

CURRENTS

PWSA Joins United for Infrastructure 2022

Event highlights how PWSA is tackling Pittsburgh's water infrastructure needs

From clean water to safe transportation, and reliable broadband – investing in quality, affordable infrastructure is essential across the nation and locally here in Pittsburgh.

To help drive home the criticality of reliable infrastructure in every one of our communities, just last week PWSA participated in the 10th annual **United for Infrastructure** national advocacy and educational event. From May 16 – May 20, PWSA joined businesses, labor organizations, and elected officials across the country to spread the word around the importance of investing in our nation's infrastructure and to share information about some of our most important infrastructure investments.

United for Infrastructure provided PWSA with an additional opportunity to highlight the historic investments we are making in our water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure, which thousands of customers and Pittsburgh residents rely on each day. From the comprehensive projects in our [Water Reliability Plan](#) to the

water, sewer, and stormwater projects happening in our neighborhoods, our community is watching first-hand the renewal of Pittsburgh's complex water system.

Prior to the kickoff of United for Infrastructure in the Pittsburgh region, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* featured PWSA's Water Reliability Plan – a series of once-in-a-generation projects that will modernize our water distribution system – in a recent weekend edition. This long-form article gives a detailed overview of our water distribution system, including how water makes it from the river to your tap, and highlights how we're building redundancy into the system through several infrastructure projects – housed under the umbrella of our Water Reliability Plan.

The series of projects within the Water Reliability Plan are the most ambitious investment in PWSA's modern history. Over the next several years, we will invest \$470 million to renew critical components of our water production and distribution system. This includes large transmission pipes, reservoirs,

pump stations, and electrical systems that help deliver water.

Ratepayer dollars will help fund these projects, and like many of our water main and sewer rehabilitation projects, we are aggressively pursuing state and federal funding for the work.

We encourage you to check out the full *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* [article](#). For a comprehensive overview of our participation and highlighted projects, please visit our [National Water Sector Events page](#) and [follow PWSA on social media](#). As always,

for a list of current and future projects, visit our [Projects & Maintenance](#) site.

PWSA is proud to have participated in this national event and to have shared important information regarding our infrastructure renewal projects. While our work as public servants is never done, we at PWSA are confident the strategic projects and priorities we've been undertaking will further transform our water system while rebuilding trust with the public we serve.

CEO Briefing by *Chief Executive Officer Will Pickering*

PWSA's customer satisfaction survey will help us better understand our customers



Here at PWSA, we've talked a lot recently about our ongoing evolution: one with a robust emphasis on public health, the environment, and our responsibility to serve as steadfast stewards of a vital

public asset. A key element of this transformation journey is centered around further strengthening experiences for those that rely on our water services each and every day – our customers.

That's why I'm happy to announce that PWSA is this year launching a customer satisfaction survey.

Our overall goals in conducting this survey are to:

- Get a more robust sense of our ratepayers' overall satisfaction and perceptions of PWSA

- Gauge our customers' awareness of our programs, projects, and services
- Measure their reactions to, understanding of, and satisfaction with our bill format, web portal and other forms of communication

In other words, this survey will give us a detailed view of customer perceptions and attitudes, and highlight for us actions we can take to continue to improve our relationships with those we serve.

While not everyone in our service area will be asked to participate, if you are contacted to take this survey, we ask that you complete it openly and honestly.

Following completion of the survey period, we'll work to fully understand and interpret the survey results and determine what opportunities we have for improvement. We'll be sure to share some of the actions we're undertaking in this regard in future communications.

Thank you in advance for your engagement with this important and exciting project!

TEAM PGH20

Employee Spotlight: Monica Walaan

PWSA sat down with our new **Chief Legal Officer, Monica Walaan**, hired in March, to learn more about her and why she's excited to be a part of Team PGH20.

Tell us more about your role.

I oversee PWSA's legal affairs and serve as an advisor to counsel, support, and guide the organization on a comprehensive range of legal and strategic issues. I will also be building out and developing PWSA's Legal Department.

Why did you join PWSA?

PWSA is beginning a new chapter in its story. I appreciate its commitment to redefining its role and purpose within the community and as an

organization. I'm thrilled to contribute to and be a part of this journey with PWSA.

Why did you choose to pursue a legal career?

I've always had a deep interest in the law and in our justice system. What surprised me the most about my career path were the invaluable skills that were developed along the way — sound judgement, decision making, strategic thinking, foresight — and how these skills were able to be applied outside of my career into other areas of my life.

Is there any advice that you'd like to share with your colleagues?

Always act and work with

integrity. Your integrity will follow you through the course of your career and, in my opinion, will always outweigh your skills and talents. Also, be understanding and work collaboratively with your colleagues — we're a team!

What's an interesting fact that we don't know about you?

When I was in college, I spent a semester living on and circumnavigating the world by ship. It was truly an amazing experience — we would study while sailing at sea and, once we arrived at a new port, we would explore and immerse ourselves in the new country.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?



There is nothing that I love more than spending time with my family — my husband, our young children, and our dog. We're also avid travelers! I really enjoy reading, especially good thrillers.

Highland II Reservoir Improvements Underway



Crews begin to install new liner on the Highland II Reservoir.

