gov/li](http://www.phila.gov/li). Obtain a few estimates.
- **Enroll in PWD's interest-free HELP Loan program** listed at the top of this page.
- **Enroll in PHDC's Basic Systems Repair**. Free repairs for eligible low-income customers. Visit [www.phdchousing.org](http://www.phdchousing.org) and choose "home repair" or call 215.448.2160.

## SHUTOFF CHARGES

You must pay restoration charges. If we could not access your property's curb stop to shut the water off, or if you tamper with your meter, you will have to pay additional charges as shown below. *\*Meter tampering and curbstop/sidewalk charges will appear on a future water bill.*

### **Shut off / Restoration**

Service line 2" and smaller **\$60**

Service line larger than 2" **\$140**

### **Meter Tampering**

Depending on meter size **\$120–\$580**

### **Curb stop access & sidewalk repair charges**

Curb box obstructed/missing/ requires digging **\$420**

Curb box obstructed/missing/requires digging + repaving **\$820**

Curb box requires replacement **\$630**

Curb box requires replacement + sidewalk paving **\$865**

Digging required and shut off at main **\$1,985**

## FIRE PROTECTION

Suspension of water service may affect your fire suppression system if the property is served by a single/combined domestic and fire service line.

## DELAYING SHUTOFF FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCY

If you are sick and need water service for health reasons, the Water Revenue Bureau may delay the shutoff of your services for 30 days. To request a delay, you must call 215.685.6300 or send a request to the Bureau that includes the following:

### **1. A letter that says:**

- Having your water shut off will prevent you from getting better.
- You understand that your service will be shut off at the end of the delay period if you haven't paid your entire bill or entered into a payment agreement by then.

### **2. An official doctor's note stating that you have a serious illness and how long it will take you to get better.** Send your shutoff delay request to:

#### **Water Revenue Bureau**

P.O. Box 41496

Philadelphia, PA 19101-1496

You can fax medical documentation to 215.686.2711

Please note: Medical delay request documentation must be on file with us within seven business days of the original request.



## Water Infrastructure In Philadelphia

The Philadelphia Water Department is responsible for the maintenance and operation of all public water mains and sewers, over 25,000 fire hydrants, and more than 72,000 storm drain inlets. PWD employees take their jobs seriously. We are responsible for delivering top-quality, safe, and affordable drinking water to **all of our customers**. And, as civil servants to the City of Philadelphia, **each one of our nearly 2,000 employees is also a customer**, depending on reliable access to clean water for their families.

PWD operates three drinking water treatment plants, three wastewater treatment plants, multiple intake locations on the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers, and a renowned laboratory that allows us to constantly sample and test our source water and treated water.

We sample multiple times throughout the day, exceeding required testing standards to ensure that tap water in Philadelphia is always top quality and safe to drink. We are often ahead of the curve, meeting all state and federal guidelines and meeting or exceeding all industry standards in every facet of our work. The Water Department is a 24/7 operation, with employees working around the clock to handle emergencies as they arise.

With thousands of miles of pipes to care for, we rely on customers to report leaks and other issues. Don't assume someone else already reported a problem: call our hotline right away, 24 hours a day at 215.685.6300.



**After a break is reported, what does it take to fix it?**



## IDENTIFY

Inspectors assess the problem.



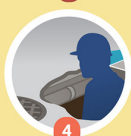
## CONTAIN

Emergency crew shuts down the main.



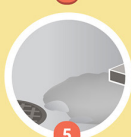
## PINPOINT

PA One Call helps coordinate other utilities.



## REPAIR

A repair crew digs, repairs, and disinfects.



## RESTORE

The road is patched until Streets Dept. can repair it.

## Service Interruptions from Breaks, Repairs & Replacements

If you see water leaking from the street or sidewalk or believe leaking water is causing the pavement to cave in, please call our 24-hour water emergency hotline at 215.685.6300 immediately.

A PWD crew will be dispatched to your location to investigate and determine the best next steps.

In the event of a water main break, crews will begin repairs as soon as possible. Most repairs take approximately 8-10 hours from start to finish. If a leak is caused by a defective sewer, PWD will make the necessary repairs to both the sewer and the street.

It is important to note that water in the street may not always be caused by a water main break, and is sometimes traced to a broken customer service line or sewer lateral. If a leak is traced to a broken customer service line or sewer lateral, the homeowner will be responsible for repairing their pipes.

As you are our eyes on the ground, we ask that you report any incident on the street so we can properly address the situation!

## Water Construction and Capital Improvement Jobs

The Water Department works hard to ensure that we are continually maintaining and upgrading our infrastructure. Find a listing of current projects at: [www.phila.gov/water/notifications](http://www.phila.gov/water/notifications).

Each year, PWD replaces dozens of miles of water mains and sewers. With any construction job, we understand that it can be inconvenient, noisy, and messy. We work hard to provide our customers with as much notification and information as possible so they know what to expect.



