

Fall 2014

Correction: In the summer newsletter, the URL for TapIt™ was incorrect. The correct URL is www.freetapwater.org. We apologize for any inconvenience.



Fox Mill Water Main Project

Proposed Changes to the Commodity Rate

Important Rate Information

Customers in Fairfax Water's Traditional Service Area

At 6:30 p.m. on Thurs., Dec. 11, 2014, the Fairfax Water Board of Directors will hold a public hearing on the proposed revision to the commodity charge from \$2.42 to \$2.55 per 1,000 gallons, effective with meter readings taken on or after April 1, 2015. The commodity charge is the only increase proposed for Fairfax Water's rates, fees, and charges. (See table on page 2.)

The public hearing will be held at Fairfax Water's main office at 8570 Executive Park Avenue in Fairfax. A copy of the proposed changes and directions to the main office can be viewed at www.fairfaxwater.org/rates/index.htm. To speak at the hearing or obtain a hard copy of the proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges, call 703-698-5600, TTY 711.

(continued on page 2)

Customers Formerly Served by the City of Fairfax or the City of Falls Church Water Systems

As you know, Fairfax Water became your water provider in January 2014. Although you are now a Fairfax Water customer, the commodity charge for your water has temporarily remained the same as it was with your previous provider while Fairfax Water conducts an operational evaluation of our new service areas.

The year long study will evaluate the infrastructures of the two systems acquired by Fairfax Water to identify any unusual or unexpected issues. The study will help us develop a financial strategy to maintain the quality of your service and to ensure funding is available for infrastructure replacement.

We expect to provide more information about the study in the spring issue of this newsletter. For more information about Fairfax Water's rates, fees, and charges, visit www.fairfaxwater.org/customer/index.htm or call 703-698-5600, TTY 711. 💧

Important Information to Establish Water Service

Attention, Landlords and Renters

In 2012, changes were made to the Code of Virginia that govern how water and sewer systems may place liens against landlords for tenants' unpaid bills. Due to these changes, tenants (renters) now must provide Fairfax Water with two additional items to establish water service – a Tenant Authorization Form and a Lien Offset payment of \$190.

You can find the form at www.fairfaxwater.org/customer/Tenant%20Authorization.pdf. For your convenience, the form can be scanned and e-mailed to customers@fairfaxwater.org or faxed to 703-466-6863.

There are several ways to make the lien offset payment:

- Online or by phone using your checking account or credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or American Express). Payments are processed by Speedpay® for a fee of \$2.95 per transaction. Call 703-698-5800, TTY 711, for information on making your payment by phone or online.
- In person at 8570 Executive Park Avenue in Fairfax, Mon. – Fri., 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., except holidays, or deposited in the night deposit box at the front entrance of the building.

For more information about the lien offset payment, visit www.fairfaxwater.org/customer/tenant_changes.htm, call 703-698-5800, TTY 711, or send an e-mail to customers@fairfaxwater.org using "Lien Law" in the subject line. 💧

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Customers in Fairfax Water's Traditional Service Area (continued from page 1)



If approved, the proposed changes to the commodity charge would increase the average household quarterly bill by \$3.12. The main cost driver for Fairfax Water is the continuing focus on updating our infrastructure, in particular the approximately 4,000 miles of water main pipes in the system. Our financial strategy of incremental increases ensures that we can replace aging mains before they cause serious problems and are able to do so without placing an unexpected financial burden on customers.

For more information about Fairfax Water's rates, fees, and charges, visit www.fairfaxwater.org/customer/index.htm or call us at 703-698-5600, TTY 711. 💧

The following table shows the only proposed change is to the commodity charge.

Charge	Current	Proposed
Availability Charge	\$3,950	No change
Local Facilities Charge	\$9,750	No change
Service Connection Charge	\$1,090	No change
Account Charge	\$36	No change
Quarterly Billing Service Charge	\$9.80*	No change*

Charge	Current	Proposed
Commodity Charge (per 1,000 gallons)	\$2.42**	\$2.55**
Peak Use Charge (per 1,000 gallons)	\$3.55	No change
Turn Off/Turn On Charge	\$50	No change
Sewer Use Meters Charge	\$45	No change
Returned Payment Charge	\$20	No change

* Charges reflect fees associated with standard 5/8 " residential meter. Charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges available on our Web site at www.fairfaxwater.org/rates/index.htm.

** Fees for the use of Fairfax Water fire hydrants would also change to include the proposed increase in the commodity charge.



Keep a Stream Clean

Help make a difference in our community! Join the volunteers throughout Fairfax County who monitor water quality in local streams. No prior experience is necessary. The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District provides all the training and equipment you need. You may choose to assist other monitors when it is convenient for your schedule or you may adopt your chosen stream and commit to monitoring it four times a year. The program is designed to work for you.

To learn more or to volunteer, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd/monitoring.htm or call 703-324-1422, TTY 711. 💧

Just Around the Corner . . .

Whether we like it or not, winter is on its way. Again this year, we want to provide these tips to help you get through winter safely.

- Locate and tag your main-line water valve so you can shut off the water in an emergency. The valve is normally located where the water line enters your home through the foundation. Make sure everyone in your household knows how to turn off the water. To make it easier, print the main-line water valve tag on our Web site and attach it to the valve. (See Web address below.)
- Never try to thaw frozen pipes with an open flame or torch.
- If you'll be away from home for an extended period, keep the thermostat at a reasonable temperature to protect pipes from freezing.
- Insulate pipes in unheated spaces. Hardware or building-supply stores carry insulation designed to keep pipes in these areas from freezing.



You can find more winter safety tips and print a main-line valve tag at www.fairfaxwater.org/customer/youplum.htm. Call 703-289-6194, TTY 711, to request the tag by mail. 💧

Out and About . . .

