



## From the Tap...

### Fairfax Water Turns 50 This Year!

We thought it would be interesting to share some of our history with you. This is the second in a series of four articles.

#### Part Two: 1967–1982

Created for the purpose of “acquiring, constructing, operating and maintaining an integrated water system for supplying and distributing water,” Fairfax Water had, by 1967, accomplished its primary goal of integrating several disparate water systems.

With this important groundwork done, the focus shifted to maintaining a reliable water supply and distributing safe, clean water to our customers.

Fairfax Water’s sole surface-water source in 1967 was the Occoquan Reservoir, located on the

southern border of Fairfax County. With an estimated capacity of seven billion gallons, it was apparent that additional water sources and production facilities would be needed to meet demand. In addition, the Occoquan faced increasing water-quality concerns from point and non-point sources of pollution. In 1971, the State Water Control Board approved the Occoquan Policy, which laid the groundwork for protecting our primary drinking water supply.

In 1972, Fairfax Water suffered its worst disaster

with the arrival of Hurricane Agnes. After nearly 16 inches of rain in 36 hours, the Occoquan water treatment facilities were flooded. Storage tanks were depleted and system pressure was lost. The supply line between the reservoir and the treatment plant was severely damaged.

Almost 35 hours after a total water-production shutdown, limited water service was restored to Fairfax County. Full service was restored about eight days later. This was accomplished by a coordinated effort between various federal and local

#### Inside this issue:

Fairfax Water Celebrates 50 Years of Service– Part 2

Rain Barrels

Water-Saving Tip #18

Continued on Page 2

### Rain Barrels

Rain barrels can be used to collect rain water runoff from gutters and downspouts.

The water collected can be used to water plants around your home or even your lawn.

The environmental benefit to using rain barrels is

capturing water that would otherwise run off into our local streams.

Most rain barrels will capture about 50 gallons of water.

The Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District (NVSWCD) has more information

about rain barrels, including information on local workshops.

To learn more, you can visit NVSWCD’s website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/nvswcd>



## Fairfax Water turns 50 This Year!– Part Two: 1967-1982

Continued from Page 1

resources. Full repairs to damaged structures took another four years to complete.

In 1973, new water-treatment facilities were placed into operation, providing an additional 24 million gallons per day of capacity and bringing the total daily water-production capacity to 76 million gallons. To augment water-supply storage, the height of the dam at Occoquan was raised two feet in the late 1970s, bringing the reservoir capacity to 8.3 billion gallons.

Even with these improvements, additional supplies and treatment

facilities were needed to meet the ever-growing demand for water. In response, the James J. Corbalis water-treatment facilities were built and began operation in 1982 using water from the Potomac River. The Corbalis Plant was formally dedicated on June 25, 1982, and was designed to treat up to 50 million gallons of water per day.

Along with other major water suppliers in the Washington Metropolitan Area, Fairfax Water participated in a regional study of the Potomac River. Recognizing the benefits of cooperation, the

three water suppliers (Fairfax Water, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, and the Washington Aqueduct), agreed to the Water Supply Coordination Agreement of 1982, with a goal of coordinating operations and meeting the long-term water supply needs of the region.

By the end of 1982, Fairfax Water had more than 1,800 miles of mains, more than 10,300 fire hydrants and nearly 126,000 metered accounts serving more than 650,000 people. Revenues were \$27 million and full-time employees numbered 289.

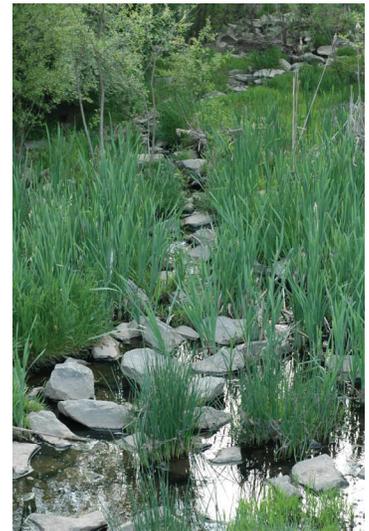


### Water-Saving Tip #18:

Divide your watering cycle into shorter periods to reduce runoff and allow for better absorption every time you water.

For lawns, water deeply but infrequently to encourage deep roots. The key to watering your grass is to apply enough water to soak down to the depth of the roots. The amount varies with soil type, but a good guide is to apply no more than 1 inch of water every time, which is enough to soak the soil to between 6 and 10 inches.

For more information and other water-saving tips, visit [www.wateruseitwisely.com](http://www.wateruseitwisely.com).



### Editor's Note

If you have comments or suggestions about this publication, let us hear from you.

E-mail us at [jbailey@fairfaxwater.org](mailto:jbailey@fairfaxwater.org) or write us at the address below. If you have questions regarding water service, please call Customer Service at (703) 698-5800.

For all other departments, call (703) 698-5600; After-hours emergency, call (703) 698-5613, TTY (703) 698-7025.

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