

CURRENTS

RAW TALK

By Interim Executive Director **Robert A. Weimar**

PWSA crews GSD while facing
record-cold temperatures



The new year brought us one of Pittsburgh's coldest winters on record. Those bitter cold days in January, combined with a few warm spells, caused a record number of water main breaks, damaged valves, and triggered service line failures across PWSA's service area. In total, PWSA and its contractors repaired over 178 water mains and 89 water service lines during the month of January. The Authority and its contractors worked in brutal conditions 24/7 to limit service disruptions to our customers. I continue to be impressed with the fortitude of our Field Operations team and their ability to Get Stuff Done (GSD),

even when Mother Nature tries to get in the way.

Over the past few days, I visited each remote work site to personally recognize our workers and give them an opportunity to ask questions about the future of PWSA. Knowing that we still have some cold days ahead of us, I provided the team with fleece hats and neck gators. The headgear is adorned with the Pgh2o logo and the GSD motto. I hope they wear this apparel with pride knowing that while most of the city sought refuge inside during record breaking cold, they were Getting Stuff Done for the public we serve.

In addition to meeting with staff in the field, I am getting out into the community with our "Get to Know Your Pgh2o" community blitz – an intensive tour to meet with residents throughout Pittsburgh's neighborhoods. I will personally attend local community group meetings each week, along with the Communications team, to discuss the future of your water, sewer, and stormwater utility. These meetings provide an opportunity to talk one-on-one with residents



and respond directly to the community on issues and concerns they may have with water quality, customer service, infrastructure needs, rates, and anything else that may be on their minds.

You might say that it's the start of a new era at PWSA. An era that puts customers, and our accountability to them, first and foremost. As we identify opportunities for renewing the organization and rebuilding our infrastructure, listening to our ratepayers is an important part of the process.

Several meetings with neighborhood community groups are scheduled through May. Later this year, PWSA will host its own community forums to have an open, engaging discussion about the future direction of their public utility. All meetings are open to the public and we encourage all of our stakeholders to participate in the discussion. More information about these meetings is available on our website at pgh2o.com/communitymeetings.

I look forward to meeting as many of our customers as possible, and I also hope to see some familiar PWSA faces out in the audience!

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COMING UP:

2018 Board Meeting Dates

March 23
April 20
May 18

Pittsburgh Black Elected Officials Coalition (PBEOC) Community Meeting

February 26
Community Empowerment Association

Green Infrastructure Open House on Negley Run

March 1
PWSA - 1200 Penn Avenue

Hazelwood Initiative Meeting

March 13
5433 Second Avenue

Stanton Heights Neighborhood Association Meeting

March 21
Sunnyside Elementary School

PWSA Connects With Local Community Groups

PWSA kicked off its plan to attend monthly community meetings with visits to the Homewood Concerned Citizens Council, Highland Park Community Council, and Elliott Community Group

Homewood was the first group to welcome Interim Executive Director Bob Weimar to their community meeting on February 7 to get updates on the changes at PWSA and what improvements to expect in the future. PWSA also attended meetings with the Highland Park Community Council and the Elliott Community Group this month.

Each community is unique, and so are the issues residents face who live there. That is why it is so important to us to interact with as many local groups as possible and become more familiar with their priorities.

Homewood Concerned Citizens Council:

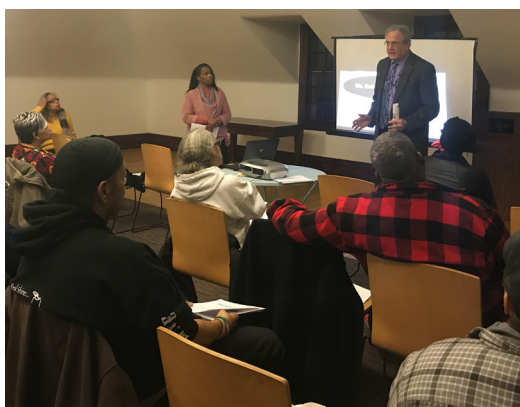
Homewood residents had questions about lead service lines and how to replace them, as well as the rate increases and assistance programs that are now being provided.

Highland Park Community Council:

Highland Park sits at the center of PWSA's open reservoir, Highland 1, which is in the midst of major improvements, including overhaul of the microfiltration plant, the reservoir, and surrounding pump stations. All of these projects will impact residents in some way.

