

CURRENTS

RAW TALK

By Executive Director
Robert A. Weimar

Flattening the Curve: Protecting Our Essential Staff and the Public During These Uncertain Times



to have staff backup should the virus outbreak among our staff. We have also invoked mandatory health screenings for all our essential Water Treatment Plant operators and field repair and maintenance staff. These screenings include the following methods to ensure that our employees and their families stay healthy:

- Health screenings are conducted seven days a week for all essential PWSA employees.
- Water Treatment Plant operators and critical facilities repair staff are screened at the treatment plant. All field employees are required to complete health screenings at a separate location the beginning of each work shift.
- Screening stations are staffed by trained medical professionals who are taking employee temperature and asking a series of questions based on CDC guidelines.

Workforce health screenings are just one facet of our comprehensive staff COVID-19 response. We have also enhanced safety training for essential field personnel on the proper use of personal protective equipment, and

increased cleaning frequency of all work sites and PGH2O vehicles. You may find more details and continue to stay up to date with our response at pgh2o.com/covid-19.

For our customers PGH2O is extending our moratorium on water shutoffs during the COVID-19 pandemic to July 1, 2020 and waiving two additional requirements through the end of 2020 which helps our customers receive financial cash assistance to pay their water and sewer bills.

You can still reach a PWSA Customer Service Representative at 412-255-2423 (press 5) during our normal business hours Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 6 PM. After hours, you can reach our Emergency Dispatchers 24/7 by calling the 412-255-2423 (Press 1). For non-urgent matters, please consider using our easy online 'Report an Issue' form at pgh2o.com/report-an-issue.

Thank you for your patience as we all continue to navigate and overcome these unprecedented difficulties together.

No matter the challenge, I am exceedingly confident in Team PGH2O's ability to continuously deliver safe and reliable water and sewer service. Our entire organization continues to prove our readiness to resolve any challenge, regardless of scale, and that we are here to ensure that you - our customers - are always served.

As we continue to maintain our infrastructure and operations, I am proud to inform you that we are successfully confronting the immense challenge of protecting our staff and customers from the public health dangers presented by COVID-19.

At the beginning of the month, we transitioned all office staff to work remotely. We also established two independent sets of operators and repair staff

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COMING UP:

2020 Board Meetings

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 COVID-19, the May meeting may be held via teleconference. Visit pgh2o.com/events-meetings for the most updated information.

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

WATER CONNECTS US

Joining the U.S. Water Alliance in pledge to secure our water future

At the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority, we recognize that water is essential to our health and well-being during the public health crisis brought about by the global COVID-19 pandemic. During this crisis, we extended our moratorium on all water shut offs to ensure that no one is without water.

We initially made this decision on March 13th to extend the moratorium through May 31st, in response to the regional response to the Coronavirus. On April 24, we extended it again through July 31st. Extending the shutoff moratorium and waiving income qualifications ensures that our customers and their families will have continuous access to water during the pandemic.

Public health and safety are our top priorities, and it is now even more pronounced. Personal hygiene is critical to prevent the spread of the virus, and economic disruptions have presented unforeseen financial hardships. In moments of crisis, attending to the whole is more important than ever.

The pandemic is bringing to light many enduring water issues related to affordability, access, reliability, funding, and ongoing investment in critical water infrastructure. These issues are prevalent in times of stability but are much more apparent during the crisis we are facing.

A [pledge](#), developed by the US Water Alliance and supported by PWSA and more than 200 water utilities across the country, creates a framework to secure a better water future.

- **Ensure water is reliable and affordable for all.** While many water utilities have proactively taken steps to suspend water shutoffs, these actions, coupled with revenue lost from most commercial activity, heightens the affordability challenge. Federal assistance and rate structures designed to ensure affordability are needed. All levels of government must work together to provide affordable water for all.
- **Strengthen water utilities of all sizes.** Now more than ever, as water utilities implement emergency protocols to respond to the pandemic, they will need further assistance to maintain operations. Government-funded grants and low-interest loans should be dedicated to water systems most impacted by this crisis.
- **Close the water access gap.** Many rural and tribal communities have limited access to water. Emergency measures, such as water deliveries and washing stations, are needed to provide these communities with immediate access to water.
- **Fuel economic recovery by investing in water systems.** Investing in our overall water infrastructure ensures that we can continue to provide reliable water services. Reinvesting in our water systems will create valuable jobs for our region, strengthen the local economy, and gives our community the resources to thrive

By instituting a Customer Assistance Program and utilizing state funding to advance the replacement of lead service lines, we have made efforts to address these issues. There is, however, more we can do. We look forward to working with our local, state, and federal officials to assure a future where everyone can count on reliable and safe water service.



