

CURRENTS

PWSA Releases 2021 Water Quality Report

Understanding your water quality

As stewards of a vital natural and public resource, PWSA is committed to providing safe and reliable drinking water to the communities we serve. We're proud to release our **2021 Water Quality Report**. This annual report, also known as the Consumer Confidence Report, outlines our treatment process, the effectiveness of water quality testing, and the sample results of the various contaminants found in our drinking water.

We encourage you to read the full report on our [Water Quality & Treatment](#) webpage. To drive greater understanding of PWSA's water quality and treatment work, we also responded to some of the questions most frequently asked by customers.

Is my water safe to drink? Yes, drinking water distributed to PWSA customers in Pittsburgh is safe for drinking, personal hygiene, cleaning, cooking, and other essential daily uses.

Where does my drinking water come from? Drinking water supplied by PWSA is drawn from the Allegheny River. This iconic river begins

in north central Pa. and ends in Pittsburgh, where it joins the Monongahela River to form the Ohio River.

How's my drinking water treated? On average, 66 million gallons of water are treated each day. Water drawn from the Allegheny River enters our Aspinwall Water Treatment Plant and undergoes three stages of treatment over three full days prior to distribution.

- **Clarification:** This step removes suspended solids – like silt and clay – from raw water using a chemical process that clumps organic material together. This material settles out of the water by gravity.
- **Filtration:** Clarified water passes slowly through anthracite and sand filters to remove fine particles like microorganisms.
- **Disinfection:** Filtered water is sent through a large storage tank (the clearwell) and treated with chlorine to inactivate harmful microorganisms. Sodium carbonate is added to adjust pH and fluoride is added to prevent cavities.



How frequently is my water tested? Your water is tested every step of its journey by dedicated professionals responsible for operating, maintaining, and monitoring our water system. Each day, we test for approximately 100 different chemical and microbial constituents before, during, and after the treatment process. Additionally, we perform approximately 2,500 routine tests per month at the Water Treatment Plant and Microfiltration Filtration Plant. Lastly, we perform approximately 1,500 routine tests per month at various points of the distribution system.

Are lead levels in compliance? Our lead levels remain firmly in compliance with the EPA's action level of 15 ppb. Since the establishment of our industry-leading Community Lead Response program in 2016, we've replaced more than 9,136 public lead service lines and 6,048 private lead service lines, exceeding state requirements.

We remain dedicated to removing all lead service lines from our system through targeted programs. Our Priority Lead Service Line Replacement project will replace lead service lines at locations with elevated lead samples taken via our sampling program (request a test kit [here](#)). Please visit our [project](#) webpage for more information.

CEO Briefing by *Chief Executive Officer Will Pickering*

Supplier Diversity Annual Report highlights PWSA's prioritization of doing business with diverse enterprises



PWSA's [Supplier Diversity Program](#) ensures that minority, women, veteran, and service-disabled veteran owned businesses have the opportunity to participate in our contracting opportunities.

Supplier diversity is a topic of critical importance for our organization, and something we prioritize every time we engage with third parties to work with PWSA.

I'm pleased to announce that PWSA has published its inaugural **Supplier Diversity Annual Report**. This two-page report highlights our direct capital spending on Minority, Women, Disadvantaged, and Veteran Business Enterprises (MWDVBE) vendors and contractors throughout 2021. This past year, PWSA spent \$31,294,999 on contracts with 76 MWDVBE businesses,

totaling 18% of capital expenditures. The types of contracts include annual maintenance, such as sewer reconstruction and surface restoration, water treatment chemicals, debris removal, landscaping, plumbing, and electrical work.

The report also highlights our local and regional impact. Our contracts resulted in \$53,821,031 in direct, indirect, and induced economic outcomes for the surrounding communities and region.

I encourage you to review the full Supplier Diversity Annual

Report [here](#). If you are a diverse business interested in contracting with PWSA, please visit our [Bids & Opportunities](#) webpage.

I'm confident that providing contracting opportunities for a diversity of businesses, contractors, and sub-contractors will only help to bolster the economic vitality of our local business community and the Pittsburgh region. As we're investing more dollars into our infrastructure, we must also be deliberate about integrating equity and inclusion into how we do business so that everyone benefits.

TEAM PGH2O

Employee Spotlight: Kelly Hays

Ensuring the delivery of safe and reliable drinking water is PWSA's top priority. Just this month, **Kelly Hays, Water Quality Manager**, became the newest member of our team of water quality professionals. We sat down with her to learn a little more about her in this month's Employee Spotlight.

Tell us more about your role.

I'm responsible for overseeing and maintaining drinking water quality in compliance with all state and federal drinking water regulations and requirements.

