

# CURRENTS

## Record Capital Investment Strengthens Our Water Future



With the approval of our five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority is projected to invest approximately \$1.4 billion in projects that will modernize critical water infrastructure, optimize the performance of our systems, and improve reliability of essential water services.

As a publicly owned and operated utility, every dollar we receive is reinvested back into our water, wastewater, and stormwater systems. The [2022 – 2026 CIP](#) is an ambitious plan that describes how ratepayer dollars will be used to deliver reliable water services. As these projects are completed, our customers, Pittsburgh, and the region will benefit by having a system that is built to meet the demands that today's population and economy

places on a modern water utility.

This means that improvements to our water infrastructure will ensure the reliability of our water services, that century-old sewer lines will be fortified to keep wastewater flowing, and that new stormwater infrastructure will help our neighborhoods become more resilient to the impacts of increased rainfall and climate change.

In 2022 we anticipate investing approximately \$181 million in a wide variety of

capital projects, which will be the largest annual capital outlay in our history and a nearly 56 percent increase from 2021's forecasted total. Investment will gradually increase through 2026 and will result in the completion of critical projects that will improve the safety and reliability of our water future for many years to come.

### Ongoing Investment in Infrastructure

The past several years have focused on the replacement of lead service lines with the greatest amount of capital spending being allocated to the water distribution system. The 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Plan accounts for the level of investment necessary to continue removing lead service lines while turning our attention to other essential water, wastewater, and stormwater projects.

Over the next five years, we will invest nearly \$300 million in the [Water Reliability Plan](#),

### COMING UP:

#### Next Board Meeting: November 19

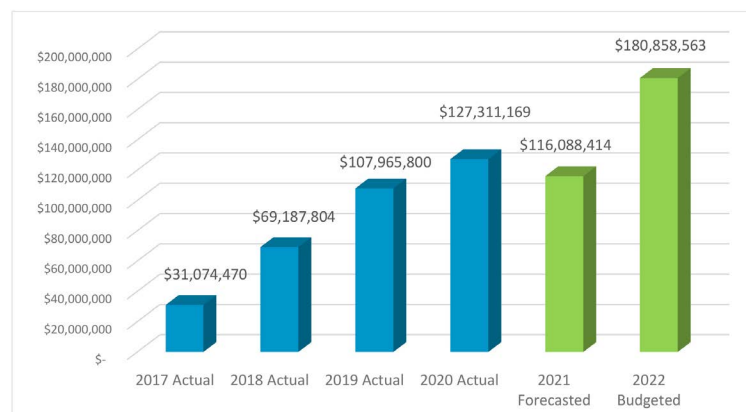
For a complete list of PWSA's board and community meetings, please visit [pgh2o.com/events-meetings](https://pgh2o.com/events-meetings).

Following COVID-19 restrictions, meetings are held virtually and may be tentative or postponed.

a series of large-scale water improvement projects that will strengthen our water system, add redundancy, and provide an uninterrupted supply of safe, quality water.

Customers will also see improvements in our wastewater infrastructure, primarily focusing on the rehabilitation of aging sewer lines. Investment in stormwater projects that capture the rain and reduce the amount entering our sewer system will also become more prominent. These wastewater and stormwater investments will result in significant improvements to our sewer system, which due to aging infrastructure and increased rainfall requires immediate attention.

To view the full version of the 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program and other financial reports, please visit [Pgh2o.com/about-us/finance](https://Pgh2o.com/about-us/finance).



# DIRECTOR'S CUT

By Chief Executive Officer Will Pickering

## A cultural shift is underway



*With a renewed focus on environmental compliance and water quality, we can ensure the health and safety of our water.*

Last month, a federal judge accepted the plea agreement PWSA negotiated with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Justice related to Clean Water Act violations dating back to 2016 and 2017. This final step in the legal process means that we're owning up to our past failures and moving forward as a utility that is focused on serving our customers and protecting the environment.

PWSA fully cooperated with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Justice's investigation and has addressed the violations by making physical changes to the Aspinwall water treatment plant.

