

# CURRENTS

## RENEWED INVESTMENT EQUALS RESULTS!

A cultural shift at the lab benefits our drinking water customers.



*Our lab technicians are staffed and trained to monitor the water treatment process and ensure that our water quality meets or exceeds all regulations.*

The lab at the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority has undergone tremendous improvement these past two-years. In 2017, we partnered with CWM Environmental (CWM) to provide oversight and management of our lab. They have trained our staff, support day-to-day functions, and provide additional resources to facilitate long-term planning.

Our staff has since gained the accreditation to analyze water samples without the help of a third party. We are also investing in new equipment and technology to measure water quality. This is helping us

better understand the makeup of the water we draw from the Allegheny River and the effectiveness of our treatment process.

New machinery provides precise readings about our source drinking water and helps to determine the appropriate level of treatment. An area where we are seeing vast improvements is in our turbidity levels – the cloudiness of the water before and after it is treated. Using this technology, our testing and ability to monitor has improved. We are achieving lower turbidity levels than any we've seen in the past five years.

We are fortunate to have a scale replica of our treatment

plant to test new treatment methods and processes. We are now putting this resource back into service and are using it to assess a new method to improve the coagulation step of the water treatment process.

Coagulation causes the dirt and other matter found in our source water to clump together, so it is more easily separated and removed. If the new coagulation method proves effective and is approved by the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), we can expect to see even lower turbidity levels and improved water quality.

Our partnership with CWM will continue into 2020 as we take the final steps to regain our certification.

We are proud of all that the lab has accomplished. Without this renewed investment in equipment, staff, and technology, these improvements would not be possible. The lab and the men and women that work there every day are making continuous improvements to provide customers with safe, reliable drinking water. Our ratepayers can have greater confidence in the quality and safety of their drinking water when they turn on the tap.

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- 1** Water Treatment Plant Upgrades
- 2** RAW Talk
- 3** PWSA in the Community
- 5** PWSA in the News
- 6** Team PWSA
- 9** Engineering & Construction
- 10** Water Wise
- 11** PWSA Connect

### COMING UP:

#### 2019 Board Meetings

November 22

December 20

*Meetings begin at 10:00 am at 1200 Penn Avenue and are open to the public.*

#### Oakland Planning and Development

November 7

*Oakland Career Center; 6:30 pm*

#### Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

November 14

*Bloomfield-Garfield Activity Center; 6:00 pm*

#### Uptown Partners Pittsburgh

November 19

*Pittsburgh Association of the Deaf; 6:00 pm*

# RAW TALK

By Executive Director Robert A. Weimar



## One Water Summit Highlights Need for Equity in Rates, Workforce Development

In recent editions of this column, I have been focused on extolling the ability of the PWSA team to “Get Stuff Done” in our efforts to renew our infrastructure and increase our water distribution capacity. However, we also understand that we must make investments in people by dedicating time and resources to creating an organization that serves our ratepayers and our employees.

In September, I joined members of my team, Pittsburgh government officials, and local community leaders in Austin for the US Water Alliance’s One Water, One Future Summit. The Alliance is a national water sector organization with a primary goal to educate the public about the value of clean, reliable drinking water and the importance of investment in aging water systems. The Alliance recognizes that drinking water plays a key role in ensuring a high quality of life for all citizens countrywide and advocates for water sustainability. They encourage cities to address availability, quality, and affordability of water, as well as creating a local, sustainable workforce to meet these responsibilities.

Our Pittsburgh Alliance delegation is comprised of ten community leaders and senior PWSA managers. We have joined six other major Northeastern US City delegations to collaboratively address water equity, water quality, and workforce challenges. We are all facing similar challenges and are benefitting from our joint assessment of programs that have been fully tested and found successful elsewhere.

We face challenges in the coming years to address the lack of past investment and poor conditions of our utility systems. As each day passes, we are restoring your water, sewer, and stormwater systems to achieve best-in-class standards. To accomplish this, we plan to build our workforce to meet our operational, administrative, and data management needs. We will also establish a robust customer assistance program to ensure that all our rates are manageable for every one of our customers.

### Workforce Development

We cannot meet our goals without a team of skilled, dedicated public servants in every department. Moreover, we need to develop an adequate private contracting force to complete our projects on time and within our budget. Working with trade unions, recruiters, local educational institutions, and community leaders will all help to build interest in joining our team.