Elliott Community Group:

Elliott residents asked about the types of improvements they can expect to see with the rate increases. Often these improvements are vast and



Interim Executive Director Bob Weimar answers question from the residents of Homewood

wide-ranging, but not always "seen," so these forums are an excellent opportunity to explain exactly how these dollars are being maximized and the benefits they will provide.

Residents at these meetings have been very engaged, and Bob Weimar enjoys meeting the people in all areas around Pittsburgh, whom he considers both valued neighbors and customers.

We hope to see as many people as possible at these events. Bob and the PWSA Communications team will stay until every question is answered.

We encourage you to visit our webpage dedicated to these meetings, which includes a regularly-updated list of locations, dates, and times:

pgh2o.com/communitymeetings



PWSA IN THE COMMUNITY

Homewood Concerned Citizens Council Meeting

February 7
Carnegie Library Homewood

PWSA Blue Ribbon Panel Public Meeting

February 6
City-County Building

Highland Park Community Council Meeting

February 15
St. Andrew's Church

Elliott Community Group

February 19
Emanuel United Methodist Church

Saw Mill Run Green Boulevard Meeting

February 21
William S. Morehead Federal Building

PWSA will be attending local neighborhood community meetings to talk with residents about PWSA's plans to improve water quality and service to customers. Interim Executive Director Bob Weimar will be available for questions and we welcome you to join us.

Please check your local neighborhood community group schedule for dates and times, or visit pgh2o.com/communitymeetings for a full list of upcoming meetings

Any community groups that would like to request a presentation for their neighborhood should contact: communications@pgh2o.com (please provide at least two weeks advance notice).

PWSA Customer Feedback

Our Customer Service team has been working hard lately to go above and beyond to help customers.

- We would like to recognize **Nicole Tarver**, who worked with a sight-impaired customer in late January. She took the time to help this customer fill out all necessary forms and make his water payment. He called in afterwards to let us know how much he appreciated her attention and help. Thanks, Nicole!
- We also want to recognize **Ramika Fields**, who worked with a customer in early February to explain, in detail, a customer's payment options and worked with them to pick the best fit. The customer let us know that Ramika is a great asset to the Authority. Thanks for your hard work, Ramika!
- **Andrew Graves** also received praise. Some of our favorite thank-yous from customers come in the form of a hand-written letter. A South Side customer recently left a friendly note for Andrew that said when Andrew stepped in to help with a leak on his street, "the problem was fixed next day. I hope PWSA recognizes the fine work that you do." We sure do! Thanks, Andrew.

During the month of January, PWSA fielded nearly 60 unique social media requests. These issues, usually related to a water main break, broken service line, hydrant, or catch basin, require timely and accurate communication with our field crews to mobilize and make repairs. The Communications team acts as an extension of customer service and tracks requests to ensure a job site is added to PWSA field crews' schedule or is given to a contractor for repairs. They are also able to direct customers to the appropriate parties for questions about billing or lead.

The PWSA FAQ page is a useful source of information on a variety of day-to-day water issues PWSA customers may experience, from temporary brown water to street restoration. Customers can read more by going to pgh2o.com/FAQ.

After a continuous issue with a sinkhole near Julius Street was repaired by crews on Valentine's Day, Pgh2o got a little love from the East End Brewing Company. Unfortunately, timing is everything.

Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority @pgh2o · Feb 14
Crews are scheduled this afternoon.

East End Brewing @EastEndBrewing · 24h
Awesomeness... will you be our valentine??? 🍷🍷🍷

Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority @pgh2o
@pgh2o

Replying to @EastEndBrewing @TheNextPGH @Pgh311

Sorry I missed this - can we celebrate a day late?? ❤️

7:56 AM - 15 Feb 2018



Eddie Valencic and Daniel Baynit rescue a student's phone on the South Side

One of the many tasks our field services crews complete daily is retrieving various lost items in storm drains. Hopefully most of us do not know the sinking feeling of watching a set of keys or a phone drop into a storm grate, but it happens! Customers often call to thank our crews for this service, and we are happy to help when we can.

Collaborate and Succeed!

PWSA hosts collaborative workshop to kick-off the Little Negley Run Green Stormwater Infrastructure Project

PWSA and the Pittsburgh District of the Army Corps of Engineers are hosting a collaborative workshop on Thursday, March 1 to provide an opportunity for public agencies and community stakeholders to share ideas on the conceptual design of the Little Negley Run Green Stormwater Infrastructure Project.

