GURRENTS

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

A donation to PWSA's Hardship Grant Program will help local families struggling to pay for water and wastewater services.

Pittsburgh is a city of helpers. It's engrained in our community and we all strive to lend a helping hand to someone in need. During this challenging time, we are proud to provide an additional way to help one another.

Pittsburgh residents can now contribute to our Hardship Grant Program, which directly benefits local families who are struggling to pay for basic water and wastewater services.

Since 2018, the Hardship Grant Program has helped more than 370 Pittsburgh households maintain essential water services. It was established to provide income-eligible customers with annual cash assistance to put towards their monthly water bill. We have currently distributed more than \$91,000 through the program and award an average household grant of \$285.





PWSA is expanding its **Customer Assistance** Programs to help make bills as affordable as possible for those that need it most. As we make the necessary improvements to our water and sewer infrastructure. customer protections and the affordability of our rates cannot be ignored. Our Hardship Grant Program can make a tremendous difference in the lives of many of our customers while reflecting Pittsburgh's values of helping one another.

By contributing to the Hardship Grant Program, your tax-deductible donation is distributed to income eligible households. Grants are dispersed to families with a gross household income that is at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. This means that a family of four making \$39,300 would qualify. Households can only receive a grant once every 12 months up to the maximum amount of \$300.

The Hardship Grant
Program, like our
other Customer
Assistance Programs, is
administered by Dollar
Energy Fund. For more
information about the
Hardship Grant Program
or to donate, please visit
pgh2o.com/give.

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COMING UP:

2020 Board Meetings

December 18
Meetings begin at 10:00am
and are open to the
public. Due to COVID-19,
meetings will be held via
teleconference until further
notice. Visit pgh2o.com/
events-meetings for the
most updated information.

Due to restrictions on events from COVID-19, meetings may be tentative or postponed. For the most updated information, please visit our website at pgh2o.com/eventsmeetings

DIRECTOR'S CUT

By Chief Executive Officer Will Pickering



Giving Thanks and Giving Back:

Our Hardship Grant Program provides an opportunity for Pittsburgh residents to help one another

The traditional Thanksgiving celebration with family and friends will look different this year. COVID-19 continues to spread at an alarming rate, and the best way to show our gratitude for loved ones is to follow the guidelines established by public health professionals.

No matter how we celebrate, Thanksgiving is still a time to be grateful for the things and people we care about most and to consider how we might help others. If you would like to make a difference in the lives of Pittsburgh residents, our Hardship Grant Program provides a way to benefit local families who are struggling to pay for basic water and wastewater services. Your charitable contribution stays in the community to support our customers who need it most.

During this difficult time, no one should have to choose between paying their water bill and other essential expenses. As you reflect upon all that you are grateful for this year, please consider donating to this important program. Your generosity will go a long way to help another Pittsburgh resident.

As I reflect upon this past year, I am grateful for the essential work we are doing to deliver safe and reliable water services throughout Pittsburgh. Here are some of the things that I find most meaningful:

- PWSA's decisive actions to keep our employees safe.
 We instituted a mandatory work from home policy and established health screenings for employees and contractors working in the field and at our treatment facilities. These swift actions have kept our workforce safe.
- Serving alongside a dedicated team who step up to meet every challenge. Our employees are committed to providing essential water services to Pittsburgh residents and businesses. Their strong work ethic and can-do attitude in the face of unprecedented challenges are inspirational.
- Making progress to replace aging infrastructure. We
 are advancing a series of once-in-a-generation projects
 to renew key components of our water production and
 distribution systems. We are also replacing water mains,
 removing lead lines, rehabilitating aging sewer lines, and
 constructing new stormwater infrastructure. These projects
 will strengthen our water systems and provide more reliable
 service for our customers.

- Appreciation for our customers. We appreciate
 your patience as we make the needed investment in
 our overall water system and recover from our past
 missteps. As a publicly owned utility, we never lose
 sight that this is your water, and we are committed to
 continuing to improve.
- Assisting those that need it most. We have established industry-leading programs to help customers who cannot afford their bill. Over the next year we will conduct more outreach to connect customers with the assistance they need.