Providing clean, reliable drinking water to the community is a truly fulfilling career, and our enthusiastic team of professionals are testament to that. We are also spurring

professionals are testament to that. We are also spurring development and growth of local minority women’s and veterans owned businesses by establishing a new Equal Opportunity Program, adopted by our Board of Directors last month. Outside of our employee base, we must also make sure our contracted workers are meeting our employment standards. We will do this by reviewing contract submissions to ensure our vendors are paying prevailing wages and are committing to equitable hiring and sub-contracting practices. We are committed to an inclusionary workforce throughout our utility.

### Equitable Affordability Programs

We are now collaborating with the Public Utility Commission, federal and state government, and regional philanthropic foundations to develop fair and equitable financing plans for our water, sewer, and stormwater improvements. Like many other utilities, the ability for customers to afford the required investments is crucial to achieving the level of service required by the Public Utility Commission. We need to address the delicate balance between affordability and the level of investment that impacts our rates. We are also developing sustainable options to support our most disadvantaged communities to prevent disproportionate utility cost burdens.

One example of this effort is our water usage tracker which is available to all customers via our website. This system helps customers identify leaks within their home before they become costly. PWSA is dedicated to delivering common sense systems that directly benefit our customers.

PWSA’s progress to-date has been amazing to see. Everyone is dedicated to Getting Stuff Done every day to improve our organization, our services and your experience. Please let us know how we are doing!

“Our culture is becoming more professional and customer centric. We are focused on becoming a nationally recognized public utility, delivering “best in class” drinking water, wastewater collection, and stormwater related services.”



## Getting Stuff Done (GSD): Going above and beyond!

### Making Riverview Park a Better Place

We were honored as a “2019 Friend of Riverview Park” during Riverview Park Day on September 29. The award was given to us by Friends of Riverview Park for our commitment to improving Riverview Park and collaboration with the community for the design and construction of the Woods Run Stormwater Project. Thanks to Communications Project Manager Rebecca Zito, Engineer III Ana Flores, Engineering Consultant Tom Batrone, and the rest of the Stormwater Team for all their hard work to make Riverview Park a better place for stormwater management and the community!



*From left to right: Former Mayor Tom Murphy, ALCOSAN Director of Engineering and Construction Kimberly Kennedy, PWSA Senior Group Manager for Stormwater Beth Dutton, and Northside Community Development Fund Executive Director Mark Masterson.*

### PWSA is Weather-Ready!

Earlier this month, Acting Group Manager of Production George Watson received news that we were the 10,000th Ambassador to sign up for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador™ initiative, which is an effort to formally recognize NOAA partners who are improving the nation’s readiness, responsiveness, and overall resilience against extreme weather, water, and climate events.

Executive Director Robert A. Weimar said, “as the intensity and frequency of storms increase throughout Pittsburgh, it is more important than ever to create partnerships and provide residents with information to make sound weather safety decisions. We are excited about this opportunity to build a Weather-Ready Nation and will work with our partners in Pittsburgh to create a climate-resilient community.” Make sure you follow us on Twitter @pgh2o to stay up to speed with our progress as a Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador.

### Innovation in Construction

This month, PWSA received the e-Builder 2019 Innovators in Construction Award. This award recognizes organizations that demonstrate excellence in using technology to efficiently drive substantial building projects, ultimately freeing up resources that can be reinvested in the community. We use e-Builder, a cloud-based construction Program Management Information Solution (PMIS), to successfully implement our Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which focuses on sustaining cost-effective operations while optimizing our system’s asset performance and life expectancy. Through the efficiencies afforded to us by e-Builder, we’ve been able to replace more lead service lines than expected, ensure that our vendors and contractors are paid in a timely manner, and increase organization-wide access to a variety of important metrics. Kudos to everyone here at PWSA who helped make this possible!



*From left to right: e-Builder Co-Founder John Antevy PWSA Senior Manager-Project Controls Giuseppe Sciulli, PWSA Project Systems Specialist Tiffany Patton, and e-Builder President & CEO Ron Antevy.*

### Community Meeting Kudos

Our staff enjoys attending community meetings and engaging with customers in person. A representative from the Greater Park Place Neighborhood Association (GPPNA) reached out to thank Lead Service Line Replacement Program Manager Dan Duffy for speaking to their group about lead in water. He said, “Dan was an excellent presenter. I know our members really appreciated learning more about what PWSA is doing about lead. As a grandparent and long time Pittsburgher, its good to know



*Lead Service Line Replacement Program Manager Dan Duffy speaks to residents of Greater Park Place.*

our government agencies are doing things right.” Many thanks to Dan and our Lead Help Desk for the relentless efforts they put forth to improve water quality for generations to come.