PWSA Continues to Hold Virtual Board Meetings to Protect Public Health

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



To protect public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, March and April board meetings have been held via teleconference and are still open to the public to call in. The May 22 board meeting may also be held via teleconference if social distancing measures continue. For the latest updates, visit pgh2o.com/about-us/board-board-meetings.



PWSA IN THE COMMUNITY

Due to restrictions on events from COVID-19, in-person meetings have been suspended. We look forward to engaging with our customers and neighbors after we pull through this difficult time together.

To schedule a future presentation in your community, go to: pgh2o.com/request-us-event

PWSA Offers Translation Services in Over 200 languages

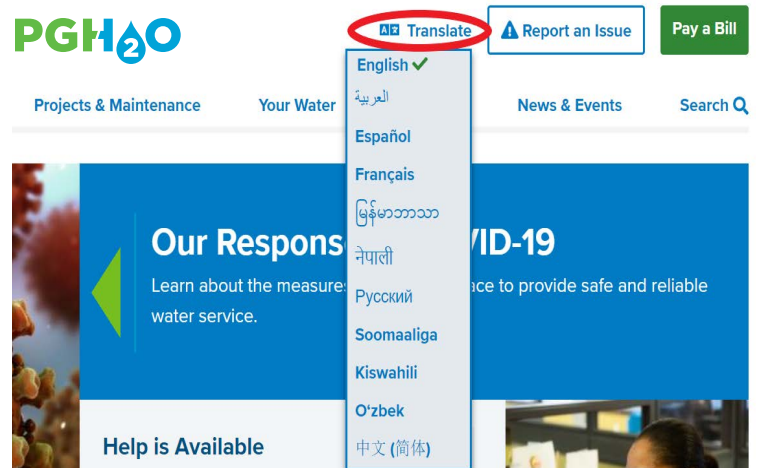
Customers can be transferred to an interpreter by request or have a PWSA letter or notice converted to a language other than English.

This service, implemented in April 2019, provides our non-English speaking customers the opportunity to talk to experienced, qualified interpreters of over 200 languages, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers to get the information they need about our programs and services. A link to the languages provided can be found here: [ULG Translation Languages](#).

If you or someone you know does not speak English well and has questions concerning their PWSA water and/or wastewater service, please call PWSA Customer Service at 412-255-2423, available Monday through Friday from 8 AM until 6 PM. Our Customer Service Representatives will need to know which language the caller speaks, and the caller will be placed on a brief hold while PWSA gets a translator on the line. The caller will then be joined to the call with both PWSA and a translator, with the translator facilitating communication.

Our website, pgh2o.com, also offers full translation in the 10 most commonly spoken languages in the City

of Pittsburgh. Look for the “Translate” button next to “Report and Issue” and “Bill Pay” in the top right corner of the desktop screen, or at the bottom of the “Menu” tab if you are on a mobile device.



Board Extends Shut Off Moratorium

Expanded assistance offerings during pandemic.



The PWSA Board extended the moratorium on water shutoffs during the COVID-19 pandemic to July 1, 2020. We had previously paused all shutoffs through May 31. The Board also waived two additional requirements for customers seeking financial assistance on bills through the end of 2020.

“We recognize that access to clean water for sanitation and proper hygiene plays a critical role in keeping our community safe and healthy,” said PWSA Board Chair Paul Leger.

Previously, our monthly Bill Discount Program required participants to recertify their income with Dollar Energy Fund every twelve months. Additionally, the Board lifted the requirement that residential customers make a sincere effort payment of \$150 and \$75 for senior citizens before they can access cash assistance grants. The Board waived both of those requirements through the end of 2020.

“We’re continuing to offer ways to ease the burden on our low-income customers during the pandemic. Administrative changes like waiving

recertification and eliminating sincere effort payments will help our customers cope in these trying times,” said PWSA Director of Administration Julie Quigley.

We encourage customers to contact Dollar Energy Fund to see if their current financial status would make them eligible for discount and assistance programs. They can be reached at 866-762-2348 and more information can be found at pgh2o.com/CAP.

Drinking water treatment protocols that we use include filtration and disinfection procedures that are effective in removing viruses. Pittsburghers can be assured that their water is safe to drink and to use for cleaning, cooking, and personal hygiene.

“We recognize that access to clean water for sanitation and proper hygiene plays a critical role in keeping our community safe and healthy.”

PWSA Board Chair Paul Leger



Media Coverage

Pittsburgh Water launches investor website in transparency move,
The Bond Buyer

Pittsburgh Organizations Going 100% Renewable Energy On Earth Day’s 50th Anniversary – PA,
PA Environmental Digest

Pittsburgh’s Plan for Combating Rising Flood Waters,
Weather.com

PUC approves PWSA lead line removal plan,
Post-Gazette

‘Flushable’ Wipes Wreaking Havoc On Sewer Pipes,
KDKA Radio

Public water suppliers say systems are safe,
Post-Gazette

Please help us curate the best newsletter we can by taking a brief survey regarding *Currents*!