Negley Run is plagued by repeated catastrophic wet weather events. The current stormwater infrastructure was not designed to hold the volume of water that occasionally falls in the area. Through the use of innovative green infrastructure solutions, the project will separate stormwater from the sewer system to alleviate flash flooding during severe storm events.

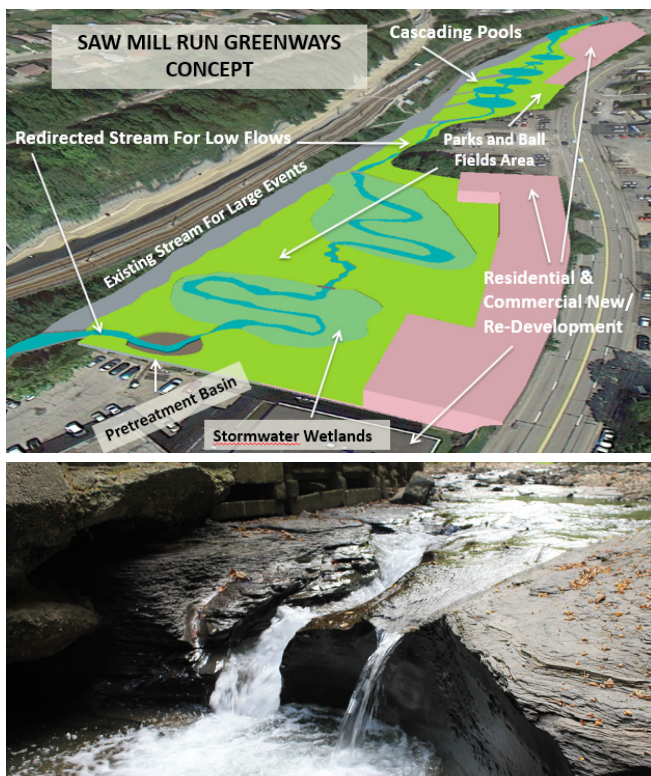
Pittsburgh neighborhoods, including Homewood, Larimer, Lincoln-Lemington, Point Breeze, and parts of East Liberty all have a direct connection to Washington Boulevard and are anxious for this project to begin. Previous studies, conducted by these neighborhoods, will help to inform the final design.

The March 1 workshop is the first of several working sessions scheduled for the Little Negley Run project. At the workshop, the design team will present the conceptual alternatives for the project and will lead a collaborative discussion to align project priorities. A collaborative effort amongst stakeholders will ensure the project's long-term success.

RSVP

Please RSVP by **2:00 p.m. on Friday, February 23** to Megan Zeigler at mzeigler@pgh2o.com and include the names of those attending from your organization.

Light refreshments will be provided



Stakeholders Convene to Discuss Green Boulevard Concept for Route 51

On Wednesday, February 21, PWSA participated in a meeting with City officials, the Saw Mill Run Watershed Association, Economic Development South, and the Army Corps of Engineers to revisit a strategy to transform the Route 51 corridor into a green boulevard. The green boulevard will enhance economic, environmental, and social health along the corridor while incorporating plans to mitigate localized flooding, manage stormwater, and improve water quality.

This is the first convening on the project, which has been considered for several years. We are looking forward to the evolution of the plans for Saw Mill Run and the opportunities it will bring to Pittsburgh's southern neighborhoods.

Equal Opportunity Contracting Program

PWSA believes that providing contracting opportunities to diverse businesses, contractors, and subcontractors will help to bolster the economic vitality of our local business community and the Pittsburgh region.

PWSA recently established a program that will promote equal contracting opportunities for minority, women, veteran, and service-disabled veteran businesses. The Equal Opportunity Contracting Program ensures that these businesses can participate in PWSA's contracting opportunities.

For all project contracts with a value of \$250,000 or more, PWSA's goal is to award 18 percent of contracts to minority owned businesses, 7 percent to women owned businesses, and 5 percent to veteran and service disabled veteran businesses. PWSA makes

every effort to meet this goal and encourages contractors to partner with these businesses when seeking subcontractors.

Businesses wishing to participate in the Equal Opportunity Program must have a certification from any government-based or nationally recognized private certifying agent. PWSA does not accept self-certification status. For more information about the Equal Opportunity Contracting Program, please visit:

pgh2o.com/equalopportunity.