## Telling Our Stormwater Story

Bloomfield-Garfield residents ask how they can help.

On October 15th, representatives from our Stormwater Division participated in the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's *State of the Neighborhood Meeting*. We spoke to residents about our stormwater management approach, completed and potential stormwater projects in the area, residential flood protection methods, and ways in which Pittsburghers can help improve stormwater issues in their community.

The Hillcrest Stormwater project, completed in 2018, is helping to reduce stormwater runoff in the Garfield neighborhood. Residents are interested in seeing more green infrastructure in their community and are curious about how they can help manage stormwater on their own properties.



Hillcrest Stormwater Project in Garfield

## The Civic Leadership Academy Visits the Water Treatment Plant

The CLA is an 11-week course giving city residents an opportunity to learn about their local government.



Environmental Compliance Manager Faith Wydra reviews the treatment process using a mosaic in the Treatment Plant lobby.

This unique program was created to foster informed, effective, and inspired community leadership. It is taught by leaders and employees of city government and authorities to share what services, operations, and resources the City provides in and for our communities; including tours, hands-on demonstrations, and informational activities that give participants an insider view of how the City of Pittsburgh operates.

Executive Director Robert A. Weimar presented information on operations, finance, capital projects, and new programs and improvements at the Authority. Participants also received a tour of the treatment plant and demonstrations of CCTV sewer inspections.

For more information on how to apply, visit the City's website at [pittsburghpa.gov/servepgh/cla/participate](http://pittsburghpa.gov/servepgh/cla/participate)



## PWSA IN THE COMMUNITY

Over the past month, we engaged with the community at the following meetings and events:

**Riverview Park Day - Stormwater Outreach**  
September 29  
Riverview Park

**Brightwood Civic Association**  
October 1  
2611 Stayton Street

**Thomas and McPherson Stormwater Project**  
October 2  
Construction Junction

**Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation**  
October 15  
Bloomfield-Garfield Activity Center

**Highland Park Community Council: Rising Main Pump Station Update**  
October 17  
St. Andrews Episcopal Church

**Interested in learning more? Please contact [rrampa@pgh2o.com](mailto:rrampa@pgh2o.com) to schedule a presentation in your community.**

# Applications Now Being Accepted for PWSA's 2019-2020 Cash Assistance Grant

We are committed to supporting our customers in need by offering financial relief for income-qualified residential customers having difficulty paying their water and sewer bills.

Our Cash Assistance Grant provides up to \$300 per year to assist eligible customers who are at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level with paying their PWSA bills. Dollar Energy Fund administers the program and is currently accepting applications for its 2019-2020 program year. Customers can call Dollar Energy at 1-866-762-2348 to apply.

PWSA's additional assistance programs include the Winter Shut Off Moratorium (available annually from December 1st through March 31st), Bill Discount Program (offering a 75 percent discount on our fixed water and wastewater conveyance charges, approximately \$26.66 per month), and the Free Lead Line Replacement Project.

Since the inception of these programs in 2018, 2,715 customers enrolled in the Winter Moratorium, 3,283 enrolled in the Bill Discount Program, 341 were approved and granted a total of \$71,595 for the Cash Assistance Program, and 339 were approved and granted a total of \$1,188,326 for the Free Lead Line Replacement Program.

More information on any of these programs can be found online at [pgh2o.com/CAP](http://pgh2o.com/CAP). Customers can review the income eligibility chart below to determine if their income, based on household size, falls within the guidelines for enrollment.

People in Household	Annual Income Eligibility (150% of Federal Poverty Level)
1	\$18,735
2	\$25,365
3	\$31,995
4	\$38,625
5	\$45,255
6	\$51,885
7	\$58,515
8	\$65,145
For more than 8 people, add this amount for each additional person.	\$6,630

People in Household	Annual Income Eligibility (250% of Federal Poverty Level)
1	\$31,225
2	\$42,275
3	\$53,325
4	\$64,375
5	\$75,425
6	\$86,475
7	\$97,525
8	\$108,575
For more than 8 people, add this amount for each additional person.	\$11,050



## Media and Press Releases

### MEDIA COVERAGE

**How Pittsburgh is funding the fight against climate change,** *Public Source*

**An Innovative Solution to Pittsburgh's Flooding Problem Could Help Many Other Flood-Prone Cities,** *weather.com*

**PWSA Accepting Grant Applications For Residents Struggling To Pay Water, Sewer Bills,** *KDKA*



Director of Public Affairs Will Pickering and Board Chairman Paul Leger were featured on *Our Region's Business (WPXI)* on September 29th. They shared information on our lead service line replacements and the new addition of orthophosphate for corrosion control.

