

CURRENTS

SHUT OFF MORATORIUM EXTENDED AND EXPANDED IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Decision will extend the moratorium until May 31 and waive income qualifications.



As part of the regional response to the spread of COVID-19, commonly referred to as Coronavirus, the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) is extending the Authority’s Shut Off Moratorium until May 31 and waiving the income qualification criteria to ensure that no customer is without water service during the pandemic. Customers whose water service has been recently terminated are encouraged to contact our Customer Service at 412-255-2423 to request an account review and potential service restoration.

“Given the critical importance of personal hygiene to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and the potential for economic disruptions that may present our customers with unique financial hardships that may affect their ability to pay on time, we feel

this action is necessary and appropriate to ensure that no one is without water service at this critical time,” said PWSA Board Chairman Paul Leger.

While service will not be terminated during the extended period, customers will still be billed for water and wastewater services and past-due balances will continue to accrue if payment is not made, which may result in service termination after the moratorium is lifted.

PWSA’s drinking water treatment protocol includes filtration and disinfection procedures that are effective in removing viruses. Our water is safe to drink and to use for personal hygiene activities. Customers are encouraged to follow the hygiene and social distancing guidance of the Centers for Disease Control.

We are instituting business continuity measures to ensure that service is not interrupted and critical operations continue during the pandemic.

As part of these precautions to protect essential staff, PWSA’s in-person billing and permit counters will be closed until further notice. Bills can still be paid online, by mail, or by phone. Permit applications will be accepted by email at PermitInfo@pgh2o.com. More information on permit submissions can be found at pgh2o.com.

Work that would require PWSA personnel to enter a customer’s home is being suspended except under emergency circumstances.

Updated information can be found by visiting our website at pgh2o.com/COVID-19.

“Public health and safety is PWSA’s highest priority. This action is necessary and appropriate to ensure that no one is without water service at this critical time.”

PWSA Board Chairman Paul Leger

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COMING UP:

2020 Board Meetings

- April 24
 - May 22
 - June 26
 - July 24
 - No August Meeting
 - September 25
 - October 23
 - November 20
 - December 18
- Meetings begin at 10:00 am at 1200 Penn Avenue and are open to the public.*

Due to restrictions on events from COVID-19, April meetings may be not be held in person. For the most updated information, please visit our website at pgh2o.com/events-meetings

RAW TALK

By Executive Director Robert A. Weimar



Committed to Safe and Reliable Water Service: PWSA's Response During the COVID-19 Pandemic

We are committed to providing our customers with clean, safe drinking water. During these uncertain times in our region, we want to reiterate our steadfast commitment to our customers. Our focus is on providing the vital water and sewage services that you depend on, while prioritizing the health and safety of our customers and workforce.

Customers should be assured that the COVID-19 virus does not pose a threat to drinking water safety, per the CDC and other public health authorities. Unlike a power outage or natural disaster, a pandemic does not impair our drinking water treatment capabilities. Our water treatment plant is operating normally, and our treatment procedures are effective at inactivating viruses. Tap water is safe to drink and use for personal hygiene.

We have been monitoring and preparing for the impact of COVID-19, commonly referred to as coronavirus, before cases were confirmed in Allegheny County. Our leadership team is coordinating with local public health and safety officials to be prepared for multiple scenarios as this situation unfolds.

Our actions include:

- Imposing a ban on water service shut offs, regardless of income
- Closing our in-person bill payment and permit counter as well as our bill pay drop box, located in our lobby at 1200 Penn Avenue, in favor of online options
- Reducing social interaction by eliminating non-emergency work performed inside customer homes and businesses
- Enhancing safety training for essential field personnel to ensure proper use of personal protective equipment and increasing cleaning frequency at work sites and inside vehicles
- Transitioning all staff who are able to work remotely
- Implementing technology solutions to continue to serve customers while working from home
- Engaging vendors and business partners to ensure we receive continuous supply of critical materials like water treatment chemicals
- Keeping employees and customers informed of emerging events via social media and real-time alerts



Our leadership team continues to monitor guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Pennsylvania Department of Health, and local agencies working on the response to COVID-19. Although some of our projects—such as our lead service line replacement program, which requires significant interaction and work inside homes—may be delayed, we are taking active measures to ensure that essential operations continue and core water and sewer service is not affected.

