Welcome to Chester Water Authority

Information for new customers

Quality • Service • Value
Welcome to Chester Water Authority

Bringing Clean Water to You

Chester Water Authority (CWA) is proud of our award-winning record of providing clean, pure water. You can be confident that your water will meet or exceed all the criteria established by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), and the American Water Works Association (AWWA). You can also rest assured that our rates are the lowest practical to cover operations, maintenance, and other requirements.

CWA is locally owned and managed. That means we care about – and understand – your needs and concerns, because we live and work here, too.

Below are some points of interest about Chester Water Authority:

- We serve over 41,000 customers (a total of over 200,000 people).
- Our service area extends from the Susquehanna River to the Delaware River, covering the developing communities of southwestern Delaware County and southern Chester County.
- We pump an average of 34 million gallons of water per day.
- We have over 639 miles of distribution mains.
- We supply water not only to residential, industrial, and commercial customers, but also to other water companies in Pennsylvania and Delaware.
- Our Octoraro Treatment Plant has the capacity to treat 60 million gallons of water per day, positioning us well to serve today’s and tomorrow’s customers.

This brochure contains information about CWA and your water service. Our water quality report, which is produced annually, is enclosed. Please contact our Customer Service Department at 610-876-8181 or at 800-793-2323 if you have any questions.

Again, welcome to Chester Water Authority. We are here to serve you, our valued customer.

*The Employees of Chester Water Authority*
Our Mission

The mission of Chester Water Authority is to provide quality water to all of our customers, when they need it, at a reasonable cost.

Our water meets or exceeds all the criteria established by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), and the American Water Works Association (AWWA).

*CWA meets or exceeds state and federal standards for your drinking water.*

We not only satisfy the water needs of our current customers, but we anticipate and plan for the needs of future customers through orderly growth. We charge the lowest practical rates to cover operation and maintenance costs, capital requirements, and bond obligations.

Benefits to our Customers

Chester Water Authority’s sole purpose is to provide excellent-quality water to over 200,000 people, in both homes and businesses. As an authority, CWA does not have stockholders who require dividends. That means our rates are – and can remain – lower than those of private utility companies.

Equally important, CWA has a higher percentage of funds to direct into the infrastructure to make capital improvements such as building new storage tanks, revitalizing existing mains and lines, and enhancing the distribution system.

*CWA is part of your community. We are your neighbors and friends.*

CWA, as your regional water authority, sets goals that are dedicated to meeting the needs of the communities we serve in Delaware and Chester Counties. Being totally integrated into the region, we transcend county boundaries. Through capital projects and proactive maintenance, CWA invests in our water treatment and distribution infrastructure to deliver quality, service, and value to the community.
Our History

CWA was created for a single purpose – to supply pure water to homes and businesses. For nearly 140 years, since its origin as the South Ward Water Works, CWA has maintained the highest standards of water quality and customer service.

In 1939, the Chester Municipal Authority was incorporated with a five-member Board of Directors, which purchased the South Ward utility. The Municipal Authority was a vibrant, expanding operation that built the Octoraro Reservoir, which is located in Lancaster County. A water treatment plant and a 45-mile-long transmission pipeline connected the new water supply to our customers in the City of Chester and surrounding areas. Throughout the 1950s and ’60s, the Authority increased the treatment capacity of the plant and the storage capacity of the distribution system.

In 1965, the name of the Municipal Authority was changed to Chester Water Authority, and improvements continued.

Through our on-going capital projects and commitment to pro-active maintenance, CWA continues to deliver quality drinking water to the community. Recent projects include the following:

- Our 10-year Capital Improvement Program at our Octoraro Treatment Plant to upgrade treatment processes and equipment, as well as constructing new facilities to enhance capacity and preparedness.
- Extensive water main rehabilitation in order to reduce risk of service interruption to our customers or unanticipated water main repairs.
- Other preventative assessments including our Leak Study to determine water mains most in need of immediate repair or replacement, before creating costly leaks.

Today, CWA continues to look for new and better ways to provide quality service to our customers. By being proactive, the Authority is able to preserve water quality and ensure service reliability. We have instilled reliability, and we continue to pursue quality.
At CWA, we know that our customers are busy and have full schedules. Therefore, we have adjusted CWA’s hours of business to suit your needs. Our Customer Service Department is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We are also available via telephone Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. If you have an emergency, CWA representatives are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at the emergency telephone number listed below.

Telephone: 610-876-8181
800-793-2323

Emergency: 610-876-8181

Our Customer Service Department is in our Main Office Building, which is located at 415 Welsh Street in the City of Chester.