Fairfax Water was on the go this past summer, participating in community events across the region. Here are a few highlights of our summer fun.



The Fairfax Water bar was a hit at the Smithsonian Garden Fest. The fest highlights each of the Smithsonian's gardens. This year's



event took place in conjunction with Drinking Water Week and promoted the value of clean, safe water.



Fairfax Water sponsored Water Quality Field Day in partnership with the Fairfax County Public Schools, the Fairfax County Divisions of Wastewater Management and Stormwater Planning, and four



other environmental organizations. Sixth graders from Ft. Belvoir Elementary School explored water in their world through interactive exhibits.



Fairfax Water provided free ice water to thirsty fairgoers at Celebrate Fairfax! The fair is held at the Fairfax County Government Center in June. This year Fairfax Water was honored by Celebrate Fairfax for our ongoing support of this community event.



Fairfax Water's vehicles were a big hit at the Touch a Truck event sponsored by the Fairfax County Police Department. Touch a Truck is an interactive event that allows children to see, touch, and safely explore their favorite big trucks and heavy machinery, as well as to meet the people who protect, serve, and build the community. 💧



Glad You Asked!

Q. I moved to Fairfax about eight months ago and it is the first time I've used hard water. Can you tell me how I can convert hard water to soft water for bathing purposes?

A. While Fairfax Water cannot endorse a specific softening system for you, we suggest you investigate systems through the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) at www.nsf.org/consumer/. The NSF is a non-profit, non-governmental agency that tests and certifies consumer products. To find NSF-certified water softeners, visit their Web site at <http://info.nsf.org/Certified/DWTU/>. Scroll down to the bottom half of the page titled "Reduction Claims." Under the "Reduction Claims for Cation Exchange Water Softeners" section, click on "Hardness Reduction." You'll be given a list of certified water softener components and vendors who sell them.



Water hardness is caused primarily by compounds of calcium and magnesium and, to a lesser extent, by a variety of

other metals. Water is an excellent solvent. As it moves through soil and rock, it dissolves and retains very small amounts of minerals. The hardness of water is measured by the amount of mineral grains per gallon, per liter, and per million gallons. Typically, the treated water provided by Fairfax Water is considered "moderately hard" to "hard."

Before you soften your water, consider these benefits of hard water:

- It can be a valuable source of essential dietary nutrients, like calcium and magnesium.
- It is less likely to cause pipe corrosion.
- It often tastes better.
- Many water softeners operate by adding sodium to the water in exchange for the minerals causing the hardness. This may be a concern for those who must restrict their sodium intake.

For more information, visit www.fairfaxwater.org/water/hardness.htm or call 703-698-5800, TTY 711💧

If you have a question, concern, or compliment, contact us at pr@fairfaxwater.org or call 703-698-5600, TTY 711.



We Want to Know...

If you have comments or suggestions about the newsletter, please send an e-mail to pr@fairfaxwater.org, call us at 703-698-5600, or write to us at this address:

Straight From the Tap Editor
Fairfax Water
8570 Executive Park Ave.
Fairfax, VA 22031

Important Numbers

Fairfax Water Services

Questions about water service:
703-698-5800

After hours/emergencies:
703-698-5613

To report a water main break:
703-698-5613 or e-mail
watermainbreak@fairfaxwater.org

Questions about billing:
703-698-5800

All other Fairfax Water departments: 703-698-5600

Sewer Services

Fairfax County
Department of Public Works
Wastewater Trouble Response Center; 703-323-1211, TTY 711, www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/wastewater

City of Falls Church
Department of Public Works
703-248-5350, TTY 711, www.fallschurchva.gov

City of Fairfax
Department of Public Works
703-385-7810, TTY 711, www.fairfaxva.gov

Dig with C.A.R.E.

Miss Utility at 1-800-552-7001 or 811, <http://va811.com/homeowners/how-to-when-to>

Use TTY 711 (Virginia Relay) for all numbers unless otherwise stated.

KIDS' CORNER

Pond Scavenger Hunt

Fall is a great time to visit a pond with your mom or dad. After your visit, circle below all of the pond life you were able to find. If you don't have a pond nearby, use the Internet or the library to find out which creatures live in a pond.



Source: www.iheartcraftythings.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Mondays, Sept. through May

Hidden Pond Mondays at Richard Byrd Library; Ages 6-12; 4:30 p.m.; Call 703-451-8055, TTY 711

Sat, Sept. 27

National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day
Visit www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/ to find a location near you.

Sat, Oct. 4 and Sun., Oct. 5

Fall for Fairfax; Fairfax County Govt. Center; www.fallforfairfax.com/ or 703-324-3247, TTY 711

Mon., Oct. 13

Fairfax Water offices closed for Columbus Day

Tues., Nov. 11

Fairfax Water offices closed for Veterans Day

Thurs., Nov. 27 and Fri., Nov. 28

Fairfax Water offices closed for Thanksgiving

Wed., Dec. 24

Fairfax Water offices closed at noon for Christmas Eve

Thurs., Dec. 25

Fairfax Water offices closed for Christmas Day

Thurs., Jan. 1

Fairfax Water offices closed for New Year's Day

Mon., Jan. 19

Fairfax Water offices closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day



Fairfax Water is a public, non-profit water authority serving nearly 2 million people in the Northern Virginia communities of Fairfax County, Loudoun, Prince William, Fort Belvoir, Herndon, Dulles, Vienna, Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax City.



Water-Saving Tip

Fall is a great time to plant because it takes less water to get your plants off to a good start. Talk with your local nursery to find plants that are native to this area and don't require much water. Add mulch to prevent evaporation when you water. For more water-saving tips, visit www.wateruseitwisely.com.