To keep you up to date and informed throughout the process of replacing mains and sewers, PWD and our contractors provide services like neighborhood outreach, street cleaning and paving, and posting of signage when necessary.

## Replacing Supply and Service Lines During Main Replacement

When PWD replaces a water main, we look at the customer-owned pipe that runs from the water main to the curb stop shutoff valve. If we find that you have a service/supply line made from lead, we will replace the entire line, right up to the water meter in your home. Learn more about lead service line replacement during water main construction at: [www.phila.gov/water/lead](http://www.phila.gov/water/lead) or call 215.685.6300.



Our construction team is dedicated to making sure our customers' needs are met to the best of their ability under the circumstances.

Minor disruptions of water service should be expected during construction, resulting

in the loss of water service for 1-2 hours while house connections to new pipes are made and for 4-8 hours while water main connections are completed. Residents will be notified when water service outages are anticipated.

Because water mains and sewers are designed to last for more than a century in most cases, you may never see PWD construction on your block.

If we do replace your water main or sewer, understand that it is an investment in your community that ensures safe water and improves home values by reducing the likelihood of a water main break or sewer collapse and potential property damage.

# Protecting Our Waterways

The Philadelphia Water Department works extensively with organizations throughout the region in an effort to protect our waterways, including Philadelphia's seven watersheds: **Darby-Cobbs, Delaware, Pennypack, Poquessing, Schuylkill, Tookany/Tacony-Frankford, and Wissahickon.**

These partnerships enable communities to participate in protecting and improving our rivers and creeks. Through public outreach initiatives, watershed assessments and watershed management plans, we work with these groups in reconnecting Philadelphia residents and their waterways.

Some of our watershed partners include:

**Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership** • [www.ttfwatershed.org](http://www.ttfwatershed.org)  
4500 Worth St., Philadelphia, PA 19124  
215.844.8100

**Partnership for the Delaware Estuary** • [www.delawareestuary.org](http://www.delawareestuary.org)  
110 South Poplar Street, Suite 202, Wilmington, DE 19801  
302.655.4990 • [Info@delawareestuary.org](mailto:Info@delawareestuary.org)

**Schuylkill Action Network** • [www.schuylkillwaters.org](http://www.schuylkillwaters.org)

**Pennsylvania Horticultural Society** • [www.phsonline.org](http://www.phsonline.org)  
100 N. 20th Street - 5th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103  
215.988.8800

**Pennsylvania Environmental Council** • [pecpa.org](http://pecpa.org)  
1315 Walnut Street, Suite 532, Philadelphia, PA 19107  
215.545.4570

**Cobbs Creek Environmental Education Center**  
700 Cobbs Creek Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19143  
215.685.1900

**Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association** • [www.wvwa.org](http://www.wvwa.org)  
Four Mills Barn and Nature Reserve, 12 Morris Road, Ambler, PA 19002  
215.646.8866 • [info@wvwa.org](mailto:info@wvwa.org)

**The Friends of the Wissahickon** • [www.fow.org](http://www.fow.org)  
40 W. Evergreen Avenue, Suite 108, Philadelphia, PA 19118-3324  
215.247.0417

**Friends of Poquessing Watershed** • [www.friendsfopoquessing.org](http://www.friendsfopoquessing.org)  
 2000 Bennett Road, Suite 305, Philadelphia, PA 19116  
 215.638.0832

**Friends of Pennypack Park** • [www.friendsfopennypackpark.org](http://www.friendsfopennypackpark.org)  
 8600 Verree Rd. Phila., PA 19115  
 215.934.7275 • [friendspennypack@comcast.net](mailto:friendspennypack@comcast.net)

More information about watershed partners can be found at:  
[www.phillywatersheds.org](http://www.phillywatersheds.org)

## Green City, Clean Waters Program

Today, stormwater runoff and sewer overflows caused by excess stormwater represent the biggest sources of pollution impacting our waterways within the city. State and federal regulations require Philadelphia to make improvements reducing these pollution sources.

The Water Department works with homeowners, businesses, communities and others across the region who share our waterways to manage stormwater in a smart way. The *Green City, Clean Waters* program is Philadelphia's plan to reduce stormwater runoff using green infrastructure tools such as rain gardens, rain barrels and other green projects.

Green stormwater tools help reduce pollution in our waterways by slowing, filtering, and consuming rainfall while beautifying neighborhoods and making Philadelphia a greener place to live. *Green City, Clean Waters* was launched in 2011 and has since added green stormwater tools to hundreds of sites in our communities. PWD is on track to reduce stormwater pollution in the city by 85 percent by 2036.





## How Homeowners Can Get Involved

### RAIN CHECK

Philadelphia residents can do their part and reduce stormwater pollution by signing up for a free Rain Check workshop at:

[www.pwdraincheck.org](http://www.pwdraincheck.org)

Established by PWD in 2012, Rain Check helps residents manage stormwater runoff at home with landscape improvements and other tools that manage stormwater. After attending a workshop, participants can get a free

rain barrel. Downspout planters, rain gardens and special rain-absorbing bricks and paving can be installed at a reduced price with the help of certified contractors.

