

# CURRENTS

## CUTTING THE RIBBON, SLOWING THE FLOW

PWSA completes its largest ever green stormwater project



On June 21st, we recognized the completion of the Centre and Herron green stormwater infrastructure project with representatives from the Office of Mayor Peduto, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and ALCOSAN.

The project, located in the Upper Hill District, directs stormwater runoff into a series of cascading bioswales where it will be absorbed by plants or infiltrated into the ground. Additional stormwater will be transferred through a series of pools and waterfalls to underground storage tanks and slowly released into the sewer system.

PWSA's green stormwater projects are designed to capture the first 1.5 inches of rain. This level of capture can manage 95 percent of the rain events we get in a typical year.

But there will always be larger storms that exceed

capacity. The larger storm events can create severe threats to public health, safety, and the environment. Green solutions are one method of defense against stormwater but fixing our stormwater problem requires these multi-pronged solutions.

### **Stop as much water as possible before it goes into sewers.**

Through our [comprehensive green infrastructure efforts](#), we're working to capture stormwater before it enters our sewers, reducing the need for additional and expensive "gray infrastructure" projects. The Centre and Herron project will manage one million gallons of stormwater, but we need to do much more. We are completing two other green stormwater projects this year and several others are in various phases of planning or design.

**Take responsibility for Pittsburgh's stormwater duties.** No single agency is responsible

for managing stormwater. PWSA is forming a stormwater division that will provide more consistent management to address stormwater challenges.

**Work with community partners.** Encourage companies, universities, healthcare facilities, parking garages, and residents to do what they can to reduce stormwater overflows. Every little bit helps.

**Strengthen the bigger system.** Support ALCOSAN's current plant upgrades and the regional work that is taking place to manage stormwater.

**Learn about your sewer system and take care of it.** The sewer system isn't the most glamorous part of Pittsburgh, but it belongs to all of us and it is critical to our health and safety. We all need to appreciate how it operates and do our part to keep it working.

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## COMING UP:

**2018 Board Meetings**  
September 28  
October 26  
(no August meeting)

**Red Oak and Hayson Community Meeting**  
August 8  
459 Crane Avenue

**Mt. Washington Community Development Corporation**  
August 16  
Mt. Washington Senior Center

**Lawrenceville 9th Ward**  
August 21  
TBD

**Oakland Community Town Hall**  
August 27  
Oakland Career Center

**Uptown Partners**  
September 12  
Life'sWork of Western PA

**Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition**  
September 20  
Jewish Community Center

# RAW TALK

By Executive Director Robert A. Weimar



## Renewing PWSA is our mission

The entire team is committed to restoring PWSA as a trusted publicly-owned utility. With support from our Board, we have the fiscal resources and staffing to deliver the programs and policies that have been lacking for too long.

We are solidifying relationships with our state and federal regulatory agencies, which are essential to our success and ability to complete priority projects. With their approval, we are better able to deliver on the lead line replacement program, coordinate water quality improvements that will help with corrosion control, and make needed improvements to critical infrastructure at Highland Park.

Our current successes demonstrate the benefit of our renewal efforts including these recent accomplishments:

### 1. Restoring the Lanpher Reservoir

The Lanpher Reservoir, which supplies Pittsburgh's North Side, has been out of service since last fall. This summer we will complete the necessary repairs to restore the reservoir and place it back into service. A project of this magnitude can take several years to complete -PWSA will complete this major facility renovation in less than 18 months.

### 2. Replacing Lead Service Lines

On June 30th, we met the mandate set by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to replace 1,341 public lead service lines. In addition to meeting the

mandate, we avoided partial lead line replacements by replacing more than 450 customer-owned lead lines.

### 3. Improving Water Quality

With new chemical feed facilities, renovated filters, and reinvestment in our lab, we continue to produce high-quality drinking water that exceeds all current standards. We are implementing plans to further enhance our treatment capabilities and system resiliency. Our most recent Lead and Copper Rule compliance testing resulted in our lowest 90th percentile level since 2010.

### 4. Responsive Customer Service

Increased staffing and renewed clarity of our customer service policies, our customer service group has improved billing, telephone call response times, and responsiveness to customers. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) has recognized our customer service staff for its compliance efforts.

Our fiscal plan submitted to the PUC on July 2nd outlines the investments we will make over the next three to five years. These investments include improvements at the Aspinwall Treatment Plant, upgrading pumping facilities, pipes, and equipment that are 50 to 100 years old, and modernizing our system with renewed automated meters and improved system security and resilience.