On behalf of the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority, I would like to wish you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving. We appreciate your support as we work to provide the quality water services that Pittsburgh expects and deserves. To learn more about Hardship Grant Program or to donate, please visit pgh2o.com/give.

"We never want our customers to have to decide between water and other essential expenses. If you are thinking about making charitable donations this year, please consider helping another Pittsburgh family access one of the most basic needs: water."

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

Stellar Service

A customer named Emma reached out to express her satisfaction with the service she received from Customer Service Representative, Alexia Dolphin.

Emma said Alexia was "professional, kind, excellent, didn't rush through the conversation, and most importantly, didn't interrupt when I was speaking."

Thank you for the great work, Alexia!



Clerical Specialist, Carleen Kamon, and Customer Service Representative, Michael Anania, received praise from a customer for assisting with the setup of a payment plan.

"Please pass along how pleased I was with how this whole process was handled," said the customer.

The customer mentioned both Carleen and Michael by name and expressed his gratitude for how helpful they both were. Congratulations on the well-deserved praise!

Terrific Teamwork

Travis, a customer living in Lawrenceville let us know how great Customer Service Representatives Autumn Graham, Aileen Evans, Janine Garlicki, Tasha Crafton, Corporate Accounts Analyst Janice Barnett, and Compliance Analyst Zachary Larimer were in handling a billing-related manner.

"I was very impressed with everyone's knowledge and courtesy," said Travis.

Thank you for your consistently outstanding collaborative efforts, team!



Above and Beyond

During a water main repair in Squirrel Hill, Water Service Foreman, Gene Saunders, went above and beyond his duties to help a family searching for their dog.

"Thank you for being so thoughtful, attentive, and kind," wrote the family.

Thank you, Gene, for your kindness and the critical work you and the rest of our field crews are doing during these extraordinary times.

Pleasant Patience

A customer called us and asked that we recognize Customer Service Representatives Jeremy Root, Autumn Graham, and Alexia Dolphin for the help she received from them.

"They were able to show patience and were more than pleasant with me," said the customer.

Keep it up Jeremy, Autumn, and Alexia!

Celebrating the Reopening of Wightman Park

On Wednesday, October 28, PWSA joined Councilmember Erika Strassburger, Mayor Bill Peduto, the City of Pittsburgh, ALCOSAN, and other partners at a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Wightman Park Improvement Project in Squirrel Hill.

In addition to an inclusive playground, picnic pavilion, and ballfield, the park is designed to slow and capture rainwater using a stormwater cascade, a rain garden, permeable pavement, and underground storage. We are proud to celebrate the success of this innovative park project and look forward to our next phase of stormwater improvements in the neighborhood. In 2021, we plan to construct stormwater retrofits along nearby streets to capture and direct rainwater to the newly renovated park.

Learn more at pgh2o.com/wightman-park and pgh2o.com/wightman-park-2.



Community members and project partners participate in the ribbon cutting ceremony at Wightman Park.



A boardwalk over the new rain garden provides a close view of our stormwater infrastructure at work.



PGH2O IN THE COMMUNITY

Due to restrictions on events from COVID-19, in-person meetings have been suspended to protect public health.

Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging Fall Community Services Meeting October 15 Virtual events

MonOakland Mobility Virtual Public Meeting II October 29 Virtual events

Hazelwood Water Main Replacement Project Meeting November 12 Virtual meeting

Uptown Partners Community Meeting November 18

Strip District Neighbors
Town Hall Meeting
November 19
Virtual meetina

Highland Park Community Council Community Meeting November 19 Virtual meeting

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

PWSA Continues Suspension of Water Shutoffs

Prioritizes customer assistance for lower-income customers.

At our October board meeting, the PWSA Board of Directors adopted a resolution to continue the suspension of water shutoffs through March 31, 2021. This extension follows the timeline of PWSA's Winter Shutoff Moratorium and applies to all residential customers regardless of income.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have taken thoughtful steps to protect customers and make it easier to access and enroll in our Customer Assistance Programs. In addition to suspending water shutoffs, we have also waived the recertification requirements for our Bill Discount Program and the sincere effort payment typically required for those enrolled in the Hardship Grant Program. These changes are currently in effect through the end of the year.