This program is funded by PWD and managed by the **Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS)** in partnership with the **Sustainable Business Network (SBN)**.

Check [www.pwdraincheck.org](http://www.pwdraincheck.org) for an upcoming workshop to get started on your home greening project.

### PRACTICE SMART STORMWATER TIPS

As a homeowner, you can also help keep our water clean and reduce stormwater pollution by using fewer chemicals outside, reducing rain-repelling surfaces like driveways, planting native trees and plants, and remembering that only rain goes down the storm drain.

For detailed information about preventing stormwater pollution, see our Homeowners Guide to Stormwater Management at the Stormwater section of [www.phila.gov/water](http://www.phila.gov/water) or request a free copy by calling 215.685.6300.

# Top Customer Concerns

## I don't have water.

Is there something going on?

There are many reasons customers experience water loss, including construction in the area, frozen pipes, water main breaks, shut off water due to a Notice of Defect, and more.

**If you do not have water or are experiencing low flow (pressure) and are current on your bill, call our water emergency hotline at 215.685.6300. If there are freezing temperatures and your neighbors have water, see page 13 to learn about frozen pipes.**

## My water was shut off!

How do I get it turned back on?

**FIRST: Find out why it was shut off—** Late payment, a Notice of Defect, not allowing the PWD to read or repair your meter, a water main break in the area, etc.?

**SECOND:** You must be up to date on all outstanding bills and fees or enter into a payment agreement, allow meter access, or take the necessary steps to repair the defect noted in your issued Notice of Defect. **For more information, you must call us at 215.685.6300 or visit any of our three customer service locations.**

**There's construction on my street.** Where can I find more information?

For more information about current construction projects, **call 215.685.6300** or **visit [www.phila.gov/water/notifications](http://www.phila.gov/water/notifications).**

## How do I pay my bill?

Pay by **mail**, by **phone** at **215.685.6300**, **online** at **[www.phila.gov/revenue](http://www.phila.gov/revenue)** or **In person** at one of our three payment centers.

**TIP:** Find your Water Access Code on your bill first. See page 21 for more details.

## I have an issue with my monthly bill.

All billing is handled through our hotline. Call 215.685.6300 Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 5 pm, or email [wrb.helpdesk@phila.gov](mailto:wrb.helpdesk@phila.gov).

## My meter isn't working correctly.

Please report meter issues to our hotline at 215.685.6300. An inspector will be sent to determine if your meter is working correctly or if you need a replacement.

## QUICK REFERENCE

**I just purchased a property,**  
how do I get the name  
changed on the account?

If your deed is recorded, your account will automatically be updated by the City and you will begin to receive bills in your name. If your deed is not yet recorded, you must present your settlement statement to us at a payment center or by fax at 215.686.0199 or 215.686.6852. Questions? Call 215.685.6300.

**My water has a funny  
taste/color/smell:**

If you believe there are issues with the quality of your water, call our water emergency hotline immediately: 215.685.6300. An inspector will take samples from your property to determine if there is an issue.

**There's water in my  
basement.**

If you detect water in your basement or house, call our water emergency hotline while the water is still there: 215.685.6300. An inspector will determine where the water is coming from and recommend next steps.

**I see water on the street.**  
Who do I report that to?

If you see water on the street, please report it to our water emergency hotline at 215.685.6300. A crew will be sent out to investigate.

**A hydrant is knocked over  
and/or leaking water.**

If a hydrant is damaged, please report it to our water emergency hotline: 215.685.6300.

**There is construction on the  
street that seems unsafe.**  
Who do I call?

All worksite safety concerns should be reported to our water emergency hotline: 215.685.6300. An inspector will be sent out to investigate and determine the best next steps.

**What is stormwater & why  
am I paying for it?**

Stormwater is the water from rain or melting snow and ice that runs over our yards, streets, buildings, parking lots and other hard surfaces and ends up in our sewers. When too much water flows into sewers, this can cause overflows that flood basements and spill polluted water into our rivers and streams. Residential customers are billed a standard monthly amount based on the amount of hard, rain-repelling (impervious) surfaces on residential properties throughout the city. For more info, contact our customer service staff at 215.685.6300.

**I'm having trouble keeping up with my monthly bill.**

Can PWD help?

Don't wait until you fall behind or have your water turned off. Take advantage of assistance programs offered to customers struggling with monthly bills. Payment agreements, discounts and more can be accessed by calling the Water

Revenue Bureau at 215.685.6300. Or apply online at: [www.phila.gov/water-bill-help](http://www.phila.gov/water-bill-help).

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1101 Market St #5, Philadelphia, PA 19107  
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# A Guide for Customers

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## **PWD Customer Hotline:**

All Concerns— 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday

**215.685.6300**

**Open for Emergencies— 24/7:**

- Water main breaks
- Taste and odor complaints
- Open hydrants
- Neighborhood flooding