Our staff is committed to delivering these projects. To achieve our plan, PWSA engages many private sector partners. Already we have teamed

with water consultants, utility operators, and contractors that are supporting PWSA every step of the way. We will continue to strategically procure private sector partners as needed to deliver projects and continue to improve our utility performance.

“PWSA is dedicated to meeting the expectations of our customers and delivering quality water services. We are committed to doing this as a public utility – where profit is not our focus. Each dollar we receive is reinvested back into the water system to provide our customers with the water authority it expects and deserves.”

## Carrick and Overbrook residents weigh in on Maytide Street Stormwater Improvement Project

Carrick and Overbrook residents living near the planned stormwater improvements along Maytide Street are no strangers to the impact of stormwater runoff.



*Carrick and Overbrook residents fill the room to learn about the Maytide Street Stormwater Improvement project.*

Recent storms have brought larger volumes of water to this area. So, the community meeting held on Thursday, July 12th drew more than 40 attendees.

PWSA staff provided an overview of the project, discussed improvement strategies, and answered questions related to recent storm events and the impacts they have had on individual residents.

The project will address long-term sewer infrastructure needs including the repair and replacement of the existing

sanitary and stormwater sewers and surface restoration of Sanderson Street between Merritt and Maytide Streets. It will also stabilize the hillside in the public right-of-way and incorporate green stormwater infrastructure solutions into the project area to improve water quality.

Residents are looking forward to these improvements and are anxious for them to get started. PWSA can make some improvements in the immediate term but time is needed to complete design and field investigations before construction of the project can get fully underway.

PWSA will complete the conceptual design in September and final design will be done next February. Construction will start in the spring or summer of 2019. For more information please visit [pgh20.com/maytidestreetstormwater](http://pgh20.com/maytidestreetstormwater).



*PWSA will make the sanitary and stormwater improvements along the Sanderson Street Steps between Maytide Street and Merritt Avenue, at the intersection of Merritt and Sanderson, and between the 300 and 400 blocks of Maytide Street.*



## PWSA IN THE COMMUNITY

**PWSA engaged with the community at the following meetings:**

South Side Planning Forum  
June 25  
*Brashear Center*

Perry Hilltop Fineview Citizens Council  
June 26  
*Fineview Park*

Millvale Community Meeting  
June 27  
*Millvale Borough Building*

Wightman Park Public Meeting  
June 27  
*Jewish Community Center*

Maytide Green Public Meeting  
July 12  
*Fair Haven Church*



## PWSA Customer Feedback

Going above and beyond to help customers.

Wholey's thanks PWSA crews for work on Smallman Street



While working in the neighborhood, PWSA contractors enjoy supporting local Strip District businesses. In the past three months, crews have replaced a combined 2,675 feet of water line on Smallman Street, between 16th and 21st Streets. To thank the construction workers for their dedication to the job, Wholey's Fish Market invited them for lunch on July 12th. Manda Metzger, PWSA Project Manager, joined Independence Excavating crews for a fish sandwich with Sam Wholey to talk about the progress they were making on the project.

PWSA would like to thank Wholey's and all the Strip District merchants for working closely with us during this project. The work has a great impact on the neighborhood, but we believe these water and sewer improvements will ensure long-term infrastructure stability to this rapidly developing area.

Project updates on Smallman Street and other Capital Improvement Projects can be found at [pgh2o.com/project-updates](http://pgh2o.com/project-updates).

### Lead Service Line Replacements

Lead service line replacements have continued throughout the city this summer. We have met with hundreds of homeowners to coordinate replacing their private lead service line.

A resident in Mount Washington was very pleased, saying that "[the crews] did extra work. They're professional in what they're doing. All the way around. Every one of them, not just one guy, was nice, every one of them courteous! They wanted to make the homeowners happy and did everything possible to do so."

A customer from the Northside also appreciated the coordination and hard work, and emphasized that the entire staff was polite and helpful during the process.

### Basement Backups

PWSA worked closely with a customer in Shadyside to resolve their basement back up from the heavy rains by televising the sewer main and clearing any debris. She thanked our workers for their quick response and said it meant a great deal that we came out and worked towards a solution so quickly.

Heavy rains in the summer months can cause issues on

private properties that can be messy and frustrating. We work diligently to clean catch basins, address sewer backups, and replace failing infrastructure designed to keep water off properties and out of basements. We appreciate the public's patience while we address these problems.

### Water Main Breaks

Crews recently responded to an evening emergency water main break on Stanton Avenue. Sometimes, when there is great water loss or substantial damage to the road due to a water main break, especially late in the evening, crews cannot wait for a robocall notifying customers of a water outage in order to make repairs. It is frustrating to unexpectedly be without water, but PWSA's ultimate goal is maintaining water service.