Media and Press Releases

MEDIA COVERAGE

Key takeaways from our interview with Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority Interim Executive Director Robert Weimar, *PublicSource*

New PWSA leadership dedicated to transparency, righting the ship, *The Post-Gazette*

Why Has Pittsburgh Had So Many Boil Water Advisories?, *WESA*

PRESS RELEASES

The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority Announces Updated Development Procedures Manual for 2018

Get to Know Your Pgh2o Community Outreach Meetings

PWSA Announces Design-Phase of Four Drinking Water Improvement Projects

Demolition of Lanpher Reservoir Parapet Wall

Demolition of the parapet wall of the reservoir's west cell commenced on Tuesday, February 6.

The contractor removed and disposed of the parapet walls (a barrier which is an extension of a wall at the edge of a structure) and began the replacement with a metal post and rail system, which will include hooks for maintenance-type tasks in the future.

Additionally, the contractor will begin concrete rehabilitation along various areas of the Friday Road retaining wall, which will improve several zones that are currently experiencing concrete failure.



Side view of parapet wall.

Green Infrastructure Volunteer Opportunity

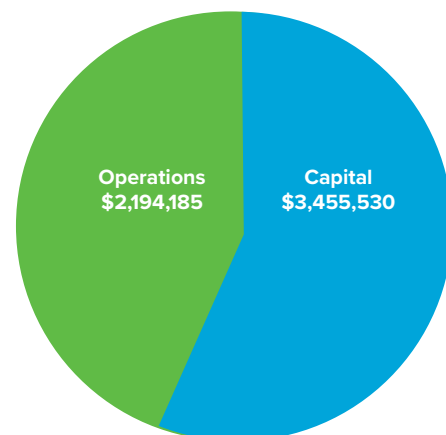
PWSA is partnering with Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) to oversee a series of volunteer workdays to plant a variety of perennials and ornamental grasses in the month of April. If individuals or groups are interested in participating, please contact Lynn McGuire-Olzak, WPC Volunteer Coordinator, at 412.586.2324 or at gardens@paconserve.org.



2018 YTD Expenditure

Report includes all paid Vendor Invoices and Contractor Pay Applications from February 1, 2018, to February 22, 2018, as well as invoices received but not yet finalized/approved.

Capital	\$3,455,530
Operations	\$2,194,185
TOTAL	\$5,649,715



PWSA Starts Work on Capital Projects Throughout Service Area

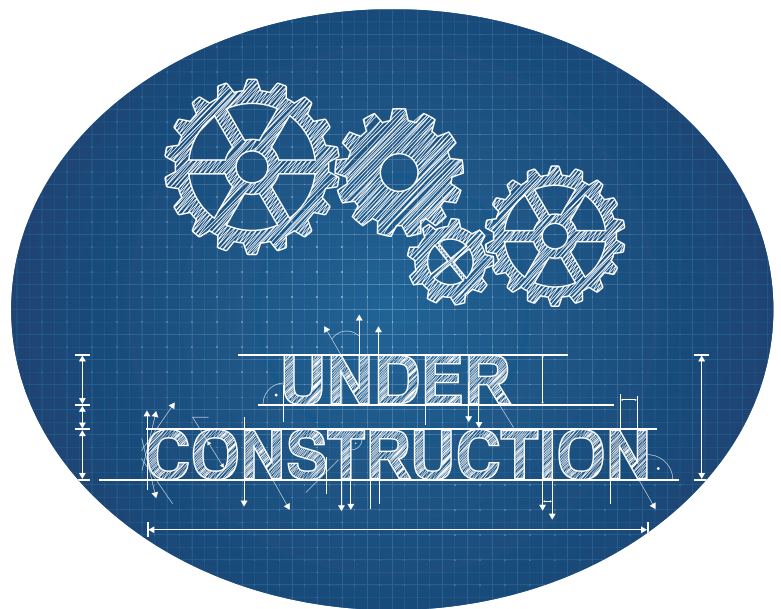
In efforts to follow through on long-term plans for infrastructure improvement, PWSA will complete the design-phase of capital improvement projects to be constructed in 2019.

Four waterline replacements projects in the Strip District, Bloomfield, Homewood, and the Borough of Millvale are currently in the design phase.

The design of these projects will take place during February through April. Work will have minimal impact to customers and will include surveys of existing utilities at the existing work site as well as geotechnical surveys. All this work is needed to meet the end-goal of a cost effective, safe, and successful construction plan. The planning and design process ensures that when it is time to break ground, we can execute our construction plan with as few hitches as possible.