CWA has a drive-up window and provides convenient parking for customers at the rear of our Main Office Building.

For easy drive-up access, please use the 4th Street entrance to the parking/drive-up area, as indicated by the diagram at the left. This entrance is also accessible to the handicapped.

You may contact CWA by telephone or in person, or visit us at www.chesterwater.com
How to Read Your Water Bill

1. Bill Number
   CWA internal use
2. Customer Name and Mailing Address
3. Meter Number
4. Billing Period
5. Meter Reading
6. Read Status
   Type of meter reading
7. Thousand Gallons Used
   Thousands of gallons of water used during the billing period
8. Bill Date
9. Account Number
   Number assigned to service address
10. Customer Number
    Number assigned to customer
11. Service Address
    Address where water service is provided
12. Usage Graph
    Water usage history
13. Balance Forward
    Unpaid balance from previous bill
14. Base Charge
    Base charge for water service
15. Water Consumption Charge
    Charge for water used during the billing period
16. Current Due by
    Payment is due on or before the date listed
17. Account Balance
    Total amount owed on account
18. Amount Due
    Amount due on or before the date listed
19. Amount Due if After
    Amount due plus late fee if paid after the date listed

For your convenience, we have designed a new, EASY-TO-READ statement.
Paying Your Bill

Chester Water Authority customers have a variety of bill-paying options. You can mail your payment, using a check or money order, in the self-addressed envelope that arrives with each quarterly bill. You can also pay in person at the Authority’s main office, located at 415 Welsh Street in the City of Chester, either by walking inside or by using the drive-up window.

Other options are to “Pay by Phone” directly to the Authority or to use online computer banking. Many banks now offer the automated “Pay by Phone” system, or electronic bill-paying. If you are currently paying other bills by phone, you can add Chester Water Authority to your list through your bank. For more detailed information on telephone or electronic bill payment, contact your bank.

You may:

• mail your payment
• pay in person
• pay by phone via your bank
• pay electronically
Many facilities that provide water to your home or business are located underground. The sketch below shows the location of a typical water service, and who is responsible for what part of it. If you have any questions, call our Customer Service Department at 610-876-8181 or 800-793-2323.

**Sketch 1 - Curb Box**

**Sketch 2 - Water Meter Box**
You may have an outside water meter box serving your house. Outside water meter boxes are about 10 inches in diameter, and have a cast-iron top. In residential areas, the boxes are usually located between the sidewalk and the street, in the sidewalk, or near the edge of the road if there is no curb or sidewalk.

A water meter box serves two functions. It allows CWA to easily access the water meter and provides a master shut-off valve that serves your house without requiring CWA to enter your home.

You may have a curb box on your property. Curb boxes are about 4 inches in diameter and are also located near the curb. The curb box gives CWA access to the master shut-off valve serving your home. With a curb box, the water meter will be inside your house.

There are several things you can do to provide CWA with easy access to the meter box or the curb box. Access is particularly important during an emergency when CWA needs to operate the valve located in the box.

- Keep items such as trash canisters, potted plants, vehicles, and debris off the meter box and curb box.
- Trim the grass around the meter box and curb box.
- Do not plant flowers around the meter box or curb box that may hide it from view.
- Keep shrubbery and other landscaping from obstructing clear and easy access to the meter box and curb box.

Pictured above are typical examples of a properly maintained meter box and curb box. It is CWA’s responsibility to maintain these boxes. If they become higher or lower than the surrounding ground, please let us know.

If you have any questions or concerns about these structures, please feel free to contact CWA’s Customer Service Department at 610-876-8181 or 800-793-2323 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
Chester Water Authority has an ongoing program that requires the installation of check valves on all new and retrofitted water service connections. This program is part of a public health precaution to provide what is called cross-connection control. This will ensure that once water enters a property or a customer’s home, it will not be allowed to reenter Chester Water Authority’s distribution system.

We want to make you aware that this check valve could exacerbate a problem that may occur if your hot water heater ever malfunctions by overheating. If your hot water heater overheats with the check valve in place, the expanded water will not be allowed back through the meter and back into CWA’s distribution system. The water will have to be released into an expansion tank, which should be part of your hot water plumbing system.

If you have any questions or are having a specific problem regarding the operation of your water system, please feel free to call one of our Customer Service representatives at 610-876-8181 or 800-793-2323, and we will be happy to have someone discuss your problem with you.
Keeping Our Customers Safe

Stop. Look. Listen.

Chester Water Authority wants all of our customers to be safe. We offer the following suggestions to protect our customers. When someone knocks on your door and claims to represent Chester Water Authority, please make sure the person really is a CWA employee.