A customer who contacted us via Twitter about this main break was directed to PWSA's 24/7 Emergency Dispatch. Dispatchers are able to answer questions about water and sewer emergencies when our administrative staff may not be available. The customer spoke to Dispatcher John O'Hara, and was very pleased he was able to promptly provide info on the repairs and a timeframe for completion.

Thank you to our Dispatchers who work day and night to help customers and give them peace of mind!

# PWSA Releases July 2018 Lead Compliance Test Results

Latest testing round is lowest 90th percentile in eight years.

On July 25th, we released the results from our most recent compliance testing for lead required by state and federal regulations. One hundred six samples were collected from homes that were determined to have, or are expected to have, lead service lines or plumbing. The results are then calculated to determine whether 10 percent of the total samples exceeded the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) lead action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb).

The 90th percentile results from the latest round of testing were 10 ppb, which is below the action level of 15 ppb. PWSA is required to perform this testing every six months until two consecutive rounds of testing produce results at or below the action level. According to EPA, there is no safe level of lead. Residents should continue to consider the recommendations provided by PWSA to reduce exposure to lead if they know or suspect they have a lead service line or plumbing.

In accordance with DEP and EPA guidelines, PWSA sent sample kits to 195 homes for testing. One hundred and six (106) residents returned their kits to PWSA's third party laboratories for analysis. The results were reviewed and the 90th percentile level was calculated by DEP. Eighty-nine percent of the samples collected were below 10 ppb. The details

of the July 2018 compliance testing results, as well as a comparison of previous testing rounds, are as follows:

- 72 have a lead concentration of less than 5.0 ppb (parts per billion)
- 22 are between 5 and 9.9 ppb
- 7 are between 10 and 14 ppb
- 0 are between 15 and 19 ppb
- 4 are between 20 and 49 ppb
- 1 is higher than 50 ppb

Range	June 2016	December 2016	June 2017	December 2017	June 2018
< 5.0 ppb	60%	48%	55%	52%	70%
5.0 to 9.9 ppb	7%	18%	23%	23%	21%
10 to 14.9 ppb	16%	16%	10%	10%	7%
15.0 to 19.9 ppb	6%	10%	5%	3%	0%
20 to 49.9 ppb	7%	8%	5%	9%	4%
50 ppb and higher	4%	1%	2%	3%	1%
90th percentile	22 ppb	18 ppb	15 ppb	21 ppb	10 ppb
Total samples taken	100	159	128	118	106

Previous compliance testing results.

The 90th percentile is not an average of the presence of lead across PWSA's water system, but rather a calculation to determine if 10 percent of the worst-case scenario sites that were sampled exceeded the lead action level. PWSA must repeat compliance testing every six months until the 90th percentile level is 15 ppb or below for two consecutive rounds of testing.

PWSA's Community Lead Response is focused on reducing lead exposure to all customers. As part of a consent order and agreement with DEP, PWSA has replaced over 1,390 lead service lines since July

2016. To reduce the health risks of partial lead line replacements, PWSA is offering no-cost private lead line replacements at homes identified under the \$44 million program.

In addition to locating lead lines and replacing them as quickly as possible, PWSA will begin adding orthophosphate to the treated drinking water this fall to reduce corrosion from lead pipes. A rigorous year-long study demonstrated that orthophosphate can reduce lead levels in PWSA's drinking water. It has also been used successfully by numerous major cities to reduce corrosion from old lead service lines.

"We've learned that the results of compliance testing are highly variable. While we're pleased that the latest results are trending downward, PWSA will not rest until we improve our water treatment using orthophosphate and replace the lead lines in our system," said PWSA Executive Director Robert A. Weimar.

**"We know what needs to be done, and we're moving full speed ahead to deliver for our customers."**

## PWSA Surpasses DEP Requirement for Lead Line Replacements

Authority replaces over 1,341 lead lines while avoiding harmful partial replacements.

PWSA surpassed its requirement to replace 1,341 lead service lines by June 30, 2018, while also replaced over 400 private lead service lines at no direct cost to customers.

PWSA's Community Lead Response is demonstrating that it is possible to meet aggressive replacement requirements while also protecting public health by avoiding partial lead line replacements.

