

CURRENTS

Today's improvements benefit you now and into the future

PWSA's infrastructure investments protect water quality, improve service reliability



PWSA contractor crews coordinate a successful lead service line replacement.

► When you spot PWSA crews in your neighborhood working on water lines, lining sewer pipes, or rehabbing aging infrastructure, you can be confident that those efforts will, over time, result in fewer service interruptions like water main breaks and low-pressure events, which may have caused boil water advisories in the past.

Strengthening the Pipe Network

In 2023, we replaced more than five miles of water main and lined more than 13 miles of sewer pipe. This work fortifies our network of pipes so that we can safely bring water to your home and carry it away as it

leaves your house through the sewer system.

Removing Lead Lines Block-by-Block

Paramount to drinking water safety and protecting public health for customers now and in the future is our community-based approach to removing lead service lines. Since 2016, we've replaced more than 11,000 lead service lines and are continuing to go block-by-block, neighborhood-by-neighborhood to remove any lead pipe we encounter. This means we're well on our way towards our goal of replacing all lead service lines in our water distribution system by 2026.

Additionally, our most recent round of lead testing reflects lead levels well below the state and federal action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb). This is PWSA's seventh consecutive round of testing. With results of 3.58 ppb — remaining historically low for Pittsburgh — customers can have confidence in the effectiveness of our treatment process and trust in our commitment to protecting public health.

Water Reliability Plan Progress

With our water system more than a century-old, we are moving ahead with our Water Reliability Plan — a series of once-in-a-generation projects to transform Pittsburgh's water system.

Since 2022, we've replaced the cover and liner at the covered Highland Reservoir and restored two large-diameter water mains within the vicinity of Highland Park. Construction of a new pump station in Highland Park started earlier this year. When complete, it will improve service reliability to two-thirds of our drinking water customers.

Projects on the horizon include the rehabilitation of the Aspinwall Pump Station, the replacement of the Bruecken Pump Station and the construction of a new bypass pipe around the Clearwell, which is located at the Water Treatment Plant. The plan culminates with the complete restoration of the Clearwell — originally built in 1912 and the final step of our drinking water treatment process. Its replacement will add redundancy and ensure secure and reliable water services for the next century.

Learn More About Our Recent Accomplishments

This month, we released our **2023 Year in Review** — our annual report that shows the progress we are making to improve the water services you rely on. It's available online at www.pgh2o.com/year-review-2023.

Meant to inform and build confidence, we encourage you to review the report to learn about our projects and programs and the essential services we provide for the health and well-being of you — our customers. ♦

Chief Executive Officer Briefing by Will Pickering

Is my water safe from PFAS? A brief explainer



▶ Just a few weeks ago, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) set its first-ever limits on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances – commonly known as PFAS – in drinking water.

PWSA first began monitoring for PFAS in 2018 as a proactive measure and

are well ahead of this new national standard. Through our proactive monitoring and use of historic data on PFAS, PWSA has never detected concentrations exceeding the EPA's now-formalized maximum contaminant level (MCL) over the past six years.

In addition to the EPA rule, the PA Department of Environmental Protection established a state regulation that took effect in January of this year. PWSA complies with these state regulatory requirements for PFAS, including mandated testing.

Though PFAS are widespread and found in a variety of everyday items, there are

actions you can take to reduce your exposure:

- Avoid products containing known PFAS (PTFE or any chemical starting with 'perfluoro' or 'polyfluor').
- Avoid non-stick products. Opt instead for stainless steel, cast iron, and glass.
- Choose 'water-resistant' instead of 'waterproof' products.
- Steer clear of stain-repellent sprays and treatments.
- Avoid containers with waxy inner coatings, like microwave popcorn bags, and food in grease-resistant containers.

- Skip the spray wax at the car wash.
- Trade your easy glide floss for a floss that is PFAS-free.

We understand the importance of providing transparent information regarding the quality and safety of your water. We want to assure you that our commitment to maintaining the highest water safety standards is unwavering.

As the EPA finalizes this new ruling, we will continue to monitor for PFAS and make the necessary adjustments to comply with the new regulations and maintain a quality water supply for our customers. ♦

TEAM PGH2O

Employee Spotlight: Martin Rocke



▶ Meet **Martin Rocke, Plant Operator** at our Water Treatment Plant. In this role, Martin is responsible for operating and monitoring the phases of our water treatment

process, including pumping, treatment, filtration, and more in accordance with all state and federal water quality regulations. Let's get to know a bit more about him in this issue's Employee Spotlight.

How do you contribute to the delivery of safe, clean drinking water each day? When it comes to the delivery of safe, high-quality drinking water, us Plant Operators are at the forefront. After all, we're one of the teams that ensure potable water makes it from the Allegheny River to your tap! Doing this job means modeling honesty and integrity, and following all procedures steadfastly.