STOP. Safety starts before you open the door.

LOOK. Our field personnel carry CWA identification, wear a blue uniform with the CWA logo, and drive a white CWA vehicle with the CWA logo displayed.

LISTEN. If you have not requested service or received prior notice that we are working in your area, you do not need to admit the individual. We try to give advance notice if we need to visit your home for service.

If you have any doubt or a question about any person who claims to represent Chester Water Authority, you are advised to call our Customer Service Department at 610-876-8181 or 800-793-2323 before letting anyone into your home.

Chester Water Authority is committed to safety for its employees and customers.
Water Conservation

Water is a limited resource that can quickly become scarce if we do not take measures to conserve and protect it. Although we are surrounded by water, most of it is not drinkable. In fact, only 3 percent of the world’s water is fresh water, and of this, 96 percent is stored in icecaps and glaciers. That leaves only 1 percent of the world’s water available for drinking.

Conserving water is only half the battle. To ensure that our water needs will always be met, we must also protect our water supplies against pollution.

**REMEMBER - EVERY DROP COUNTS!**

- Never pour water down the drain if you can use it to water a plant, for cleaning, or for any other use.
- Operate automatic dishwashers and clothes washers only when they are fully loaded. Set the water level for the size of the load you are washing.
- Verify that your home is leak free. Read your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not stay exactly the same, there is a leak.
- When washing dishes by hand, fill one sink or basin with soapy water. Quickly rinse under a slow-moving stream from the faucet.
- Repair dripping faucets by replacing washers. If your faucet is dripping at a rate of one drop per second, you can expect to waste 2,700 gallons of water per year.
- Store drinking water in the refrigerator. Don’t let the tap run while you are waiting for cool water to flow.
- Check for toilet tank leaks by adding food coloring to the tank. If the toilet is leaking, color will appear in the toilet bowl within 30 minutes. Check the toilet for worn-out, corroded, or bent parts. Flush as soon as the test is done, since food coloring may stain the tank.
- Do not use running water to thaw meat or other frozen foods. Defrost food overnight in the refrigerator or in a microwave.
- Take shorter showers. Replace your showerhead with an ultralow-flow version. Units are available that allow you to cut off the flow without adjusting the water-temperature knobs.
- Don’t let water run while shaving or washing your face. Brush your teeth first, while waiting for the water to get hot, then wash or shave after filling the basin.
- If the toilet handle frequently sticks in the flush position, letting water run constantly, replace or adjust it.

**COLD WEATHER TIPS**

- Disconnect all hoses from outside faucets.
- Close all windows and garage doors near water pipes.
- If you have had problems in the past, when the temperature becomes severely cold, let the water in the affected pipe run about half the diameter of a wooden pencil.
- Make sure you have the telephone number of a reliable plumber.
Community Service

Reaching out to the people we serve.

Community service is an important part of our customer awareness philosophy. We provide innovative, interesting, and educational programs for all our customers to enjoy. From programs in our schools to public awareness campaigns, CWA is involved.

We have developed a variety of projects, including Safe Drinking Water Week in the spring, Water Conservation Awareness in the summer, Cold Weather Tips during the winter months, and other efforts.

CWA provides a Speakers Bureau for schoolchildren, senior groups, and other organizations. Topics cover the many important aspects of our precious water resources.

We work closely on a number of special projects with the Boys’ and Girls’ Club of Chester and public service endeavors sponsored by local municipalities.

Live educational presentations and facility tours have reached over 3,000 children and adults from schools, civic organizations, and churches.

Our Web site supplies the latest customer newsletter, water quality report, and press releases. We also keep our customers informed of water-related events by placing ads in local publications. We have added a special Alert option to our Web site to use in case of an emergency or when we need to let our customers know important information. Our Web site is www.chesterwater.com.
Notes and Important Phone Numbers

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Medical Information:

Doctor’s Name:______________________________________________________
Address:___________________________________________________________
Phone:_________________________ Cell:_______________________________

In case of an emergency, please contact:

Name:_____________________________________________________________
Address:________________________________________________________________

Phone:_________________________ Cell:_______________________________
Chester Water Authority

Mailing Address:
PO Box 467
Chester, PA 19016-0467

Business Address:
415 Welsh Street
Chester, PA 19013

Business Hours and Phone:
Walk-in: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Telephone: 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday
Telephone: 610-876-8181
800-793-2323

Emergency Hours and Phone:
24 HOURS PER DAY
7 DAYS PER WEEK
Telephone: 610-876-8181

www.chesterwater.com