

NATURAL GAS

WATER

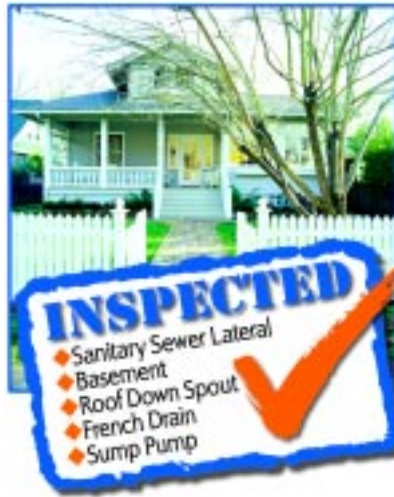
WASTEWATER

ELECTRIC
STREET LIGHTING

HELP PREVENT SEWER BACKUPS DURING HEAVY RAINS

During periods of heavy rains, tropical storms, hurricanes or thunderstorms, some homes and businesses may experience a sewer backup. This occurs when there is a blockage in either the City's sewer "main" (large pipe running under the street) or in your sanitary sewer lateral. This sanitary sewer lateral is a pipe that runs laterally from the City's sewer main at the property line to the home or place of business. This sanitary lateral carries wastewater from the home or business' plumbing fixtures (toilets, sinks or laundry) to the City's sewer main.

If you have endured the unpleasant experience of a sewer backup, you should call a qualified, licensed plumbing company to inspect your sanitary sewer lateral. The homeowner or property owner is responsible for cleaning any blockage in the lateral from the property line to the building's plumbing fixtures. Check for signs of aging, such as open joints or cracks, or roots intruding into the lateral. Also check for any blockages such as grease build-up along the pipe or paper products or other debris clogging the line. Repairs can then be made based on the problems found.



Preventive maintenance steps can be taken to help minimize sewer backups during heavy rains:

- ◆ Keep basement and area way drains clean and free of debris with protective grating in place. Damaged or missing protective grating can allow debris to flow into the drains and cause potential backups.
- ◆ Minimize the amount of wastewater you enter into your sanitary sewer lateral during periods of heavy rains. Since storm water can also infiltrate into sanitary laterals through joints and small cracks in the line, reducing the amount of wastewater entering into the system helps to minimize the potential for backups.
- ◆ Perhaps most importantly, make sure roof down spouts, French drains, sump pumps or other flood control systems are not connected to the sanitary sewer lateral. This plumbing connection can greatly

reduce the lateral's ability to carry wastewater and should be removed. A residential or commercial plumber can help identify where these drains run and whether or not they are connected to your sanitary sewer lateral.

CELEBRATING DRINKING WATER WEEK MAY 1-7, 2005

The City Department of Public Utilities celebrates National Drinking Water Week each year during the first full week of May to help educate the public on the importance of clean, safe, high-quality drinking water. Informational displays in City Hall and the Science Museum during this week show the process that is involved to pump up to 130 million gallons of water per day from the James River through the Water Treatment Plant to more than 60,000 customers in the City and through wholesale water contracts with Chesterfield, Henrico and Hanover counties every day. In total, DPU provides water daily to approximately 500,000 customers.

Daily operations at one of the state's largest water treatment facilities requires a dedicated staff to monitor plant operations 24/7.

Continuous upgrades and expansions of the Water Treatment Plant enable DPU to meet all federal and state requirements for clean, safe drinking water and the increasing demands for high-quality water as the region continues to grow. DPU also maintains 1,158 miles of water mains, nine pumping stations and fire hydrants for fire protection throughout the City.

Additionally, as stewards of the region's water supply, DPU urges people to practice water conservation every day. For information on how you can help protect and conserve our valuable water supply, call 646-3937 to receive a FREE water activity booklet for kids or a general water conservation booklet for adults.



NATURAL GAS RATE DECREASED 13 PERCENT

Richmond Mayor L. Douglas Wilder announced a decrease in the the City of Richmond Department of Public Utilities' purchased gas cost (PGC) from \$1.025 to \$.825 per hundred cubic feet (Ccf) of gas used, effective February 1. The average residential customer who uses 70 Ccf of natural gas per month now pays \$94.74, approximately 13 percent less than a previous bill of \$108.74.

The PGC is the cost DPU pays for gas on the open market. This cost is passed on directly to our customers without any mark-up. Gas prices have



moderated due to warmer than normal cumulative weather conditions and above average gas storage. These more favorable market conditions afforded DPU the opportunity to reduce the PGC to a rate lower than it was last winter. DPU continues to monitor the market and weather conditions and make adjustments to the PGC accordingly.



Did You KNOW?

Natural gas is America's most popular home-heating fuel - with 52 percent of all heated U.S. households having natural gas heat. Natural gas heats more households than all other energy forms combined (electricity, oil, propane, wood, kerosene or other fuels). For heat or hot water, enjoy the comfort, reliability and efficiency of natural gas.

FREE WEATHERIZATION KITS FOR SENIORS

Although the brunt of winter is now behind us, it's never too soon to prepare for next winter. DPU has been working with various agencies to distribute weatherization kits to senior citizens to help them stay warm. Each kit comes with its own instructions and includes:

- ◆ a door sweep
- ◆ foam tape
- ◆ clear shrink film
- ◆ draft stoppers and safety caps
- ◆ adjustable water-saving showerhead.

If you are a senior citizen, 60 years or older, and would like to receive a weatherization kit, call 646-3937.



THINK AHEAD - THINK METROCARE!



Your generous contributions to METROCARE have helped over 750 families in the Richmond metropolitan region keep warm since the program started in 1999. This DPU program, administered through United Way agencies, assists eligible families and individuals residing in our

service area who are experiencing exceptional hardships in heating their homes. Please remember to continue to give now to help those in need stay warm next winter. An easy way to contribute to METROCARE is to note it on the designated area of your utility bill.



CLEANING & LINING PROGRAM BEGINS THIS SPRING

The Department of Public Utilities' (DPU) cleaning and lining program begins in April and continues through the end of fall, targeting the Northside area of Richmond. The cleaning and lining program will get under way in the area bounded by I-95 to the south and west, Westwood to the north, Brook to the west, Laburnum to the north, Chamberlayne to the east, Overbrook to the north, Battery Park to the east, and Mitchell Street to the south.

This program rehabilitates old water mains by removing iron byproducts and solids that have built up on the inside of these pipes, and then lining them with a cement mortar to prevent additional corrosion. While the old pipes are cleaned and lined, yellow plastic pipes are used above ground to temporarily carry water to homes and businesses.

Water service may be interrupted for short periods of time and those affected will be notified at least 24 to 48 hours in advance, except in cases of unplanned emergencies.

For more information, call DPU Gas and Water operations at 646-8300 or visit our web site at RichmondGov.com/DPU and click on Construction Projects.

CALL "MISS UTILITY" BEFORE YOU DIG

The return of spring beckons many people to begin their outdoor projects. But if there is any digging involved, state law

requires you to call "Miss Utility" first. To prevent cutting an underground utility line that can disrupt service and cause a life-threatening accident, you must call 1-800-552-7001 and wait at least 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays) before you start to dig. "Miss Utility" will mark the location of your lines, such as gas, electric, water, sewer, telephone and cable.

So before you dig, please call.



Important PHONE NUMBERS:

CUSTOMER SERVICE 644-3000 ■ TDD 1-800-855-1155
STREETLIGHT OUTAGES & GAS, WATER & SEWER EMERGENCIES 644-3000 ■ TDD 1-800-855-1155
"MISS UTILITY" (Before You Dig) 1-800-552-7001



CITY OF RICHMOND
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