This spring, PWSA embarked on a \$24 million investment in its covered reservoir, located in Highland Park. Constructed between 1897 and 1903, the Highland II Reservoir supplies water to portions of Squirrel Hill, Downtown, South Side, and

West End. With a capacity of 125 million gallons, it is a crucial part of our water distribution system. As part of this project, PWSA's contractor crews will remove the existing liner and cover and install a new liner, floating cover and supplemental equipment,

like rainwater removal pumps.

Work began in March of 2022 and is estimated that it will be completed in December 2022.

This work is part of the Water Reliability Plan, a series of once-in-a-generation projects to renew key components of our water production and distribution system. After work on the reservoir is complete, it will be used as an alternative water supply point for other parts of our system that are taken offline for upgrades.

To read more about this project and other Water Reliability Plan initiatives, visit our [website](#).

What Is Impervious Area and Why Is It Important?

Our stormwater fee is charged to each property in the city based on the amount of impervious area on that parcel. Impervious area is any man-made surface that prevents or limits water soaking into the ground. Instead, stormwater runs off these hard surfaces, contributing to flooding and river pollution.

Since more impervious surface area means more stormwater runoff that needs to be managed, charging for stormwater services based on impervious area is the industry standard for stormwater utilities. This method is more equitable than charging for stormwater management based on water meter usage. Impervious area includes:

- private streets
- roofs
- driveways
- concrete pads
- structures
- mobile homes
- private sidewalks/walkways
- parking lots
- patios and decks
- athletic facilities and artificial turf
- pools (above ground and in-ground)
- compacted earth or clay
- gravel that is installed and maintained for vehicle travel or parking
- trails (paved or unpaved)

PGH₂O IN THE COMMUNITY

Join PWSA at Summer Farmers' Markets!



Our PGH₂O Cares team is out and about!

Be sure to come visit them while picking up fresh, local food at some of Pittsburgh's many wonderful farmers' markets! The PGH₂O Cares team will be at the East End market on Mondays, the Carrick market on Wednesdays, and the

North Side market on Fridays until the end of the season. They can help you find out which Customer Assistance Programs may be right for you and sign you up on-the-spot!

Click the hyperlinks to learn more about our [Customer Assistance Programs](#) and the [Pittsburgh Farmers' Markets](#).



Customer Assistance Programs

Our Customer Assistance Programs are designed to provide financial relief for income-qualified residential customers who are having difficulty paying their PGH2O bill. These programs are managed by our **PGH2O Cares team**, a group of education and outreach professionals dedicated to working directly with our most vulnerable customers to bolster enrollment in our Customer Assistance Programs and identify ways to reduce water usage.



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 our [Customer Assistance Program](#) page or call Dollar Energy Fund at 866.762.2348.

Additional Assistance Programs

Additional assistance programs are offered separately from PWSA's Customer Assistance Programs.

The **Low Income Housing Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)** provides drinking water and wastewater assistance to eligible renters or homeowners who are experiencing a water crisis. Please visit this [website](#) or call 877-395-8931 for more information and to apply.

The **Pennsylvania Housing Assistance Fund (PAHAF)** provides financial assistance to eligible homeowners to help cover water and wastewater charges. Please visit their [website](#) or call 888-987-2423 for more information and to apply.

The **Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN) Clean Water Assistance Fund** is available to eligible residential customers. It is also administered by Dollar Energy Fund. To learn more and apply for assistance, visit the [Clean Water Assistance Fund](#) page.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

If you can, consider donating to our [Hardship Grant Program](#).

Enroll in eBilling

Convenient and easy to use, our online billing and payment portal ensures timely delivery of bills and payments.

New enrollees who also enroll in the autopay feature on our [website](#) will receive a one-time \$5 discount on their bill.

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.

TO UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFO:

**Call PWSA Customer Service:
412.255.2423 (Press 5)**

Visit our [Update Contact Information](#) portal.

Stay in the know with PGH2O!

Join our email list to make sure you're getting the latest news and updates. Signing up is simple on our [News & Events](#) page.

[linkedin.com/company/pgh2o](https://www.linkedin.com/company/pgh2o) [facebook.com/pgh2o](https://www.facebook.com/pgh2o)

[@pgh2o](https://twitter.com/pgh2o)

[nextdoor.com](https://www.nextdoor.com)

Penn Liberty Plaza 1
1200 Penn Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Customer Service
T 412.255.2423 (Press 5)
info@pgh2o.com

Emergency Dispatch
T 412.255.2423 (Press 1)
Available 24/7

Board of Directors

Chair

Alex Sciulli

Vice Chairperson

Erika Strassburger

Secretary/Treasurer

BJ Leber

**Assistant Secretary/
Treasurer**

Michael Domach

Members

Peg McCormick Barron

Rosamaria Cristello

Audrey Murrell

Mark Anthony Thomas

Currents Contributors

Will Pickering

Chief Executive Officer

Rebecca Zito

*Senior Manager of
Public Affairs*

Julie Ascioffa

Industry Relations Manager

Rachel Rampa

*Senior Public Affairs
Coordinator*

Ross Marcinizyn

*Internal Communications
Specialist*

Mora McLaughlin

*Construction Communications
Project Manager*

Jordan Treaster

Development Coordinator

Elaine Hinrichs

*Education and Outreach
Associate*

Hali Hetz

Public Affairs Associate

Nick Letzkus

Public Affairs Associate