The Maytide Street Stormwater Project is a green infrastructure (GI) and stormwater improvement project that will take place in the Overbrook and Carrick neighborhoods of the South End. This project will require more detailed design work to execute. Preparations will continue from now until winter of 2018, with full design completed in early 2019. PWSA employees and contractors will complete hydraulic studies of stormwater in the area as well as utility surveys. The end goal of this project is stormwater management using GI concepts as well as sanitary and stormwater sewer improvements.

To read more about PWSA's plans to renew its infrastructure and project updates you can read our [Financial Forecast for 2018](#). To see full project info sheets, visit pgh2o.com/outages.



“In 2019, hopefully you will see us in your neighborhood making lasting improvements to the water and stormwater infrastructure.”

Interim Executive Director Bob Weimar



Department of Finance Prepares PWSA to become First Municipal Authority under PUC Oversight

Earlier this month, the Department of Finance led an internal team to prepare official comments in response to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission's (PUC) tentative implementation order regarding PWSA.

The tentative order issued by PUC was the first official step as the PWSA transitions to become a water, sewer, and stormwater utility under PUC oversight. The transition is unique because PWSA will be the only municipal authority subject to PUC's rules and regulations. The tentative order proposed how the PUC will carry out its oversight with respect to establishing rates and monitoring PWSA's compliance with public utility regulations and standards.

Among its comments, PWSA requested that the previously-approved rate increase go into effect

on January 1, 2019 and remain in place until the commission approves new rates, likely in June 2019. This will allow the Authority to have the funding necessary to continue key capital improvement projects and increased maintenance levels on our assets. In addition, PWSA is voluntarily agreeing to adopt many of the PUC's policies for handling customer complaints beginning on April 2, 2018. In order to minimize impacts to customers, the Authority is also requesting the ability to use ratemaking methods that reflect

that PWSA is not an investor-owned utility and does not use rates to generate profit to shareholders.

The transition to PUC oversight requires an intensive effort from PWSA's finance, customer service, field operations, and communications teams. PWSA views this as a positive step that will reduce financial restrictions that have limited our ability to provide the services that the City of Pittsburgh deserves.

New Hires at PWSA



Debbie Lestitian
Chief of Corporate Counsel and Administration

Debbie Lestitian joined PWSA on Monday, February 12 as Chief Corporate Counsel/ Chief of Administration. Her primary

responsibilities include serving as chief legal counsel and guiding departments through changes associated with the reorganization related to PUC oversight, and recommendations of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Panel.

Since joining the PWSA Board and serving as Board Chair since May 2017, Ms. Lestitian has demonstrated steadfast leadership and has been a consistent voice through numerous challenges. During her time with the City of Pittsburgh, she earned the reputation as a 'fixer.'

Ms. Lestitian is a champion of change and will provide day-to-day leadership that is essential to our reorganization. She will have oversight of Administrative Services, Development Services, Finance, Human Resources, and Legal and Risk Management.

Her abilities will be a positive influence as we implement the Office of Performance Improvement, establish more effective processes, and create higher standards across the organization. We are excited to have Debbie Lestitian as a full-time member of PWSA.



William "BJ" McFaddin,
Deputy Director of Field Operations

William "BJ" McFaddin comes to PWSA with nearly 20 years of utility management experience and a knack for analyzing issues

and implementing successful solutions. With experience creating internal protocols for utility management, he is ready to face the challenges of ageing infrastructure as Deputy Director of PWSA's Field Operations.

BJ will support PWSA's daily operational functions such as water main breaks, sewer inspections, and valve testing. These crucial functions of a utility ensure that PWSA understands the most vulnerable portions of the system, respond quickly to emergencies, and maintain new assets with care.

New Hires

Jessica Mooney

Green Infrastructure Program & Policy Manager

George Watson

Scada Manager

Diana Szuch

Administrative Assistant - Water Production

Amber Smith

Dispatcher

Joshua Dey

Laborer - Field Operations

Coretta Nassar

Help Desk Intern

WELCOME ABOARD!

Job Postings

Interested in working with us? PWSA is looking for dedicated people to join our team. Current opportunities available at the PWSA at listed below.

Director of Engineering & Construction

Director of Water Production

Deputy Director of Finance

Senior Contract Specialist

Accounting Specialist

Environmental Compliance Coordinator

Compliance Coordinator

Compliance Analyst

Field Service Tech II

Customer Service Representative - Full Time

Customer Service Representative - Part Time

Visit www.pgh2o.com/employment to learn more.

PWSA Employee Spotlight

Brian Sites and Melissa Bizub discuss what it took to respond to January's water main breaks.