Our recent rate settlement proposal submitted to the PUC on September 30th includes several enhancements to our assistance programs, which will be effective on or after January 14, 2021, if approved. The discount available through the Bill Discount Program would increase from 75 percent on fixed charges to 100 percent and some eligible customers could receive a 20 percent reduction on water usage charges. The threshold for our Winter Shutoff Moratorium would increase from 250 percent of the FPL to 300 percent. Under our expanded customer assistance outreach program, we hope to increase enrollment in our assistance programs and help customers reduce their bills.

"Families that are struggling to stay current on their bills are encouraged to contact us," stated Will Pickering, PWSA Executive Director. "We have simplified enrollment for our assistance programs and are offering flexible payment arrangements to



help reduce unpaid balances. We hope that our customers will take advantage of these programs during this difficult time."

Extending the suspension of water shutoffs and expanding our Customer Assistance Programs is the right thing to do. During this difficult time, when many are facing unexpected financial hardships, they should not have to choose between paying their water bill and other essential expenses. PWSA is taking every reasonable step to keep rates as low as possible and address the affordability concerns of our lower-income customers.

For more information about our Customer Assistance Programs, please visit pgh2o.com/CAP and to enroll, contact Dollar Energy Fund at (866) 762-2348. For more information about our recent rate settlement, please visit pgh2o.com/OurWaterFuture.

"Extending the shutoff moratorium for all of our residential customers until next spring is the responsible action in light of continued uncertainty from the pandemic."

PWSA Chief Executive Officer, Will Pickering



Media and Press Releases

MEDIA COVERAGE

PWSA Extends Suspension Of Water Shutoff Through March 2021, KDKA

With 200,000 customers in the region behind on utility bills, help available for many, Post-Gazette

Wightman Park reopens with new inclusive playgrounds, sustainable infrastructure, and public art, City Paper

Pittsburgh, PWSA seek proposals for innovative stormwater plan, *TribLive*

8 ways to protect Pittsburgh's streams and rivers by keeping storm drains clear, NextPittsburgh

PRESS RELEASES

PWSA Continues Suspension of Water Shutoffs, October 23

City and PWSA Seeking Proposals for Innovative Citywide Stormwater Management Master Plan, October 28

PWSA Encourages
Pittsburghers to Help Protect
Storm Drains, Streams, and
Rivers, November 9

Two Credit Agencies Affirm PWSA's Positive Bond Rating, November 20

Employee Spotlight

This past January, we welcomed our new Senior Manager of Performance, Emily Pontarelli, to Team PGH2O. With an extensive background in the public sector, Emily is a natural fit for this critical role.



After graduating from Drexel University in her hometown of Philadelphia with a business degree, Emily worked at a DC nonprofit before moving to Pittsburgh to attend the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA). Her path in public service continued when she accepted a position at a woman-owned consulting firm specializing in nonprofit strategic fundraising and planning.

Emily's last position before coming to PWSA was at the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) as a Compliance Review Specialist. There she developed policies and procedures for the URA's Supplier Diversity Program as well as compliance around minority, woman, and veteranowned vendors for the Authority's development projects. Before joining the URA, Emily worked in the City of Pittsburgh's Equal Opportunity Review Commission (EORC), whose mission includes the development of policies regarding employment opportunities for minorities and women in contracting with the City of Pittsburgh and its Authorities.

This experience was a natural fit for Emily to manage our Supplier Diversity Program. In this capacity, she strives to expand opportunities for minority, women, and veteranowner contractors to work with us.

In addition to managing our Supplier Diversity Program, Emily oversees Headwaters, our organizational improvement dashboard where the public can learn about our strategic vision and review metrics related to organizational performance and the work we do each day

"I embrace the challenge of managing Headwaters, especially during the age of remote collaboration," said Emily. "It involves working to analyze unique data collected from a wide variety of individuals across all departments."

Also managed by Emily is the delivery of our quarterly report to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC). This report addresses how we will achieve full regulatory compliance, including provisions to bring information technology, accounting, billing, collection and other operating systems and procedures into compliance with requirements applicable to jurisdictional water and wastewater utilities.