Our customers can continue to call our 24/7 emergency dispatch line at 412-255-2423 to report water emergencies. Non-urgent matters can be easily reported using our online 'Report an Issue' form: pgh2o.com/report-an-issue.

Please visit our webpage at pgh2o.com/COVID-19 for updated information on COVID-19 related operations and changes.

“We will continue to treat your drinking water to ensure it's safe and of the highest quality.”

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



Outstanding Operations

Recently, a customer reached out to thank Water Repair Foremen Ron Costa and Mike Gigliotti; Laborers Tony Johnson and Tim McCarthy; Utility Workers Billy Schempp, Aaron Kocher, and Dean Harmon; Truck Drivers Tim Rochford and Bobby Whigham; and Heavy Equipment Operator Joe Kasel for their work in making an emergency repair that restored water service to his Mount Washington home. Kudos to these dedicated employees and the rest of the Operations Department, whom we are very lucky to count on as members of Team PGH2O during this challenging time.

Dye Testing Determination

Prior to a property sale in the City of Pittsburgh, owners must submit an Evidence of Compliance Certificate Application to verify whether or not gutters, drains, or other stormwater collection is not connected to sanitary sewers. One customer who needed help with this process wrote to us that Engineering Technician Veronica Mitchell assisted him in a very timely fashion. He also said, “We had a time crunch with the closing on our current house being scheduled for April 1. And with her most professional assistance, we have been able to get everything accomplished.” Thanks for the great work, Veronica!

Successful Storm Drain Service

Earlier this month, a customer residing in the Squirrel Hill North/Point Breeze area tweeted us to thank our contractor crews for replacing a storm drain (also referred to as “catch basin”) on South Lang Avenue. Although we’ve recently made the decision to suspend non-emergency storm drain replacements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are incredibly grateful for our contractor crews and looking forward to returning to normal work schedules ASAP.



Twitter comment: “Credit where credit is due, especially given everything with COVID-19. @pgh2o fixed the catch basin here and so far there is no flooding. No snarky remarks. Just thanks to the folks who have been working hard out here. You are appreciated.”

Connecting Veterans to Jobs

PWSA tabled at an event on March 5 for veterans and their families.

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) RecruitMilitary Job Fair is an opportunity to connect service members and their spouses to employment opportunities in Western PA. With over 50 employers in attendance at the Heinz Field event, service members were able to discuss their work experience with Human Resources representatives.

Human Resources Specialist Stacey Hamilton, Senior Manager of Performance Emily Pontarelli, and Senior Manager of Operations Randy Bergia represented PWSA at the fair promoting our open positions that provide great benefits. All open positions can be found on our Careers page at pgh2o.com/about-us/careers.



Pictured from left: PWSA Human Resources Specialist Stacey Hamilton and Senior Manager of Operations Randy Bergia, hosting a table at the Veteran’s Job Fair.

Representative Ed Gainey and Clean Water Action Host Town Hall on Lead

Local agencies and state representatives shared information on lead education and assistance programs.



Pictured from left: Senator Jay Costa, PWSA Executive Director Robert A. Weimar, Wilkesburg-Penn Joint Water Authority Executive Director Nick Bianchi, and Representative Ed Gainey

Residents of Homewood and Wilkesburg gathered on March 12 to hear a panel of leaders from local agencies and organizations share their insights and talk about programs for homeowners and renters to help with lead issues in the home.

Organizations including the Allegheny County Health Department, Clean Water Action, and Women for a Healthy

Environment discussed the health implications of lead in the home. PWSA Executive Director Robert A. Weimar and Wilkesburg-Penn Joint Water Authority Executive Director Nick Bianchi fielded questions from the audience, along with Senator Jay Costa and Representative Ed Gainey. PWSA staff were on hand to talk to residents and share information on our lead service line replacement and financial assistance programs. We are grateful to Representative Gainey and Clean Water Action for the opportunity to share our solutions on this important issue with the community.