### PRESS RELEASES

**Catching the Rain in Riverview Park,** *September 27*

## Employee Spotlight

The goal of our Human Resources Department is to optimize the potential of our employees by creating a culture of empowerment, accountability, development, and pride.



Left to Right: Kelly Morgano, Rose Salerno, Michele Schanbacher, Stacey Hamilton, and Maureen Lyons

### **Kelly Morgano** **Human Resources Manager**

Kelly's primary duties consist of overseeing the recruitment and retention process, contract negotiations, performance management, succession planning, payroll, benefits administration, internal relations, and employee training. Kelly pursued a career in human resources in order to make a difference. "I learn something new every day and find satisfaction in helping others," she said. PWSA was an appealing career option for Kelly because she considers it a privilege to work for an organization that supplies a resource as critical as water to the public. As far as challenges go, Kelly embraces managing employee relations and looks forward to continuing to adapt to innovation. "We are in a time of unprecedented change and PWSA needs to adapt and evolve to be successful," said Kelly. Outside of work she enjoys spending quality time with her family and listening to all genres of music.

### **Rose Salerno** **Human Resources Specialist**

Rose maintains department reports, coordinates union grievances, administers tests for field operations positions, as well as assisting with recruiting and interviewing. She also provides service and counseling to our employees. Regarding her pursuit of a career in human resources, Rose said, "my natural ability to be organized and past work experience of managing union and non-union employees led me to a dual degree in management and human resources." After working part-time in our customer service department while going back to school, then working for the Executive Director and Board of Directors, Rose appreciated the opportunity to learn and grow with PWSA. She enjoys the challenge of staying ahead of changing human resources laws by learning how they benefit all employees. When she's not at the office, Rose cherishes spending time with and shopping for her 19 nieces and nephews, baking, cooking, and gardening.

### **Michele Schanbacher** **Payroll Administrator**

Michele is responsible for payroll processing, which includes making sure all employees are paid correctly and in a timely manner. She also handles any issues involving paychecks such as taxes, deductions, and adjustments. While Michele was attending the University of Pittsburgh, she worked as a manager at a grocery store where one of her responsibilities was payroll. "I really enjoyed it and wanted to continue working on the payroll process," she said. Michele sees PWSA as a good fit for her career

goals because she is impressed with the work environment and benefits granted to employees. Regarding challenges, Michele said "When an employee has an issue and I can help them to resolve it - it is very rewarding." She is also very excited to be part of the implementation of a new payroll system in 2020. In her down time, Michele is kept busy by her eleven-year-old son.

### **Stacey Hamilton** **Human Resources Assistant**

Stacey plays a critical role in the onboarding process as the first person met by new hires, in addition to aiding the rest of the human resources team with any given request. She pursued a career in human resources because she believes it is the heart of an organization. "Believe it or not, human resources is a complex role that requires a developed skillset that encompasses establishing a mission, setting clear objectives, leadership, empathy, integrity, confidentiality, trustworthiness, and the ability to make tough calls when necessary," she said. Stacey enjoys being a PWSA employee because "it's public service and the work that I do impacts our employees, which in turn impacts our community." In terms of challenges, Stacey takes pleasure in having a hand in creating a positive and fair work environment for all employees. After the workday is over, Stacey spends time with her family, including her 14-month-old son and 5-year-old daughter, makes up her own soul cycle routines, and cooks.

[Continued on Page 7](#)

# Employee Spotlight

Continued from Page 6

**Maureen Lyons**  
**Human Resources Assistant**

Maureen provides assistance to the HR team, including maintenance of departmental documents, scheduling and assisting with interviews and aptitude tests, event coordination, and making sure our employees are properly equipped with safety gear. Maureen decided to pursue a career in human resources because she has always been fond of working with people and learning all the changes that are occurring in the field. Concerning PWSA, Maureen said, “after reading about all the new ideas PWSA has in store for the future of our city, I thought this would be an exciting organization to work for.” Her favorite challenges to tackle as a member of human resources are learning and keeping up with new policies and procedures in the workplace. Outside of the office, Maureen said she has “three beautiful grandchildren whom I love dearly. I have a very big family and we enjoy spending time together.”