In her spare time, you can find Emily outdoors, enjoying hiking, camping, and nature. She also holds a special place in her heart for her hometown, Philadelphia, and makes the crossstate trip to see her family there whenever possible.

"I really enjoy helping other people and having a career that allows me to do that."

Job Postings

Interested in working at PWSA?

We are looking for dedicated and talented people to join our team.

Director of Human Resources

Administration

Operations Superintendent

Water Quality and Production

Laboratory Manager

Water Quality and Compliance

Plant Operator

Water Quality & Production

Electrician

Water Quality & Production

Senior Group Manager, Stormwater

Engineering & Construction

Project Manager

Engineering & Construction

Associate Project Manager

Engineering & Construction

Inspector II

Engineering & Construction

Inspector II

Field Operations

Steamfitter

Field Operations

Plumber

Field Operations

Vactor Operator

Field Operations

Laborer

Field Operations

Customer Service Representative

(Full-time and Part-time)

Customer Service

New Hires

WELCOME ABOARD!

Toby Stutzman

Senior Group Manager, Wastewater

Peter Murtagh

Field Service Technician II

Michael Kovacic Sr.

Heavy Equipment Operator

Eric Welninski

Plant Operator

exceptional lengths to acquire the best talent.
By putting our employees first, we provide a workplace that allows you to foster your career and expand your skills."

PWSA Senior Manager, Human Resources

"The secret to our

success is that we pride

ourselves in going to

PWSA Senior Manager, Human Resources Kelly Morgano

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

District Report: Stormwater Investments in District 4

Beechview, Bon Air, Brookline, Carrick, Mount Washington, and Overbrook

PWSA constructed two new stormwater management projects in District 4 this year. The Saw Mill Run Stream Restoration Project in the Overbrook neighborhood was completed in July 2020. Engineered and natural solutions were used to reduce the amount of pollution and debris entering the stream, protect against future erosion, and slow down water flow during intense storms. This project restored 310 feet of heavily eroded streambank and stabilized five storm sewer outfalls at two sites, one near Ansonia Place and the other behind the City of Pittsburgh's Accamando Center.

Learn more at pgh2o.com/SawMillRun and watch a short video about the project.

Construction of the Volunteers Field Rain Garden in the Carrick neighborhood is almost complete: the vegetation was planted in October 2020 and the finishing touches are expected in November. This engineered basin at the corner of Riota Way and Plateau Street in the park uses stones, sandy soil, and plants to capture stormwater runoff and improve water quality in the Saw Mill Run stream. We also constructed improvements to a drainage channel and storm drains next to Ballfield 2.

Learn more at pgh2o.com/volunteers-field.



A stabilized storm sewer outfall along the restored Saw Mill Run streambank behind the Accamando Center.



The completed rain garden at Volunteers Field in Carrick.

Crews Complete Inspections on Large Transmission Mains

Since late spring 2020, a small crew of experts have been hard at work in the Highland Park neighborhood completing thorough inspection of two of our largest water mains in the distribution system. Transmission mains, referred to as "Rising Mains," act like highways within our distribution system, carrying large volumes of water from one area of the system to another. The mains we are inspecting carry water from the Bruecken Pump Station to the reservoirs in Highland Park. Collected information and data will help PWSA engineers understand the condition of the pipes and determine needed repairs in the coming years.

Inspecting a long stretch of underground pipe is no easy feat. In Phase I, which occurred in May of this year, crews used a variety of remote technologies to access the pipe and collect measurements. Work began with a leak detection survey along the lengths of the pipes. Crews constructed access points along the pipe and used a tethered GPS tool that could be controlled from above ground and inspect the interior condition of the pipe. Crews also used a Smartball, which is a ball that is dropped into the pipe and can travel along the pipe collecting any evidence of leaks using acoustic sensors.

Phase II, which took place later in the year, involved tools that would give even more detail for future work. Crews drained the pipe and sent a robot to "walk" the length of the pipe, using electromagnetic signals to test the thickness of the pipe. Knowing the thickness of the pipe indicates where the pipe has worn thin and may leak.