Get Ready, Get Set...Go!

The The Minority, Women, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (MWDBE) Governmental Committee hosted its 19th Annual Conference on March 5.



Attendees listen to presentations at the MWDBE Annual Conference

Comprised of eighteen regional governmental agencies including PWSA, The MWDBE Governmental Committee hosted their annual conference for Pittsburgh area businesses at the Rivers Casino. The well-attended event included inspiring opening remarks from the honorary Conference Chair and President of the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, Mark Anthony Thomas. Thomas later moderated a “fireside chat” that focused

on inclusion and diversity in government contracting and employment with a panel of regional leaders from ALCOSAN, the Port Authority, the Urban Redevelopment Authority, and Pittsburgh Public Schools.

The afternoon panel highlighted major construction projects in Pittsburgh with representatives from Turner Construction, Jacobs Engineering, PJ Dick, Interger, and BPGS Developers sharing information on how to participate in the region’s growth.

Visit PWSA’s website to view open contract opportunities:

pgh2o.com/developers-contractors-vendors/bids-opportunities/solicitations.



PWSA IN THE COMMUNITY

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

Spring Hill Civic League
March 2
Spring Hill Elementary School

Veteran and Military Career Fair
March 5
Heinz Field

MWDBE 19th Annual Conference
March 5
Rivers Casino Ballroom

31st Ward Community Action Group
March 10
Lincoln Place Presbyterian Church

Representative Ed Gainey Town Hall on Lead
March 12
Hosanna House

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Woods Run Watershed Task Force
March 12; *virtual meeting*

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Heth’s Run Watershed Task Force
March 18; *virtual meeting*

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy South 21st Street Watershed Task Force
March 19; *virtual meeting*

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Four Mile Run Watershed Task Force
March 23; *virtual meeting*

To schedule a presentation in your community, Visit pgh2o.com/request-us-event

Employee Spotlight – Water Team

Our customers can rest assured that we are working nonstop to maintain the health of our vital water distribution system.

Customers don't need to worry about whether they will be able to drink their tap water or adhere to [CDC guidelines](#) concerning hygiene during the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19, and other viruses, are killed by the disinfection process that is already a part of PWSA's daily treatment process. Customers can continue to use their tap water for drinking, cooking, and personal hygiene activities.

At our Aspinwall Water Treatment Plant, operators and stationary engineers are working around the clock to monitor the production of water. This includes making sure we have enough chemicals to treat the water and maintaining lab testing all while practicing social distancing and having non-essential employees work from home. Water Production Administrator Diana Szuch said, "We've been in close contact with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental (DEP) and Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) in order to maintain the highest quality water." Diana added that, "We're working on a rotating skilled trades crew and only working on the highest priority projects. Also, our laborers are making sure to wipe the building down daily to disinfect all the common areas. Lastly, the lab is running all required samples to ensure public safety."

Our operations team continues to work in tandem with our 24/7 dispatchers to ensure that water and sewer issues like water main breaks or leaking service lines are addressed. To keep our workers safe, we have enhanced training for field personnel to ensure proper use of personal protective equipment

(PPE), have begun to disinfect all works sites using a hospital grade electrostatic disinfection process, and have provided disinfection kits for all PWSA vehicles to ensure each vehicle is cleaned at the end of each shift. Also, according to Director of Operations William "BJ" McFaddin, "Where possible, we have reduced our workforce to emergency personnel only, and currently have approximately half of said employees working while the other half is off for a week staying isolated, on a rotating basis."

We'd also like to remind our customers to contact our 24/7

dispatch line, at 412-255-2423 (press 1), for water and sewer emergencies. Customers can also visit pgh2o.com/serviceoutages for the latest on water service outages that may affect them.

For more information on PWSA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, visit pgh2o.com/COVID-19.

"We are very grateful for our staff's commitment to serving the public, especially during this challenging time."