The physical changes at the plant are only a small part of the changes we're making at PWSA. We've developed an environmental compliance program and put in place enhanced ethics training for all employees. These programs will bring about a cultural shift at PWSA that is already underway and being embraced by employees at all levels of the organization.

We've added an Environmental Compliance Director to our team who is stationed at the Aspinwall Water Treatment Plant. Frank Sidari, featured in this month's employee

spotlight, was hired in March 2021 to fill this role. Frank reports directly to me and is focused on environmental compliance – his expertise, supported by our executive leaders, will provide the guidance and direction that is needed to implement these changes and ensure they are successful.

With Frank's leadership, we are developing a robust environmental compliance program. It requires an annual, independent audit that will be reviewed by the EPA. The first audit is currently underway and when finished will be posted to our website and made publicly available. We are expanding our Environmental Compliance department,

developing a comprehensive compliance and ethics training for all staff, and providing new ways for employees to report compliance issues anonymously and without fear of retribution.

This new deliberate focus on environmental compliance and ethics begins an era where we can emphasize the importance of regulatory compliance for the environment and water quality, communicate expectations to employees, and continue to rebuild trust with our customers.

We are equipped with the resources, the dedicated leadership, and the fortitude to ensure that we move beyond past mistakes and forge a culture that prioritizes ethical behavior with a focus on regulatory compliance. This culture change will help protect the environment and ensure we continue to provide high quality drinking water. Our employees are dedicated to serving our customers, and we are giving them the resources and support to ensure that we are doing everything possible to avoid the mistakes of the past.

As these actions become more engrained and we can repeatedly demonstrate how we are meeting and exceeding regulatory compliance, then we will recapture the trust that is essential for providing the water services Pittsburgh expects and deserves.



## Going above and beyond!

### Stellar Storm Drain Replacement

Our great contractors help us accomplish a wide variety of tasks, and we are always thrilled when we receive positive feedback from the community regarding their hard work.

Recently, a customer called to let us know how impressed she was with the work of Michael Facchiano Contracting to replace a storm drain in her neighborhood.

*"The entire crew was wonderful, friendly, and the work was fast and efficient," she wrote.*

Thanks for your great work!

WHAT PEOPLE  
ARE SAYING

## Four Mile Run Project Update

On October 19, we will host a community meeting to provide an update on the drinking water and stormwater improvements coming to Four Mile Run and their anticipated next steps. These projects will be constructed within the Run neighborhood, the M-29 sewershed, and Schenley Park. They will provide needed flood relief, upgrade aging infrastructure, and provide resilient stormwater management.

Learn more at [Pgh2o.com/4mr](https://Pgh2o.com/4mr).



The Four Mile Run Stormwater Project includes improvements to Panther Hollow Lake, restoration of a former stream in Junction Hollow, and a new deep gravity pipe to carry stormwater to the Monongahela River.

## Join us at the Fall Farmers' Markets!

Come visit our PGH2O Cares team while picking up fresh, local food at some of Pittsburgh's many wonderful farmers' markets! Our Cares team will be at the East End market (Mondays), Carrick market (Wednesdays), and the North Side market (Fridays) until the end of the season. They can help you find out which assistance programs are right for you and sign people up on-the-spot! **Learn more about our Customer Assistance Programs at [Pgh2o.com/CAP](https://Pgh2o.com/CAP) and the Pittsburgh Farmers' Markets at [Pittsburghpa.gov/events/farmers-market](https://Pittsburghpa.gov/events/farmers-market).**



PGH2O Cares Analyst, Rebecca Copney, with a customer at the North Side Farmers' Market.



## Employee Spotlight: Frank Sidari, Environmental Compliance Director



Frank Sidari, Environmental Compliance Director, joined PWSA full-time in March, but has been working alongside the Authority for some time now, both as an embedded consultant and on a number of PWSA projects. In his role, he has his marching orders – to shift our culture to one where environmental compliance is front-of-mind in everything we do.