This thorough inspection is crucial to the planning process for large infrastructure improvements like the future Rising Main Repair Project. Collecting more data means PWSA can target its repair work in the most efficient and cost-effective way.



Electromagnetic robotic tool used in Phase II to collect data on the pipe walls.

Learn more about PWSA water, sewer, and stormwater projects at pgh2o.com/projects-maintenance.

2020 Capital Spending

Surface restoration and sewer rehabilitation projects improve service and quality of life.

As of November 11th, PWSA has spent \$93,545,895 on infrastructure improvements in 2020. Looking at the projects where the most amount of spending has occurred, this reporting highlights that surface restoration, (associated with the Water Distribution System category) and sewer reconstruction within the 31st Ward, (associated with the Wastewater System category) are organizational priorities that improve service and the quality of life for our customers.

PWSA contractors are working in many Pittsburgh neighborhoods to replace water mains and lead service lines. Restoration is a significant component of these projects and directly improves the quality of life for nearby residents.

We are working as quickly as possible to restore streets

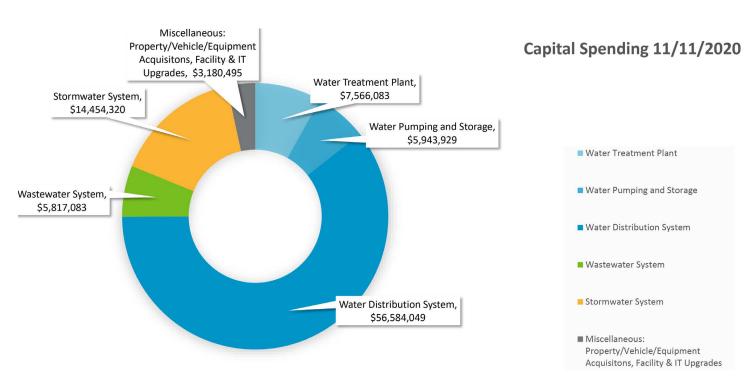
and sidewalks as projects are completed. This year we identified approximately 8,500 restoration sites and have restored approximately 6,545 sites or 77% of the total. Restoration work is ongoing, and we will continue working on these next year as soon as paving can resume.

The 31st Ward Sewer Reconstruction project, taking place in the Lincoln Place neighborhood, includes lining approximately five miles of aging sewers, repairing broken sewers, and relocating storm drains. This is one of several neighborhood-based sewer reconstruction projects that we will complete in the coming years. These projects will extend the life of the sewer system and improve service to our customers.



Crews expose manhole on Keefe Street for sewer repairs.

Learn more at pgh2o.com/31st-Ward-Sewers.



CURRENTS | November 2020

Digging Into Development

Navigating the PWSA permitting process.

To understand PWSA permits, let's start at the most basic with over-the-counter (OTC). The name is exactly the definition: permits that you can apply for and are issued over the counter without an extensive review. This month, we focus on three of the four permits issued separately from permits geared towards obtaining water and sewer service. They typically support a construction project and include a Waterline Shut permit, a Fire Hydrant Flow Test permit, and a Hydrant Use with Meter permit. The fourth OTC permit is a single-family home tap permit. We will discuss this permit more next month.

Waterline Shut Permits

These are issued in several different scenarios. Still, the general purpose remains the same: the applicant is requesting to turn off a public water main to stop water flow to complete a type of work. This work could include roadway work by PennDOT or the City of Pittsburgh, water taps for new or renovated buildings, or water main relocations. Since March 2020, we have modified our procedures to ensure that waterline shut permits are issued in a way that impacts the least number of customers for the shortest amount of time. The changes underscore the vital role hygiene plays in slowing the spread of COVID-19.

Fire Hydrant Flow Test Permit

These are issued to customers looking to gain more information about the pressure within water mains in a specific area. Once issued, the applicant schedules a time to meet our operations crew to perform the test. PWSA

staff operate the hydrant, and an independent third party conducts the test. The applicant uses this information to understand how to design fire suppression systems for a building. In the case of a high rise building, this information is used to understand if there is enough pressure to feed water to all floors. If there isn't, a pump would need to be installed.