Water Production Administrator Diana Szuch



Project Manager, Laboratory Linda Leopold tests samples at the Water Treatment Plant in Aspinwall

New Hires

John Potanko

Program Manager - Capital Projects

Marc Frangipani

Project Manager - Production

Jonathan Seward

Chemist I

Erich Schafrick

Chemist I

Samantha Young

Inspector III, Stormwater

Quinn Kobelak

Administrative Assistant

Scott Arnold

Electrician

Shelena Jones

Account Clerk

Jeremy Root

Customer Service Representative I

Theodore Spencer

Customer Service Representative I

Alexia Williams-Dolphin

Customer Service Representative I

WELCOME ABOARD!

Job Postings

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

Senior Health and Safety Manager, Administration

Government Affairs Manager, Public Affairs

Project Manager, Engineering & Construction

Associate Project Manager, Engineering & Construction

Plant Operator, Water Quality & Production

Electrician, Water Quality & Production

Superintendent of Sewers, Field Operations

Plumber, Field Operations

IT Security Analyst, Information Technology

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

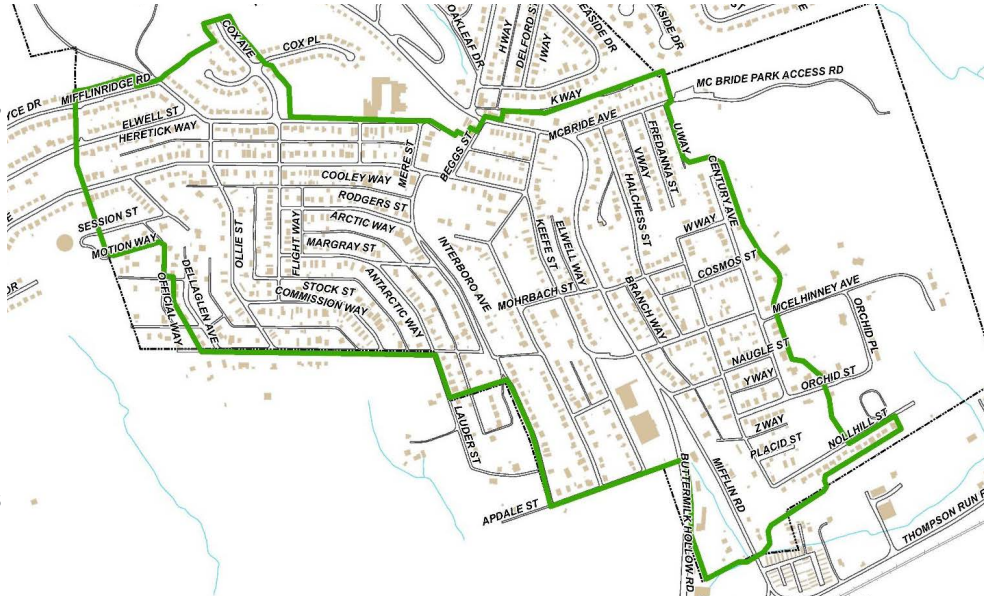
Visit pgh2o.com/about-us/careers to learn more.

Two Major Sewer Projects Slated in South Portions of Pittsburgh

In early March, we attended the 31st Ward Community Action Meeting to discuss an upcoming sewer project, the 31st Ward Sewer Reconstruction Project, that will upgrade sewer infrastructure and remove some combined sewer connections that tax the sewer system. PWSA's project team, consisting of Project Managers Manda Metzger and Toby Stutzman, as well as Construction Communications Project Manager Mora McLaughlin, presented the plans to residents and answered questions about the project's impacts.

The work will be mainly comprised of sewer lining, a process that rehabilitates the sewer by inserting a resin liner through existing sewer manholes and curing it to the inside of the pipe to repair any cracks or structural issues with the sewer. This will prolong the life of sewers in the area without having to complete costly and disruptive full sewer replacements. Crews will also be installing new storm drains in the area to better collect stormwater runoff as well as raising manholes that have been covered by asphalt or growth over the years.