Brian Sites,
Utility Worker and
Melissa Bizub,
Laborer



PWSA responded to a record number of emergency breaks this January. Within the first two-weeks of the year, crews repaired well over 100 water mains and dozens of water service lines that broke due to weather. For comparison, crews responded to only 96 water and service breaks during the entire month of January in 2017.

Melissa Bizub and Brian Sites both work on the water operations team and share their account of what it takes to respond these calls. Melissa joined PWSA as a laborer last August. She is the only female laborer working in operations and finds this to be one of the most rewarding jobs she's ever had. Brian joined PWSA in 2008 and joined the water team two-years ago. He enjoys keeping the public happy by restoring water service when repairs are needed.

PWSA's crews are in the field, every day, repairing water main breaks and doing all they can to keep water flowing. Our crews are well trained, good at locating a break, and sleuthing out any potential problems when they dig. However,

performing these repairs presents a lot of unknowns and takes more time than one may think.

"I've always had hard working jobs, and enjoy being active, but this January pushed my limits and challenged me," Melissa said. "We are working in sub-zero temperatures to repair water breaks. Tools freeze, the water hits us like an arctic blast, and we need to take care of ourselves to stay warm. When one job is done we move on to the next."

"It's been a rough winter, and with so many breaks we have to prioritize which to fix first," Brian explained. "Public safety, water service disruption, traffic impact, and water lost from the system are all factors we use to determine which to repair first. We respond to those on the schedule and do what's necessary to get the water back on."

Crews are often waiting for a response from a third-party to locate utilities, apply public safety measures, or the delivery of a part. Most people don't realize that each job will have some

downtime. Our field crews work quickly and as effectively as they can to minimize that time.

"Unplanned, emergency repairs are hard on our customers, and we realize the frustration of being without water, especially during the winter," Brian said. "But we do what's necessary to get the job done and try to create the least amount of inconvenience."

Cold weather, fluctuating temperatures, and the age of our pipe network were all contributing factors to the breaks that occurred this January. Our crews did an incredible job responding to the number of calls to repair these breaks. However, this illustrates that we must modernize our systems and invest in our infrastructure. PWSA identified several water main replacement projects that are part of the Capital Improvement Program. We anticipate awarding the contract for these projects, with an estimated budget of \$11 million, in 2018, and construction beginning in 2019.

Visit www.pgh2o.com/employment to join our team

PGH₂O WATER WISE

Stormwater Tip

Place shoveled snow in vegetated areas; don't shovel it onto streets, into inlets, or into streams.

The more water that can be absorbed by plants or sink into the ground, the less water will run off, carrying pollutants into streams. A rain garden or other planted area is the perfect place for shoveled snow.



Water Wise

How Is Drinking Water Sourced and Treated?

PWSA draws water from the Allegheny River, this called our “source water.” The Allegheny River is a very clean source of raw water. It is taken into the treatment plant and goes through several processes before it comes out of your tap. The water goes through six treatment processes before leaving the plant to be consumed by the customer. All chemicals that are used during these steps are NSF (National Sanitation Foundation) approved.

Treated water is then pumped to the reservoirs and gravity creates pressure to push water through the system. PWSA's system of reservoirs store treated potable water and allows for water to flow downhill.

Due to the large capacity of our water plant, it takes approximately 2.5 to 3 days for the water to pass through the plant after it has been taken in from the Allegheny River. The treatment plant produces 65-75 million gallons of water a day, on average, and PWSA's water system holds two days' worth of water in case of emergencies. For more information on Water Quality, visit:

pgh2o.com/quality-drinking-water



Stay in Touch with PWSA!

Subscribe to our mailing list to receive press releases and community announcements.



PWSA is using Constant Contact to send press releases and other announcements. Please take a minute to join our mailing list to receive press releases, our monthly newsletter, and other announcements you won't want to miss. Our goal is to establish an ongoing dialogue with customers and the Pittsburgh community about water and sewer services. Subscribing to our email list is the easiest way to stay informed. Simply provide your email address to begin receiving PWSA news directly to your inbox. We will send all announcements from communications@pgh2o.com—please add us to your inbox.



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Rick Obermeier
Director of Field Services

Will Pickering
Senior Communications Manager

Julie Quigley
Director of Administration

PWSA wants to have an ongoing dialogue with our customers and the Pittsburgh community. One of the easiest ways to share information is on social media and through our new email subscription. Join us in any or all of the following ways to receive the latest about water and sewer services, projects and initiatives, our newsletter and announcements.

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