Fire Hydrant Use with Meter Permit

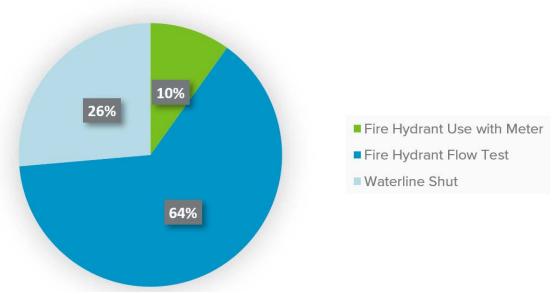
These are more commonly referred to as a construction meter, and allows the applicant to use a public fire hydrant as a water source for an extended period. Common scenarios are demolitions, site work, or concrete work. Applicants are responsible for protecting the meter and returning it to PWSA for a final reading when the project is complete. The final reading tells us how much water was used and how much to charge.

The team that works on issuing these permits is our Permit Counter staff. We have three engineering technicians that make up this team. We will dedicate a whole month to talk about how great they are, but for now, we'll take a look at some impressive stats for their work with OTC permits:

Out of 328 total permits issued in 2020, OTC makes up 55%. 64% of the 182 OTC permits are flow tests, 26% are waterline shuts, and 10% are construction meters. The permit staff issued 24 OTC permits in October.

Learn more at pgh2o.com/developers-contractors-vendors/permits.

Over-the-Counter Permits 2020



Pie chart depicting the categories of over-the-counter permits issued in October 2020.

CURRENTS | November 2020



Defend Your Drains from Fats, Oils and Grease (FOGs)!

Thanksgiving turkey leftovers are a holiday staple, but the messy FOGs that are produced by cooking a turkey and other foods can create serious problems in the sewer system.

In fact, FOGs found in food scraps, cooking oil, shortening, lard, butter, margarine, mayonnaise, salad dressings, sour cream, peanut butter, etc. is a leading cause of sewer backups into basements. When these items are poured down kitchen drains, they build up inside sewer pipes and eventually restrict wastewater flow in the pipes. These blockages cause untreated wastewater to back up into buildings, resulting in high costs for cleanup and repairs. If FOGs buildup gets bad enough, sewage can even overflow into parks, yards, streets, and storm drains, contaminating waterways and exposing the public to health hazards.

Help keep FOGs out of the public sewer system:

- Never pour FOGs down sink drains or in-sink garbage disposals.
- Scrape food scraps from dishes and utensils into the trash or compost as appropriate.
- Wipe up FOGs on dishes and utensils with paper towels and discard them in the trash.
- Pour cooled grease into a sealable container and dispose of it once it is filled.

Learn more at pgh2o.com/defend-your-drains.

PROPER GREASE DISPOSAL











The changing of the seasons and cold winter weather can bring all sorts of issues for your yard and our sewer system if you aren't prepared. Fallen leaves can clog gutters and storm drains, then freeze in place, causing flooding when it rains or snows. Water expands when it freezes, which can crack and damage garden hoses or rain barrels that haven't been emptied.

Take these steps to prepare your yard before winter:

- Remove, drain, and store outside garden hoses. Close the valves inside that control the water supply to the outside hose spigot, then open the outside spigot to allow any remaining water to drain.
- Clean out your gutters so that they can drain properly and are not weighed down by excess debris, ice, and snow.
- Rake leaves so they don't smother the lawn or wash away into storm drains. Place your leaves in a bag for curbside pickup or compost at home. Pittsburgh leaf pickup schedule: pittsburghpa.gov/dpw/leaf-waste
- If you have a rain garden, add a fresh layer of mulch and rake out any leaves to help the garden manage stormwater during winter and ready it for spring. Avoid cutting back plant growth so that the rain garden can provide food and cover for winter birds.
- If you have a rain barrel, drain it then leave its spigot open so that it can drain any water that may enter over winter. If you have downspout diverter, switch it to bypass the barrel so that water drains through the downspout. Clear the barrel filter of debris. If storing outside, cover with a tarp.

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PGH2O CONNECT



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 (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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