## Wellness Fair

At the beginning of the month, PWSA held a Health and Wellness Fair for employees at the downtown office to encourage healthy habits. Biometric screenings and flu shots were provided, as well as a variety of exciting vendors including dance fitness classes and even painting with yoga sessions. The Wellness Fair was a great success and very well-received amongst employees, who look forward to making it an annual event!



## PWSA Celebrates Customer Service



National Customer Service Week is celebrated annually during the first full week of October. This year, our Customer Service Team celebrated this annual event by incorporating fun and strategic events into their day. Staff earned tickets for raffle items by assisting coworkers, or for providing excellent customer service. It was a great way to motivate the team and an important reminder that great efforts reap great rewards!

## New Hires

**Don Gawne**

*Senior Manager, Construction*

**Amiee Butch**

*Administrative Assistant, Environmental Compliance*

**Diane Hoffman**

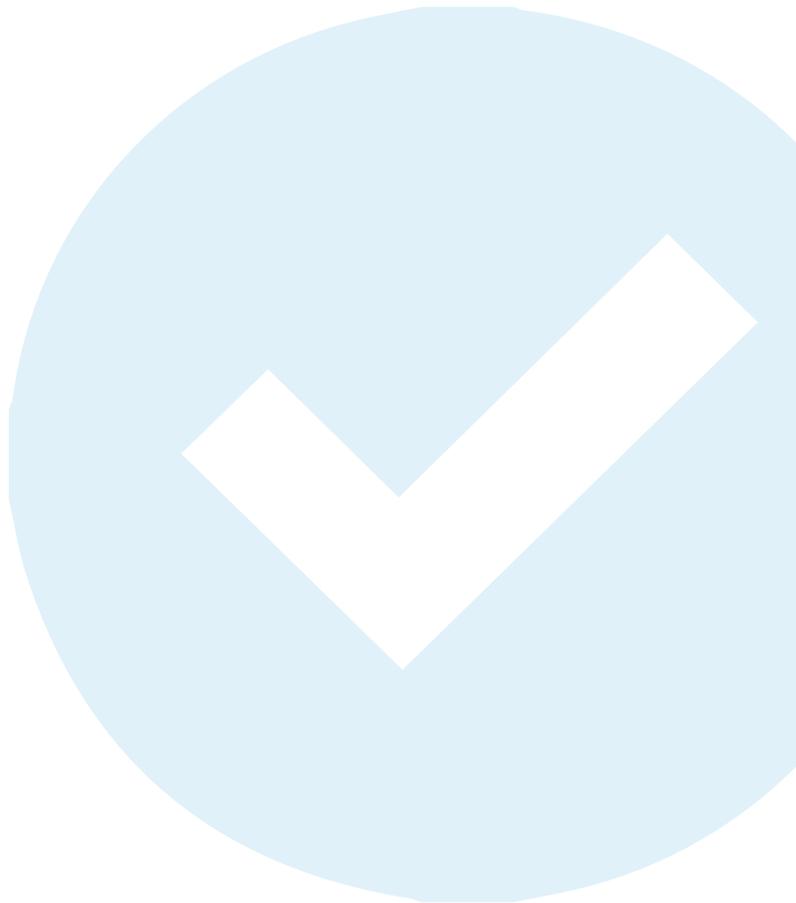
*Customer Service Representative*

**Taylor Ray-Jetter**

*Customer Service Representative*

**Anna Asturi**

*Customer Service Representative*



**WELCOME ABOARD!**

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## Job Postings

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

**Engineering Technician I**, Administration/Customer Service

**Project Manager**, Engineering & Construction

**Engineering GPS Field Tech I**, Engineering & Construction

**SCADA Technician**, Water Quality & Production

**Senior Manager Performance**, Finance

**Contract Specialist**, Finance

**Electrician**, Water Quality & Production

**Plumber**, Field Services

**Help Desk Technician II**, MIS

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

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

## Herron Hill Reservoir Restoration

As part of our continued efforts to upgrade the components of our water distribution system, we are replacing the liner and cover on the Herron Hill Reservoir in the Upper Hill District.

This work will ensure the safety and security of drinking water for our customers. Work began on the southern portion of the reservoir. Our contractor has started the process of removing the existing liner and cover, installing a new liner, cover, and other materials like rainwater removal pumps, then bringing the southern portion of the reservoir back into service. Once this work is complete, they will move onto the northern portion of the reservoir and complete the same work.

We expect this project to be complete in January of 2020.