Simply scan this QR code, or go to surveymonkey.com/r/PTJ5NGZ/



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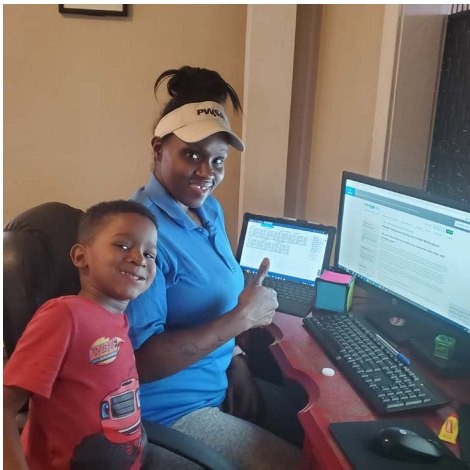
Employee Spotlight

All of our departments have responded to the challenges of COVID-19 in a completely unique fashion, keeping safety and connection with customers a priority.

Many have converted homes into office space, while others are adhering to the guidelines set forth by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and other government agencies in order to stay safe in the field. Find out below how our Management Information Systems (MIS), Customer Service, Operations, and Dispatch Departments are adapting to these current unprecedented circumstances.

Customer Service

Our dedicated Customer Service Department continues to function as a well-oiled machine from home, no matter the volume of calls they receive. “The contact center put many processes in place before COVID-19 came about, which allowed our work from home transition to take place virtually seamlessly,” said Senior Customer Service Coordinator Tishla Jones. In fact, only .3 to .8% of people abandon their call before we get to them on a daily basis! Thank you and keep up the great work!



Senior Customer Service Coordinator Tishla Jones and her son Henry III



Dispatcher Deborah Kenney

Operations

Our Operations Department ensures the delivery of safe and reliable water and sewer services by maintaining our vast network of infrastructure around the clock. As they continue to monitor our system and make vital emergency repairs, our customers can rest assured that they are doing their part to flatten the curve of COVID-19. They wear proper personal protective equipment (PPE), disinfect all works sites using a hospital grade electrostatic process, and disinfect vehicles to ensure each is cleaned at the end of each shift. Additionally, field staff is undergoing mandatory health screenings at the beginning of each shift. Kudos to our incredible Operations Department!



(Left) TV Truck Specialist Dale Juratovic; (Right) Valve and Hydrant Specialists Tony Veneziano and Tony Ficorilli

Dispatch

Our 24/7 Dispatch Department works closely with Operations and serves as a critical first step in processing a variety of issues, including water and sewer main breaks. According to Dispatcher Deborah Kenney, “Our telephones and handhelds are on standby for our field team and customers upon any emergency.” Dispatcher Amber Smith said “It has been a challenge for me [working from home] because in addition to the demands of being a dispatcher, I am monitoring my school age children who are connecting with their teachers during office hours.” Thank you for your dedication!

Management Information Services (MIS)

As soon as our Management Information Systems (MIS) Department learned of a potential impact to our normal operations, they quickly mobilized to meet the needs of the large portion of our workforce that was about to be working from home indefinitely. Their accomplishments include: upgrading our virtual private network to allow for a high volume of users; supplying desktops and laptops for staff that do not normally work from home; supplying phones so staff could take them home; training staff on setting up their equipment to successfully work from home; setting up an emergency phone line to assist those with connectivity issues; setting up a conference call process so our board meetings can be held remotely until further notice.

A special thank you is in order for our entire MIS team, who have been dedicating additional time and effort to assist users that are having any issues in addition to handling their normal day-to-day workload.



MIS Help Desk Technician II Kameron Davis

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

Inspector II
Engineering & Construction

Plant Operator
Water Quality & Production

Electrician
Water Quality & Production

Steamfitter
Field Operations

Plumber
Field Operations

Network Systems Administrator
Information Technology

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

New Hires

John Waida

Project Manager - Construction

Autumn Graham

Customer Service Representative I

WELCOME ABOARD!



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

New Customer-Focused Guide to Development Rules and Regulations



When you turn on a sink in your home or a public restroom, you expect water to come out at a constant pressure and flow down the drain at the same rate. On the surface, it seems like a simple process that has been perfected since plumbing was invented. Under the ground, it is a more complex system of pipes, connections and valves that interact in a precise manner to provide adequate water supply and sewer capacity. Plumbers and contractors dig and install connections to the public infrastructure every day. How does

PWSA ensure that all of this work will operate properly? The Procedures Manual for Developers is a document that details the rules and regulations that all developments within the PWSA service area must follow in order to obtain water and sewer service. Required approvals, design standards, and process instructions are some of the common items addressed in the manual. The current version of the manual has remained more or less the same for 20+ years. Yearly updates always ensured that latest standards are followed.