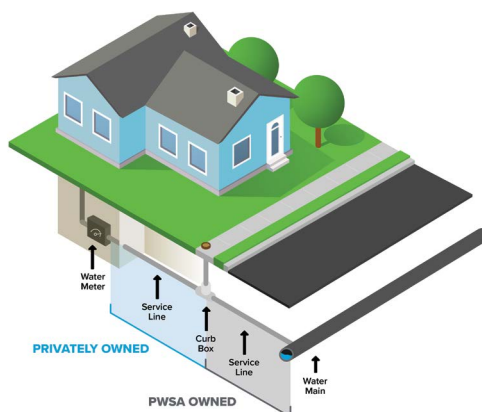
The \$44 million ratepayer-funded replacement program launched in late March 2018 and gained momentum in June due to favorable weather conditions, additional contractor and in-house PWSA crews, and extended working hours to evening and weekends. Contractors also employed innovative trenchless replacement methods, like lead line pulling, to minimize property and roadway disruption. The Authority will continue to rapidly replace lead lines through the end of the year.

"Surpassing the lead line replacement mandate is a major milestone for the Authority and the public we serve. Our comprehensive Community Lead Response is proving that we can meet the commitments we make to our regulators, while also protecting the health of our customers," said PWSA Executive Director Robert A. Weimar. "We look forward to continued success with our replacement program and the imminent water treatment upgrades that will reduce corrosion from lead service lines," he continued.

"We thank the public for their patience as we refined the replacement program to ensure we're removing lead lines from our city the right way. The Board of Directors is committed to providing the oversight

and the resources to ensure PWSA is doing everything possible to reduce the risk of lead in our water," said PWSA Board Chairman Paul Leger.

In consultation with the officials at the Allegheny County Health Department and City of Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto, PWSA halted the lead line replacement program in June 2017. PWSA's improved 2018 replacement program fully funds private lead line replacements at properties identified for public lead line replacement.



Earlier this month, PWSA posted water service line material information for an additional 20,000 properties to its searchable online map. The map now includes historical material records for over 42,000 properties in PWSA's drinking water service area. The map also includes results from recent curb box inspections, and the areas identified for lead service line replacements. Additional data related to PWSA's multiple lead programs will be posted to the map on an ongoing basis. Customers can view this information visually by neighborhood or search the records by property address at [pgh2o.com/leadmap](http://pgh2o.com/leadmap).



## Media and Press Releases

### MEDIA COVERAGE

Bioswale unveiled to manage stormwater flows in Hill District, *Post-Gazette*

PWSA says it meets state-mandated deadline for replacing lead water lines, *Tribune-Review*

PWSA tops mid-year deadline for lead line replacements, *Post-Gazette*

PWSA adds 20,000 properties to 'lead map', *Tribune-Review*

With all the kerfuffle over Pittsburgh's Water, What About its Sewers?, *WESA*

Speakers urge public ownership for PWSA at Council Hearing, *Post-Gazette*

### PRESS RELEASES

PWSA Releases July 2018 Lead Compliance Test Results

PWSA Releases Additional Lead Map Data

Community Conversations with Pittsburgh Neighborhoods

PWSA Bests DEP Requirement for Lead Line Replacements

Board of Directors Approves First-Ever PUC Rate Request

## Lanpher Reservoir in Final Phase of Restoration

Construction of the new liner and cover for the west cell of the Lanpher Reservoir began on February 19, 2018.

Installation of a new “geotextile,” which protects the liner from potential damage from the concrete lining the reservoir, is 80 percent complete.

The next step will be to inflate the west cell liner so leaks can be detected and repaired.

The final phase involves disinfecting the reservoir to pass water quality testing before putting it back into service.

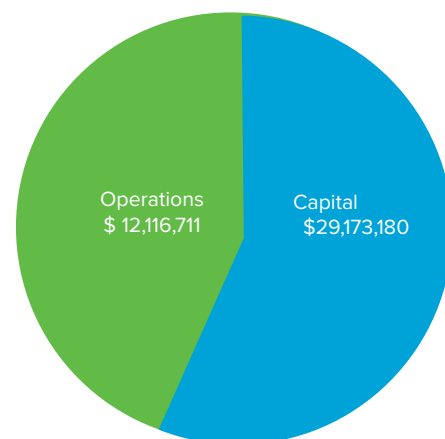
It is anticipated that the reservoir will be restored to full service by late July or early August.



## 2018 YTD Expenditure

Report includes all paid Vendor Invoices and Contractor Pay Applications from January 1, 2018, to July 24, 2018, as well as invoices received but not yet finalized/approved.

Capital	\$ 29,173,180
Operations	\$ 12,116,711
TOTAL	\$ 41,289,891





## New Hires

**Julie Asciolla**

*Business & Development Relations Manager*

**Maureen Lyons**

*Human Resources Assistant*

**John Nagel**

*Accounting Specialist*

**Frank Davis**

*Chemist I*

**Bradley McShane**

*Associate Project Manager*

**Donna Gibson**

*Customer Service Representative I*

**Lance Macklin**

*Customer Service Representative I*

**WELCOME ABOARD!**



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## Job Postings

Interested in working with us? PWSA is looking for dedicated people to join our team.