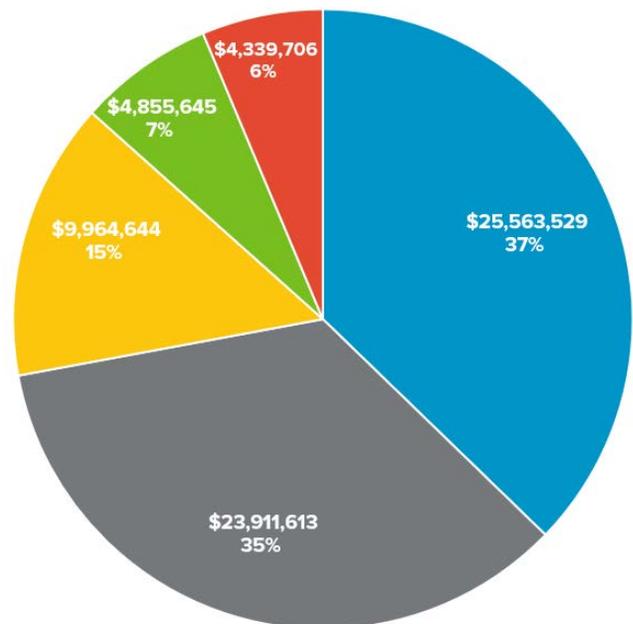
Herron Hill Reservoir, with the Herron Hill Tank in the background, before repairs.

## 2019 Capital Spending

Amounts reflect total expenditures from January 1 - October 21, 2019

- Water
- Lead
- Sewer
- Stormwater
- Other

**TOTAL: \$ 68,635,137**





# WATER WISE

## Help Keep Storm Drains Free from Fall Leaves

Fall brings us incredible foliage each year, but when the leaves eventually fall, it can be a challenge for our sewers.



Leaves have the potential to become debris that can impact the performance of our storm drains. Please remember to place your leaves in a bag for collection. We also strongly encourage our customers to carefully remove leaves from the top of a storm drain if you see this issue in your neighborhood. However, never attempt to remove a storm drain cover, only the debris on the top of it.

If a storm drain appears to be clogged, please contact our Emergency Dispatch 24/7 line at 412-255-2423 or on Twitter [@pgh2o](#) and provide an address or cross street for the location. A photo of the drain is also very helpful, as it will give us an idea of the necessary steps required for a solution. Thank you for your help in keeping our neighborhoods safe from flooding!



## Winter Water Main Breaks

Water main breaks occur any time of year, but are more likely to occur in the winter. In colder weather, freezing and thawing soil creates movement in the ground that can bend or shift water mains, and increases the pressure inside the pipe.

Winter water main breaks can become a dangerous hazard for drivers and pedestrians due to freezing temperatures. We address this by deploying our salt trucks, which are equipped with a plow, to areas where a leak presents a danger to our customers. We also coordinate with the City of Pittsburgh's Department of Public Works to apply salt in certain situations where there are multiple emergencies occurring within the same timeframe.

Please make sure your contact information is up to date on your account to ensure you receive a robocall if you are impacted by a water main break. This can be done by calling PWSA Customer Service at 412-255-2423 or selecting the "Update Contact Info" option on the righthand side our homepage at [pgh2o.com](#).





## Customer Assistance Program

Our Customer Assistance Program is designed to provide financial relief for income-qualified residential customers who are having difficulty paying their water and sewer bill.

For more information about our programs, including the Winter Shut-off Moratorium, Bill Discount, Cash Assistance, and Free Private Lead Line Replacements, please visit [pgh2o.com/CAP](http://pgh2o.com/CAP) or call Dollar Energy Fund at 866.762.2348.



## Do We Have Your Number?

Did you know that we call customers during water emergencies and outages? Please verify that we have the best number to reach you. You can even add multiple numbers for your account, so your entire household is informed about our work.

### HOW DO I UPDATE MY CONTACT INFORMATION?

Call PWSA Customer Service: [412.255.2423](tel:412.255.2423)

Or visit our website: [pgh2o.com](http://pgh2o.com) and click on “Update Contact Info”

*PWSA is committed to maintaining and protecting the confidentiality and privacy of our customers and will not share your information with third party vendors.*

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## Executive Leadership

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*Director of Finance*

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Penn Liberty Plaza 1  
1200 Penn Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

[info@pgh2o.com](mailto:info@pgh2o.com)  
T 412.255.2423  
F 412.255.2475

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