What made you decide to join Team PGH2O?

After graduating from college, I began working for PWSA

as a temporary employee, holding Chemist and Quality Control Specialist roles. I left the organization in 2017, and as time went on, I continued to hear of the many positive changes occurring at the Authority. When I was offered the role of Water Quality Manager, I gladly accepted! It's good to be home.

Why did you choose to pursue this type of career?

To be honest, I didn't choose this career, it chose me! I've always been interested in pursuing a career in science, which led me to the University of Pittsburgh, where I earned a Biology degree. Until I started working at PWSA, I never

realized just how much effort went into reliably delivering safe drinking water to our taps. It was amazing to me!

What are your favorite challenges to tackle?

Ones that require scientific investigation!

What sort of impact do you hope to have on PWSA's Water Quality work?

My vision for my group is for us to exceed all water quality standards and be the trusted source of information for our customers. We can accomplish this by setting water quality goals that exceed the regulatory limits and actively communicate those accomplishments to our



customers. We have a strong group of dedicated water quality professionals that I am excited to work with to accomplish these goals.

What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

Spending time with my son, family, and friends.

An Update on PWSA's Stormwater Strategic Plan



The stormwater strategic planning process PWSA has embarked on is necessary to develop a long-term stormwater management strategy that will serve as Pittsburgh's blueprint to address local stormwater challenges, capacity issues

within the sewer system, and combined sewer overflows and sanitary sewer overflows to improve water quality.

The stormwater strategic plan builds off past planning efforts, uses climate change data, community input, and prioritizes public health and safety to provide an inclusive and sustainable way to address one of our region's most challenging problems.

The broad goals of the plan are to reduce flooding, improve quality of life for residents, develop solutions that address wet weather challenges, and incorporate broad public and stakeholder support.

We're soliciting community feedback through the interactive [EngagePGH web portal](#), where residents can plot the location of stormwater issues, rank topics they'd like addressed, and pose stormwater-related questions to our stormwater project managers.

The next phase of our planning process focuses on modeling our sewer system to understand its capacity and begin to define an equitable level of stormwater protection we can provide across Pittsburgh.

Visit our [stormwater strategic plan FAQ](#) webpage for more information, or visit [EngagePGH](#) to engage in the planning process.

PGH2O IN THE COMMUNITY

PWSA Launches Stormwater Survey on EngagePGH Site

As part of PWSA's [stormwater strategic plan](#) and related outreach efforts, we've launched an [interactive web portal](#) on EngagePGH. Here Pittsburgh residents can plot on a map the location of stormwater issues like basement backups, overland flooding, and maintenance concerns. Residents can also rank topics they'd like to see addressed and pose stormwater-related questions to PWSA's stormwater project managers.

To gather community input, Stormwater Community Ambassadors, organized by [Grounded Strategies](#), were

a key element during the first phase of our stormwater strategic planning. This program transforms passionate residents into well-equipped, knowledgeable stormwater champions in their communities.

They served as our boots on the ground, speaking directly to residents and conducting surveys in watersheds and neighborhoods where factors like water quality, localized flooding, environmental justice, and opportunities for future stormwater projects most align. These locations include Four Mile Run, Negley and Heth's Run, Soho Run, South 21st Street, Homewood and Larimer,

Saw Mill Run, Woods Run, Hazelwood, and Sheraden.

The EngagePGH platform and Ambassadors provide opportunities for residents to participate in the long-term stormwater strategic planning efforts underway at PWSA.

The survey results, along with a full report from the first phase of the stormwater strategic plan, will be posted to our website for public comment later this summer. In early fall, we'll host a community meeting to share recommendations from the plan as well as next steps regarding our stormwater strategic planning efforts.

PGH₂O

WATER WISE

Save Water and Money This Summer

During the warmest months of the year, you may find that your household's water usage is higher than usual. Outdoor activities like gardening, lawn care, home maintenance, and car washing can all use a lot of water. However, some of that water is wasted if it evaporates in the heat, forms puddles in the yard, or runs off hard surfaces.

Following these water conservation tips can help reduce your water bill:

- Check hoses, irrigation systems, and spigots for leaks then repair as needed.
- Water your plants in the morning or early evening to reduce water lost to evaporation.
- Use an automatic shut-off nozzle for your gardening hose to control the flow.
- Set sprinklers to water the lawn or garden only – not the street or sidewalk.
- Wash your car using a water bucket over your lawn or a commercial car wash that recycles water.
- Sweep your sidewalk, steps, and driveway instead of hosing off those areas.

Learn more on our [Water Conservation](#) page.

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.

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