

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Water Operations prepared for emergencies

The County's 1,200 miles of water mains are most prone to water main breaks in the winter and spring when the ground is more likely to freeze and thaw. Extreme weather changes may result in ground shifts placing increased stress on water mains. Water main breaks can have serious consequences—leaving customers without service and impacting area roadways.

When an emergency event takes place, Water Operations is prepared to quickly respond to minimize disruption to service and any inconvenience to motorists.

- Emergency Service Dispatchers are prepared to take your calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you see water bubbling up from the ground, running down the roadway, or if you notice a loss of water pressure, contact Emergency Services at 410-222-8400 or 410-451-4118 in South County.
- Emergency Service workers will be dispatched immediately to assess the situation and contact the dispatchers to call out the appropriate work crews and equipment.
- More than 30 trained personnel are ready to respond and a fleet of heavy equipment is available to excavate and repair mains.
- When a break occurs, crews will work quickly to minimize the impact to customers and to restore service as soon as possible.
- CASSWORKS, Public Works' computerized work order system, helps Utility Operations track maintenance and repair work and therefore minimizing the need for emergency repairs.
- COUNTYVIEW is another highly technical software which utilizes Geographic Information System computer programming to help workers quickly locate affected infrastructure.

Setting realistic expectations...

- When a water main breaks, the water must usually be shut off to some customers to make the repair. Under normal conditions, Utility Operations will attempt to notify customers prior to disrupting service. However, due to the emergency nature of water main breaks, notification may not be possible.
- Workers may have to wait for Miss Utility before performing repair work. Emergency Service personnel respond first and assess the situation, then contact dispatchers to send out the appropriate work crews and equipment. These crews will respond as quickly as possible and can perform some preparation of the work site. However, the work crews cannot excavate to reach the affected infrastructure until Miss Utility has responded and marked other utilities in the area of the break.
- When sediment in the water mains is disturbed by a change in water pressure, some water discoloration may occur for several hours. It may be prudent to limit water usage during this time to avoid staining laundry and dishes. Running cold water for a short period should clear the water. If discoloration continues for an extended period of time, contact Emergency Services.

Staying safe around construction work...

- Be alert for traffic signs, signals and other traffic control devices
- Watch for workers and equipment. Do not approach the work area!
- Consider using alternative routes to avoid the work area.
- Slow down, stay back, be alert and be safe!

Anne Arundel County Top Ops Team Wins Again!

The American Water Works Association (AWWA) Chesapeake Section held its annual Regional Top Ops competition at the Tri-Conference in Ocean City, Maryland on August 31, 2006. The Top Ops is a jeopardy style competition with three-person teams representing their respective Utilities. Each team fields questions about water operations, safety, math, and equipment. The regional competition includes three to five teams from Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia.

Anne Arundel County has sponsored a team since 1997 and has always placed in the top three spots. This year, Anne Arundel County was represented by employees Steve Black, Mitch Franks, and Larry Richardson. After a slow start with tough competition, Anne Arundel County pulled ahead and won the competition! Congratulations to our first place winners!

Spring Tips for Saving Water

Fix Leaks First!

Water leaks are the most common water wasters and the most common reasons for higher than normal utility bills. Important places to check for leaks in your home include toilets, faucets and showerheads, outdoor faucets, hoses and irrigation systems.

Toilet leaks are often silent and/or intermittent and therefore difficult to detect. Remove the toilet lid and place color dye tablets or food coloring in the tank. Do not flush. If, after a half hour, colored water appears in the bowl, you have a leak. Float balls also occasionally need to be adjusted or replaced.

Household faucets and showerheads may also leak. Often the culprit is worn washers or "O" rings. These parts can be purchased at local home improvement centers and easily replaced.

Winter freezing may cause leaks. Spring is a good time to check your outside faucets and hoses to ensure no leaks have developed over the winter. It is also important to check underground sprinkler systems. Broken sprinkler heads or damaged underground water lines may have developed over the winter. Lawn mowers, automobiles, wheel barrows, etc. may damage sprinkler heads. Check your system while it's running once a month to spot problems. Watch for wet depressions in plant and grass areas or running water that may indicate broken pipes.

Helpful Telephone Numbers for The Department of Public Works

24-hour EMERGENCY service for water and wastewater
(after 3:30 p.m.) ... 410-222-8400
South County... 410-451-4118

After 3:30 p.m., weekends and holiday EMERGENCY Service for
stormdrains, roads, traffic lights/signs...
410-222-6120

For weekday EMERGENCIES (between 7:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.)
involving stormdrains, roads, or traffic lights/signs, please call the
appropriate district office. If you do not know what district to call,
please call any of these Customer Relations numbers...

Customer Relations...	410-222-7582
General Information...	410-222-7500
Billing Information...	410-222-1144
Bulk Item Trash Service, Recycling Information, Trash Collection...	410-222-6100
Northern Roads District...	410-222-6120
Southern Roads District...	410-222-1933
Central Roads District...	
Crownsville Yard...	410-222-7940
Central Roads District...	
Odenton Yard...	410-222-6126

**During snow emergencies (4" or more) customers in all roads
districts please call... 410-222-4040**

Anne Arundel County
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2662 Riva Road
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www.aacounty.org/dpw



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John R. Leopold, County Executive