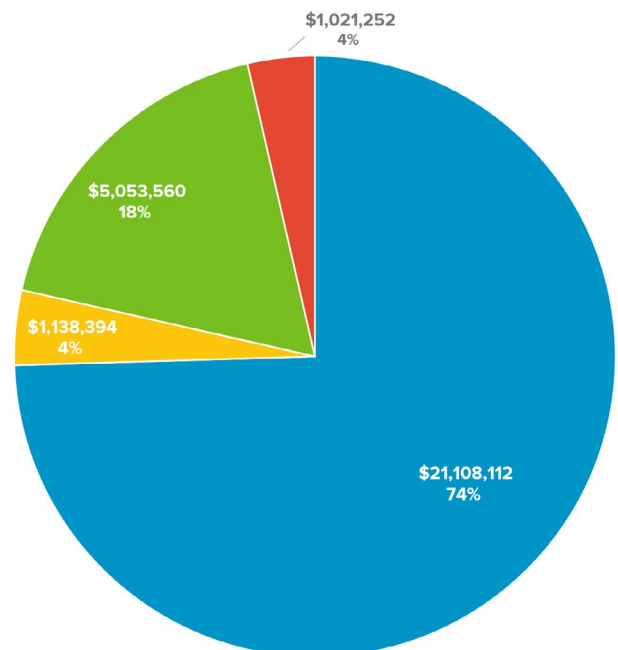
Beginning in 2019, PWSA created a cross-departmental Developer's Manual Working Group to dictate the yearly revisions. Engineers, customer service representatives, and public affairs staff met bimonthly to discuss and dissect the manual with three goals in mind: reduce Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs), communicate our standards clearly, and create a user-friendly guide for our residential and commercial customers. This process resulted in a completely revamped 2020 Developer's Manual, new title included. The revisions are intended to reduce staff time to review applications and plans, get plans approved in under two reviews, and eliminate change orders in the field.

A copy of the new manual can be reviewed at pgh2o.com/developers-contractors-vendors/developers-manual-standard-details. On May 5th, 2020 at 10:30 am, we will be holding a free webinar to discuss the changes to the manual and how it will impact development. Register at: pgh2o.com/developers-manual-webinar-rsvp.

2020 Capital Spending

Amounts reflect total expenditures from January 1 - April 16, 2020

- Water
 - Sewer
 - Stormwater
 - Other
- TOTAL: \$28,321,319**





WATER WISE

Flood Preparedness is a Shared Responsibility

As we experience more intense storms in Pittsburgh, we see more frequent sewer overflows and floods. Our goal is to better manage stormwater so that it doesn't overwhelm the capacity of the sewers during storms, so when it rains, we don't have basements backing up with raw sewage (putting families' health at risk), pollution flowing into our rivers, or flooded roads.

We encourage residents and property owners to take measures to protect their homes, buildings, and belongings from flooding. Every Pittsburgher needs to learn about and practice flood safety, especially since flash floods can occur with little to no warning.

- **Before:** Make an emergency plan, including a communications plan, with family or friends. Gather supplies in case you must leave, or utilities are cut off. Monitor the weather and emergency alerts.
- **During:** If possible, move to a safer, higher location. If told to evacuate, do so immediately. Stay off bridges over fast-moving water. Do not walk, swim, or drive through floodwaters. Turn Around, Don't Drown!
- **After:** Listen to authorities and return home only when they say it is safe. Avoid driving, except in emergencies. Avoid wading in floodwaters, which can contain dangerous debris, contamination, and electrical lines.

Learn more at pgh2o.com/flood-preparedness.



Track Usage. Conserve Water. Save Money.

With more people home during the day due to the pandemic, your household may be using more water than usual. You can track your household's real-time water usage on our online portal and sign up to receive alerts when there is a spike in water usage. Leaking toilets, faucets, showerheads, and other plumbing can waste a lot of water, but detecting and repairing leaks is often easy and can save you up to 10 percent on your water bills.



Practicing the following water conservation actions every day can also help you save money:

- Turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth to save eight gallons of water a day.
- Turn off the faucet while lathering soap when washing your hands or dishes.
- Take a shorter shower to save between two and five gallons of water each minute.
- Use an efficient dishwasher instead of washing dishes by hand and save 5,000 gallons of water each year.
- Water your plants in the morning or early evening to reduce water lost to evaporation.
- Sweep sidewalks and driveways instead of hosing off those areas.

Learn more at 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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Penn Liberty Plaza 1
1200 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Customer Service

T 412.255.2423 (Press 5)

F 412.255.2475

info@pgh2o.com

Emergency Dispatch

412.255.2423 (Press 1)

Available 24/7