



July 2008

Update: Water Rate Increase Passed by Council

On June 19, the Atlanta City Council unanimously passed DWM's four-year rate increase package in what Commissioner Rob Hunter called, "a vote of confidence in Mayor Franklin's Clean Water Atlanta program." The 13-0 vote echoed the support Atlantans showed in February with their overwhelming approval of the Municipal Option Sales Tax.

Water rates will increase 27.5 percent for Fiscal Year 2008-2009, which begins on July 1. Rates will increase 12.5 percent in 2009-2010, another 12.5 percent in 2010-2011, and 12 percent in 2011-2012. Council included an amendment making the increases in years 2-4 contingent upon the completion of an audit of DWM. The audit must be completed by March 31, 2009.

Call Center Earns Award for Excellence

DWM's Call Center earned a Center of Excellence award from Benchmark Portal, an organization that certifies and judges call center performance for major corporations and other entities. According to Erica Cockfield, Director, "DWM's Call Center, is the first government-run call center to receive this award within the state of Georgia."

Cockfield says she is tracking statistical measures such as average speed to answer the phone and call abandonment rates. The Call Center's most recent scores included a 35-second average speed to answer and a call abandonment rate of 3 percent, she says.

"We have monthly training for [call center workers] to keep their skill sets current and sharp," Cockfield adds. "Training, coupled with accountability, has yielded these wonderful results."

Mayor Makes The Case For Federal Funding

Mayor Shirley Franklin testified before a U.S. Senate committee last month about the need for more federal funding for state and local infrastructure. Franklin and other mayors backed the creation of a National Infrastructure Bank through which cities could receive federal funding for water and sewer improvements, roads, bridges, mass transit and other high-cost infrastructure needs.

DWM's federally mandated Clean Water Atlanta water and sewer infrastructure program currently receives little federal funding. Rather, 95 percent of the funding comes from water and sewer fees and the Municipal Option Sales Tax.

DWM Makes a Splash at Water Conference

Atlanta was host to the American Water Works Association (AWWA) annual conference in June. DWM employees gave presentations, staffed booths and volunteered to help make the event a success.

Senior staff shared lessons learned about financing water and sewer infrastructure, the aging of our utility infrastructure and communicating drought information to customers with water professionals from around the world.

Important Numbers to Remember

Customer Service: 404-658-6500
Customer Service Fax: 404-658-6637
Customer Service E-mail: watershedhelp@atlwater.com



City of Atlanta

Shirley Franklin
Mayor

City Council

Lisa M. Borders
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Jim Maddox

Joyce Sheperd

Cesar C. Mitchell

Mary Norwood

H. Lamar Willis



Atlanta hosts GreenPlumbers Workshop

DWM has partnered with GreenPlumbers USA to encourage plumbers and those who are interested in the industry to adopt a conservation approach to plumbing. In two GreenPlumbers workshops, participants learned about water-saving technologies and fixtures, as well as methods of saving energy, such as the use of solar hot water heaters.

“We’ve partnered with GreenPlumbers USA because they share all of our goals for the conservation program and of DWM in general,” says Melinda Langston, Director of Water Conservation. “Who better to help influence our customers to install water efficient devices than plumbers?” Langston asks.

CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Customers Taking Advantage of Toilet Rebate Program

As of June 2008, 260 customers have taken advantage of the City of Atlanta Toilet Rebate. Under the terms of the program, participants receive a \$50 credit on their water bill for installing an approved 1.6 gallon-per-flush toilet and a \$100 credit for installing an approved 1.28 gallon-per-flush toilet.

We estimate that participants are saving roughly 45 gallons of water per new, improved toilet every day. That’s a big dent in home water use!

For more information about the Toilet Rebate Program, visit our website at www.atlantawatershed.org.

Water Conservation: What Are You Doing to Save Water?

Although the State has loosened watering guidelines, Atlanta and most of North Georgia remain in a serious drought. DWM encourages its customers to continue practicing wise water use during these hot summer days. We’d also love to hear what you are doing to conserve water. Contact Jennifer Carlile at jcarlile@atlantaga.gov or 404-589-2689 to share your water conservation tips.



APS Students Learn About Water Conservation

Two Atlanta Public Schools, E.L. Connally and Centennial Place Elementary, were first and second place winners in DWM’s first Water Conservation School Challenge. Collectively, they saved more than 99,000 gallons of water and were rewarded with an ice cream party for their schools. William M. Finch’s Junior Beta Club, under the tutelage of Alyce Black, School Counselor and Club Advisor, researched and identified ways that people waste and misuse water, as well as strategies for using water wisely. Putting their new knowledge into practice, Club members affixed signs to street drains urging people not to pollute, delivered informational door hangers to neighbors (all while chaperoned by adults), and changed their own water-use behaviors to reflect what they learned. Finally, Club members developed a water conservation

presentation they will use to teach other students about conservation and preventing pollution.



The Junior Beta Club at William M. Finch researched water waste.