**Project Manager**, Engineering & Construction

**Project Systems Specialist**, Engineering & Construction

**GIS Specialist**, Engineering & Construction

**Customer Service Representative**, Full-time and Part-time  
Customer Service

**Director Water Production**, Field Services

**Director Engineering & Construction**,  
Engineering and Construction

Visit [www.pgh2o.com/employment](http://www.pgh2o.com/employment) to learn more.



## PWSA Employee Spotlight

### John “Jay” Carroll: Chemist II



The lab at our Water Treatment Plant is moving into a new era and John “Jay” Carroll, a Chemist II, has been a steadfast presence since 2007.

While there are many different functions within the lab, Jay is focused on water quality testing. He does this with a disciplined nature, constantly ensuring that water quality tests are acceptable.

“Water quality starts with samples from the river, goes through the plant, and to the final product that is distributed to customers. Testing is done throughout the process – 24 hours a day, 365 days a year,” Jay explained.

Jay has seen many changes take place at the lab and now they are on an upswing. Investments are being made in the equipment and technology used to test for water quality and needed staff members have been added since PWSA contracted with CWM in November to manage the lab.

“Having CWM on site has been beneficial to the operations of the lab and to PWSA overall,” Jay

explained. “Ryan, who is managing the lab, is hands-on and involved in all we’re doing. He’ll ask questions, go out in the field with the testers, and try to understand our processes. He’s very collaborative and this has created a more open and transparent environment.”

Jay is most excited to work with the new equipment. Instrumentation is his favorite and a big component of his job. The new technology is more sensitive and can measure contaminants at lower levels, which leads to more precise test results and greater confidence in the quality of our water.

PWSA’s reinvestment in the lab and the equipment needed to manage it effectively will help us regain our certification. This is an important and necessary step in becoming a fully functioning lab.

Jay is incredibly engaged in the nuances of water quality testing. PWSA customers are fortunate to have his careful, exacting eye at the lab. Throughout the day, he diligently runs water quality tests watching for the right balance of the natural organic materials found in the river and the chlorine that’s added to disinfect the water. He makes sure that the final product falls within the minimum standards and meets the regulations referenced in our [Consumer Confidence Report](#).

“There are standards we test to and the results must fall within those

standards and stay within regulated limits. This is what I watch for all day, every day,” he explained.

Jay has a bachelor’s degree in Chemistry from LaRoche College and studied Environmental Chemistry at Duquesne University. He enjoys biking around Pittsburgh and beyond. One of his favorite rides is to cycle to the top of Riverview Park and glide down.

“Our customers can have confidence that the right things are being done and we are making internal improvements.”

Visit [www.pgh2o.com/employment](http://www.pgh2o.com/employment) to learn more.



# WATER WISE

## Stormwater Tips

31.62 inches of rain this year. And counting...

If you think that's a lot of rain, it is. We're only halfway through the year and there's no sign that the rain will stop. The storms this year are stronger and more intense than any we've seen before. We are seeing the effects across the city—streams overflowing, roads flooding, and basements backing up with water and raw sewage. And that is a public health and safety issue.

Controlling stormwater is not easy. It requires coordination with community and regional partners and help from our customers. You can help by learning about our sewer system and by keeping catch basins clear of trash and debris. Learn more at [pgh2o.com/stormwater](http://pgh2o.com/stormwater).



*PWSA is building green stormwater infrastructure in Pittsburgh's neighborhoods. The recently completed project at Centre and Herron will manage more than one million gallons of annual runoff—an important step to improve public health and the environment.*



## Water Wise Tip

### Get to know your Pgh2o!

PWSA's Number One Priority is to Provide Safe and Reliable Drinking Water.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires community water systems to deliver a Consumer Confidence Report, also known as an annual drinking water quality report, to their customers. These reports provide customers information about their local drinking water quality.

PWSA's annual Water Quality Report is now available online:

[pgh2o.com/files/2017CCR.pdf](http://pgh2o.com/files/2017CCR.pdf)

If you prefer to have a hard copy sent by mail, please call Customer Service at 412.255.2423 to request a copy.



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Kate Mechler  
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Kelly Morgano  
*Human Resources Manager*

Rick Obermeier  
*Director of Field Services*

Will Pickering  
*Senior Communications Manager*

Julie Quigley  
*Director of Administration*

## Stay in Touch with PWSA!

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



Please take a minute to join our mailing list at [pgh2o.com/subscribe](http://pgh2o.com/subscribe) 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.



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 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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