What made you decide to join PWSA? In the 16 years before

my move to the United States, I served with The Water and Sewerage Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (WASA). Trinidad and Tobago is a two-island nation in the south of the Caribbean Sea, just north of Venezuela. The total population is around 1.5 million, so WASA is the sole water and sewage provider in the country.

The experience I gained in those roles helped prepare me for a long career in the water sector. Upon arriving in Pittsburgh, I was confident that PWSA was the ideal place for me to continue the career I enjoy and use the wealth of experience and knowledge that I've gained so far.

Why do you like working for

PWSA? I like working for PWSA because they foster employee growth. If you're willing to take advantage of the opportunities you're given, you can definitely grow your career and learn a lot here.

What's the best advice you've ever heard? Two things come to mind. First, *do the right thing, even if you're the only one doing it, and have an attitude of gratitude.*

What do you enjoy doing outside of work? Outside of work, I like cooking, relaxing, and just having fun.

What's something you're planning on doing in the next year that you've never done? Learn a new language. ♦

It's time for some spring cleaning fun



PWSA and Allegheny Cleanways employees and their families at one of our previous cleanup volunteering events, held in 2022 in the South Side.

► Spring has sprung!

In honor of the beginning of spring, Arbor Day (April 26), and Earth Day (April 27), PWSA employees and their families are partnering with Allegheny Cleanways on April 27 for a morning of spring cleaning and

giving back to our neighbors and the community in East Liberty and Larimer.

Volunteers and attendees will begin the day by powering up with breakfast and coffee while perusing educational information from PWSA, Penn

State, and Allegheny Cleanways.

Together with Allegheny Cleanways, our partners at Penn State Master Watershed Stewards, community members, and our colleagues and their family and friends, we'll spend the remainder of the morning hours cleaning litter from the streets and sidewalks and clearing off storm drains in the neighborhood.

We'd like to give a big **thank you** to all of the partners, coworkers, and community members who help us make these sorts of community volunteering events possible! ♦

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT

Educational Water Workshops announced

► As stewards of the water services you rely on, we're hosting a series of community workshops aimed at building awareness and greater confidence in the quality and safety of the drinking water we provide.

Upcoming **Water Workshops** will take place this June in neighborhoods across Pittsburgh. They will include an informative presentation on our process for treating and distributing water, facilitated table discussions to answer questions about your drinking water services, and exploratory storyboards and hands-on activities allowing you to learn at your own pace and engage with our team of water quality



experts and professionals.

We hope you'll take the time to attend!

In the coming weeks, please be sure to visit our **Events & Meetings** webpage for the upcoming Water Workshop

schedule and most up-to-date information.

To stay informed on all things PWSA, please follow us on social media or sign up for updates on our website. ♦

PGH₂O

WATER WISE

Saving water & money by managing stormwater



Please join PWSA, Penn State Master Watershed Stewards, and Penn State Master Gardeners for a workshop highlighting the stormwater control actions you can take to save water and money. The event will be held on **May 15** from **5 – 7 p.m.** at **Penn State Extension's Franco Harris Center** (1435 Bedford Ave.). A light meal will be provided.

During the workshop, volunteers from Penn State's Master Watershed Steward and Gardeners programs will discuss the stormwater interventions you can install at home. Solutions like rain barrels, rain gardens, and the use of native plants are effective ways to protect your property and neighborhood from flooding.

Representatives from PWSA will discuss the stormwater credit program and solutions that can help to lower your stormwater fee. You'll also learn more about the new, one-time rain barrel credit available to residential customers.

Learn more and register on our **Events & Meetings** webpage.

Customer Assistance Programs

We offer several Customer Assistance Programs that are designed to provide financial relief for income-qualified residential customers having difficulty paying their PWSA bill. These programs can help lower your monthly payment, reduce past due balances, and offer grants to put towards a balance on your account.

The best part is you don't have to go it alone! Our PGH2O Cares team works directly with our most vulnerable customers helping them to enroll in our programs and identify ways to reduce water usage.

If you think these programs can help you reduce your bill, visit pgh2o.com/CAP for more information or contact cares@pgh2o.com or call **412-255-2437**.



Additional Assistance Programs

Additional assistance programs are offered separately from PWSA's own Customer Assistance Programs. Please see below for a listing of available programs.

The **Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN) Clean Water Assistance Fund** is available to eligible residential customers. It is 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 \(www.pgh2o.com/give\)](#).

Enroll in eBilling

Convenient and easy to use, our [online billing and payment portal \(www.pgh2o.com/ebilling\)](#) ensures timely delivery of bills and payments.

Track Water Use

Visit our [Customer Advantage Portal](#) to track water use in real time and receive alerts when there's a spike in water use.

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.

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