### Give us a brief description of your responsibilities at PWSA.

I'm responsible for our Environmental Compliance Program. This work will

continue to expand under PWSA's Administrative Agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency to ensure we comply with mandated requirements, like expanded training, the implementation of a whistleblower hotline, and independent monitoring and reporting. I'm also leading the development of an Environmental Compliance Group, responsible for overall compliance and monitoring and reporting associated with our wastewater, stormwater, chemical storage, air, and waste management regulations. Finally, I serve as a compliance resource for all PWSA staff.

### What made you decide to pursue a career in your field?

I've always had an interest in the environmental field. A professor got me interested in calculus, which led me to pursue course work in civil and environmental engineering, and I eventually became a professional and board-certified environmental engineer focused on drinking and wastewater work.

### What made PWSA an attractive career?

I joined PWSA full-time because the job drew on a number of my areas of expertise, and I was excited by the current leadership team and the changes I saw the Authority undergoing.

### What impact do you hope to have at the Authority?

I hope we can shift our culture and make environmental compliance a forethought rather than an afterthought. This will require a multi-departmental approach to environmental compliance. There is always someone responsible for completing a task who are often supported by other individuals. In other words, our best job is done when we work together.

### What do you like to do in your spare time?

I wake up early each morning to lift weights. I also enjoy spending time with my wife, son and two Bernese Mountain Dogs. I have two years left to enjoy watching my son play lacrosse before he graduates high school.

## Interested in working at PWSA?

We are looking for dedicated and talented people to join our team! Visit [Pgh2o.com/careers](https://Pgh2o.com/careers)

### New Hires

#### WELCOME ABOARD!

Connor McGinnis, Utility Worker I  
John Peck, Stationary Engineer  
Tamika Germany, Compliance Analyst  
John Phelps, Associate Project Manager  
Daniel Sokoll, Utility Worker I

### Promotions

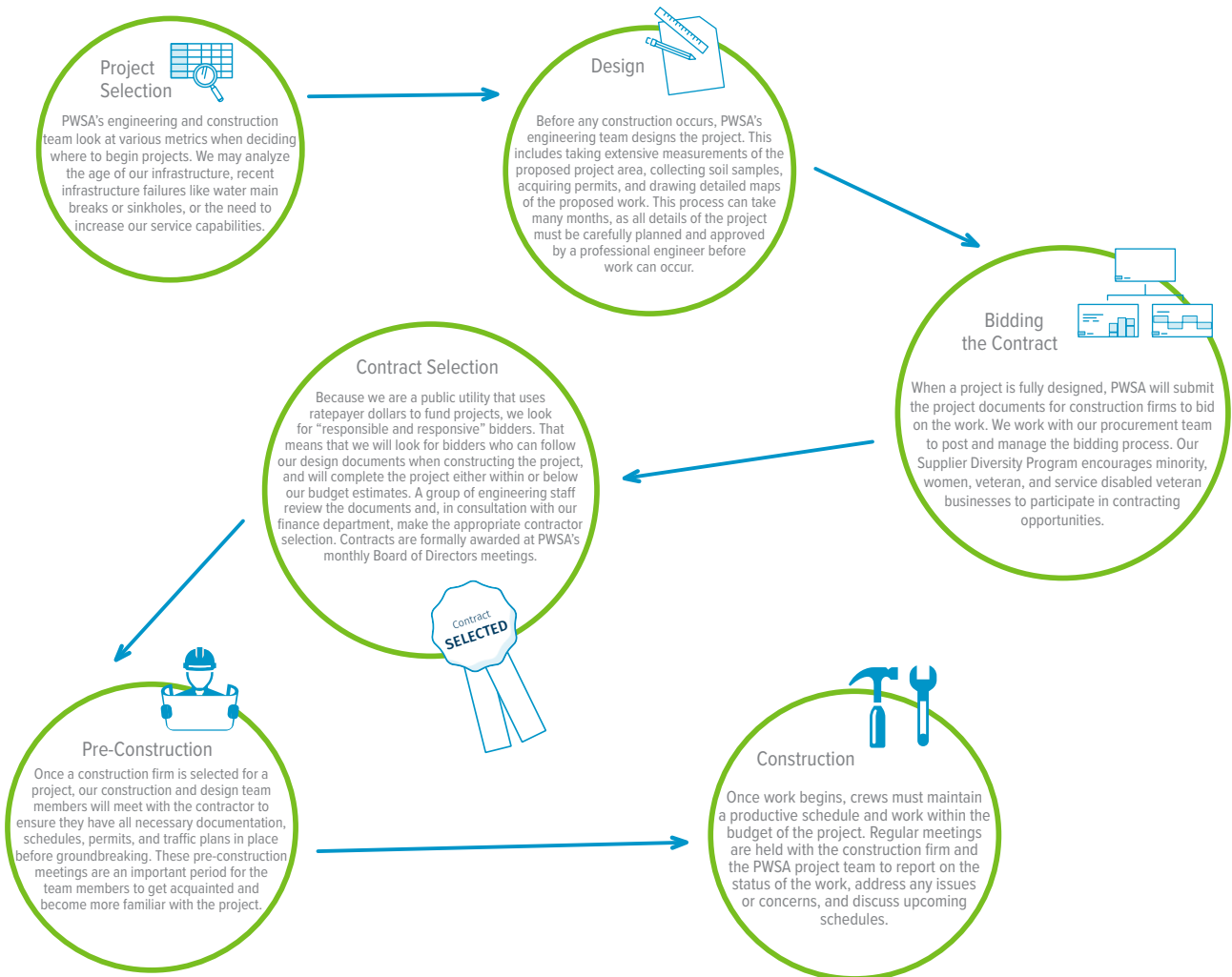
#### CONGRATULATIONS!