In addition to work happening in the 31st Ward of the City of Pittsburgh, we will be completing a similar sewer project, the Small Diameter Sewer Reconstruction Project, in the



31st Street Ward project map

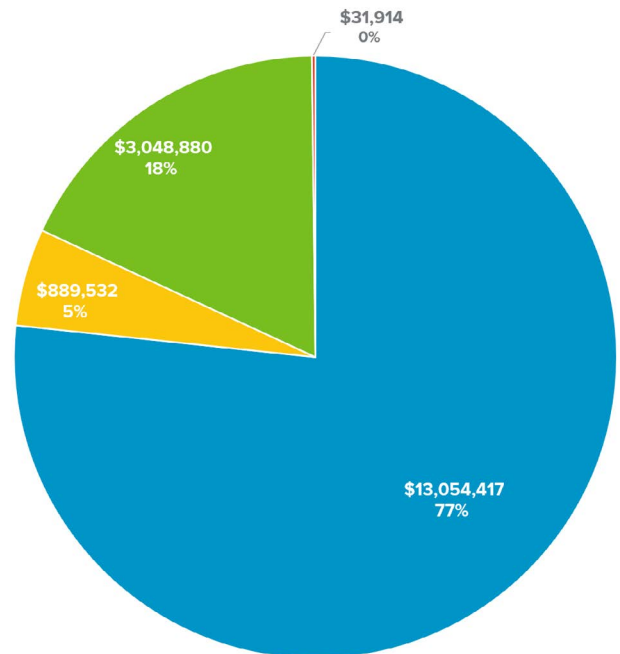
Carrick neighborhood of the city, involving sewer lining, storm drain installation, and manhole raising. These two projects combine to result in an over \$5 million investment in the two neighborhoods.

For more information on the 31st Ward Sewer Project, visit pgh2o.com/31st-ward-sewers and for the Small Diameter Sewer Reconstruction Project, visit pgh2o.com/small-diameter-sewers.

2020 Capital Spending

Amounts reflect total expenditures from January 1 - March 23, 2020

- Water
 - Sewer
 - Stormwater
 - Other
- TOTAL: \$17,024,743**





WATER WISE

Avoid Sewer Emergencies in the Time of COVID-19

With people at home, cleaning more frequently, cooking more regularly, and substituting other items for toilet paper due to shortages, we ask that residents pay close attention to the items you flush down your toilet and pour down your drain.

Wipes of any kind, used for disinfecting, the bathroom, and taking care of kids and babies can have a devastating effect on our sewer system and lead to expensive repairs for homeowners if not disposed of properly. During this time, we ask everyone to pitch in to ensure the reliability of our wastewater removal services. Follow these tips to avoid a nasty backup:

- **The myth of flushable wipes.** They aren't flushable! Their fibers do not breakdown and will clog your sewer lateral and our sewer system. Only flush #1, #2, and toilet paper. Everything else goes in the trash.
- **FOGs are equally as bad.** Fats, oils, and grease, referred to as FOGs, can also create problems. These are fatty, greasy substances such as butter, olive oil, salad dressing, food scraps, coffee grounds, mayonnaise, grease, and gravy. When poured down the drain, they form clumps and can lead to sewer backups. Dispose of FOGs in a separate can, or reusable takeout container and toss in the trash.
- **The Fatberg effect.** When flushable wipes and FOGs combine, they become huge clogs known as a "fatberg" that form and can cause breaks in home plumbing systems and our sewer infrastructure. Removing a fatberg from the sewer system is a costly expense. When they clog your sewer lateral, it's a costly repair that the homeowner incurs.



Hand Washing: Clean Hands Save Lives

As part of the regional and national response to the spread of COVID-19, commonly referred to as Coronavirus, diligent handwashing is of critical importance.

Our water treatment program includes filtration and disinfection procedures that are effective in removing viruses. It is safe for drinking, hand washing, and other personal hygiene routines.

The CDC recommends washing hands with soap and clean water for at least 20 seconds, taking care to scrub the entire hand, including underneath fingernails where germs can also hide. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. However, handwashing always remains the better option.

Learn more at [cdc.gov/handwashing](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing).





Customer Assistance Program

Our Customer Assistance Programs are 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 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? It is important to 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) (Press 5)

Or visit our website: pgh2o.com/pay

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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