Wayne Blumling, Truck Driver/Special Operator  
Joanne Hayes, Customer Service Representative II  
Devan Walters, Utility Worker I

## Lifecycle of a construction project

There is more to a construction project than meets the eye.

Read below to understand how a project concept transforms into a full-grown infrastructure investment!



## Digging Into Development: Construction UPMC Mercy Hospital



Crews work to relocate an existing sewer line near UPMC Mercy.

The Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority has been involved in the design and construction of the Vision and Rehabilitation Center at the UPMC Mercy campus. We are currently working with onsite contractors to oversee the relocation of public infrastructure for the project. This includes relocating a public combination sewer and a temporary waterline installation to service a residence during the construction period.

The new facility will provide innovative equipment and practices aimed at helping patients with vision impairment and eye disease. The 18-story facility will connect to the existing hospital through the construction of a bridge tower that will also have a rehabilitation garden for patients. The project is scheduled to be fully operational in 2023.



## 2021 Capital Spending

Construction and capital funding remain strong through October.

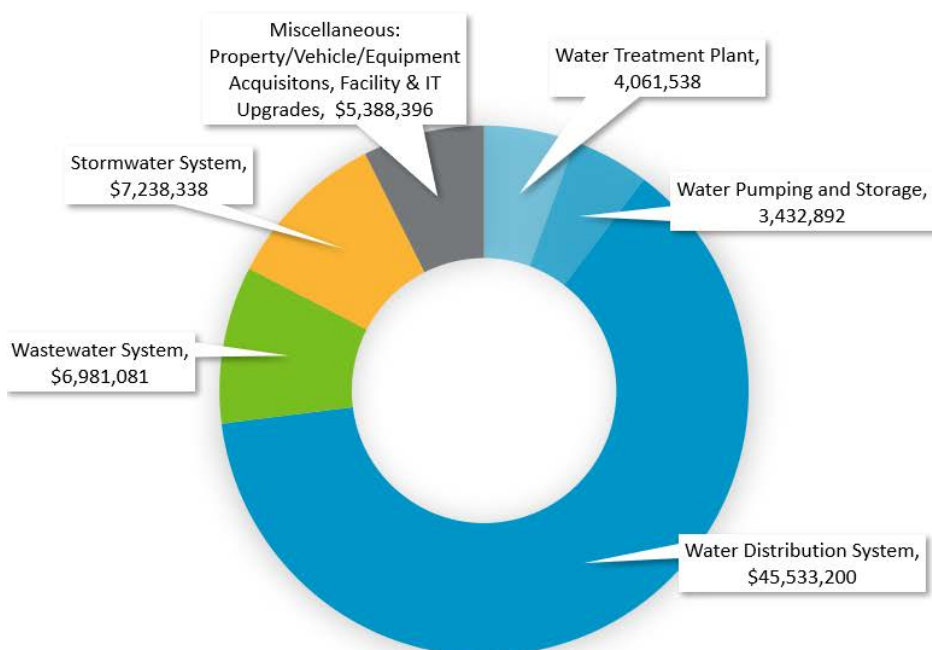


Construction crews working to replace a sewer in the Uptown Neighborhood.

Through the end of September, PWSA has invested over \$72.5 million in capital improvement projects. Projects focusing on the water distribution system remains our highest expenditure category, with \$45.5 million invested this year.

The 2020 Small Diameter Water Main Replacement contract is our most active project, followed by the Fifth and Forbes Water Main Replacement Project. The Small Diameter Water Main Replacement Project focuses on the rehabilitation of waterlines across our service area to improve water service reliability. The Fifth and Forbes Water Main Replacement Project is currently under construction and will install new water mains and new service lines for customers along Forbes and Fifth avenues.

PWSA is also investing in our sanitary and storm infrastructure by funding sewer lining and rehabilitation projects. Improving our sanitary network remains a main focal point at PWSA, with close to \$7 million spent on projects this year. By committing significant funding to sewer rehabilitation, we can continue to maintain our existing infrastructure and strengthen the system to ensure wastewater is properly conveyed to ALCOSAN. Below is an overview of the 2021 Capital Expenditures.



### Capital Spending: 9/30/21



# PGH<sub>2</sub>O WATER WISE

## Stormwater Tip: Keep Leaves and Yard Waste Out of Storm Drains



*Actions you take in your yard impact our sewers, streams, and rivers.*

For example, leaves and grass clippings left on the ground can block and clog storm drains and sewer pipes, contributing to street flooding when it rains. Fertilizers and yard waste can also cause nutrient pollution and oxygen depletion in our streams and rivers when carried through storm drains and sewers. Not only does this hurt our waterways, it can also harm fish and wildlife.

### **Help protect our water and sewer resources:**

- Do not rake or blow leaves or grass clippings off your property into the street.
- Place your leaves in a bag for curbside yard debris collection or compost them at home.
- If you have a mulching lawnmower, use it to recycle leaves and their nutrients into your lawn.
- Only apply fertilizers or pesticides if necessary and do not overapply.
- Select slow-release and organic fertilizers, which are less likely to wash away.
- Fertilize lawns in the fall to promote root growth and prevent nutrients washing away during spring rains.
- Do not dump yard waste, trash, or other waste near or into storm drains.

Learn more at [Pgh2o.com/reducing-stormwater-pollution](https://pgh2o.com/reducing-stormwater-pollution).



## Winter Water Main Breaks



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

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.

**To ensure you receive a robocall if you are impacted by a water main break, please make sure your account's contact information is up to date:**

- Fill out the online form at [Pgh2o.com/update-contact-info](https://pgh2o.com/update-contact-info)
- Or call our Customer Service at 412-255-2423 and press menu option 5



## Customer Assistance Programs

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

For more information about our programs, including the Winter Shut Off Moratorium, Bill Discount, Flexible Payment Plans, Hardship Grant, and Lead Line Reimbursements, please visit [Pgh2o.com/CAP](http://Pgh2o.com/CAP) or call Dollar Energy Fund at [866.762.2348](tel:866.762.2348).

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Donate to the Hardship Grant Program online at [Pgh2o.com/give](http://Pgh2o.com/give).

## 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)

Visit our website: [Pgh2o.com/update-contact-info](http://Pgh2o.com/update-contact-info)

## Enroll in eBilling

Use our paperless billing and payment portal to receive and pay your bill and manage your PGH2O account from your desktop or phone.

Visit [Pgh2o.com/ebilling](http://Pgh2o.com/ebilling) to enroll.

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### Customer Service

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### Emergency Dispatch

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Available 24/7