

# Chester Water Authority

## Customer News and Information

Winter 2012/2013 Vol. 18 No. 3

### News from Chester Water Authority

As some of you may be aware, PA Senate Bill 375, which has become law, stipulated that the member number and distribution of the Chester Water Authority Board of Directors was changed. This significant change occurred at the end of November and signifies that we have become truly a regional Authority. In January 1978 we had a minimal amount of customers in Chester County and less than 5% of our total in Western Delaware County. The rest were equally distributed between the

rest of Delaware County and the City of Chester. Now we have approximately 15% in Chester County, 10% in Western Delaware County, 45% in Delaware County, and 30% in the City of Chester. The growth of our distribution system facilities has shown a similar pattern to the growth of the customer location distribution.

The new Board has nine members, three each appointed by Delaware and Chester Counties and the City of Chester, instead of the five member Board that was appointed

only by the City. We welcome the newly sworn members – William Riley, Joseph McGinn, Cynthia Leitzell, Wendell Butler, Paul Andriole, Thomas Chiomento III, and Leonard Rivera, and the one returning member, Livia Smith.

We thank recent former Board members Donald Tonge, Norma Jean Holmes, Mary Smith, Earl Pearsall, Linda Cartisano, Willie Wells, and the late Earline Mann for their service.

### What is My CWA?

Chester Water Authority is excited to announce the release of *My CWA*, our new self-service Customer Service Representative. *My CWA* allows our customers the freedom to access the following information through the internet.

- View Billing History
- Receive Electronic Water Bills
- View Meter Reading History
- View Usage History
- View Transaction History
- Ask CWA a Question
- Receive educational information on Residential Water Usage
- Submit a Meter Reading
- Apply for a Leak Adjustment

To access your account information online, go to <http://www.chesterwater.com> and click on the *My CWA* icon. You will need your account and customer numbers to activate your account. These numbers can be found at the top, right hand side of your water bill.

## Consumer Information

From time to time, Chester Water Authority (CWA) customers may receive something in their mailboxes from companies trying to sell them insurance for their water lines running from the curb to their house.

The Authority is currently not affiliated with any company offering insurance.

If customers receive a mailing that is offering them to purchase insurance for their water service, you may want to check the company out by contacting the *Better Business Bureau* or do a little research before signing a contract. Here are a couple of tips that

CWA customers should consider:

— Read the service contract very carefully and make sure you have a clear understanding of it, especially the exclusions, before agreeing to buy coverage. Don't purchase coverage over the phone without seeing a contract with all verbal promises in writing.

— Make sure you're familiar with the company's cancellation policy and the Federal Trade Commission's Cooling Off Rule.

If you have any questions, please contact our Customer Service Department at (610) 876-8181 or (800) 793-2323.

## Prepared!

Chester Water Authority (CWA) takes every precaution when a potentially hazardous storm comes our way. So when Hurricane Sandy started creeping up the east coast, CWA was ready!

The storm was relatively mild for CWA, but taking into consideration how hard the area was hit by Hurricane Floyd in 1999, our Treatment Plant employees sand bagged the pump room doors and installed in advance a water-filled bladder that is stationed at the low point of the area in front of the pump room doors. The containment was to prevent potential floodwaters from entering the structure.

It was decided not to lower the reservoir level. There were a lot of leaves yet on the trees and if they were not allowed to flow over the spillway and gates, the leaves would lead to clogging of the intake. All fuel and critical chemical tanks were filled and all storm drains were cleaned of leaves and debris. Heavy equipment was relocated away from the wooded areas to prevent damage from fallen trees.

The day of the storm we sent two (2) maintenance men and one (1) mechanic home to rest up so that they would be available for the evening hours. The stream flows and rainfall amounts were monitored on our Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system (SCADA) and a dam watch was initiated. Two (2) diesel engines were started in anticipation of power outages (which never occurred). The night-shift operators arrived two (2) hours early to insure adequate staffing, in the event they could not get to the Treatment Plant to relieve the on-duty operators. Fortunately, Hurricane Sandy's rainfall amount and wind speed were less than predicted.

The day after the storm involved clean up and the dam watch was terminated once the lake level had stabilized and the stream flows began to lower.

Chester Water Authority once again took a proactive stance for emergency situation and was prepared to "ride out the storm"!

## 2012 Water Main Rehabilitation Completed

In April 2012, the Authority started its annual Water Main Rehabilitation Project in the City of Chester. The project consisted of cleaning and cement-mortar lining approximately 12,600 feet of 4-, 5-, 6-, and 12-inch diameter cast-iron water main. Some water main dates back to as early as 1867 when our first pipe was installed.

By the end of this water main rehabilitation project, the Authority had renewed approximately 220 valves and fittings, 8 fire hydrants, and 120 services. This area, like all of the other areas, sees improved water pressure, fire flows, and increased water quality which optimizes water service to our customers.

## 2012 System Flushing Completed

Each year, Chester Water Authority (CWA) performs a system flushing throughout its water service area that begins during the nighttime hours from 9:00 pm through 5:00 am.

In addition to posting advertisements in local newspapers and notifications on our web site ([www.chesterwater.com](http://www.chesterwater.com)), CWA utilized our reverse

9-1-1 system to notify customers when the flushing was occurring in their area.

The purpose of flushing our water system is to preserve water quality, guarantee sufficient water pressure for fire hydrants, maintain fire hydrant operability, and reduce fire hydrant leaks.



## Frequently Asked Questions



*Is tap water safer in one area of a community as compared to another?*

No. All the tap water must meet all federal and state requirements. The Octoraro Reservoir is Chester Water Authority's principle source of water. There are other water utilities that have multiple sources of water, but all water must be safe to drink.

***Drinking water often looks cloudy when first taken from a faucet and then it clears up. What is that?***

The cloudy water is caused by tiny air bubbles in the water similar to the gas bubbles in carbonated soft drinks. After a while, the bubbles rise to the top and dissipate. This type of cloudiness occurs more often in the winter, when the drinking water is cold.

***I heard about a water treatment device that uses an electromagnet to treat water. Does this work?***

The Water Quality Association (WQA), the watchdog group for home treatment devices, has this to say: "WQA knows of no generally recognized scientific or technical evidence proving that magnetic, electromagnetic, or catalytic devices sold to treat water have any measurable physical or chemical affect on water quality."

*(Source: "Plain Talk About Drinking Water" Third Edition by Dr. James M. Symons)*

## Update - Tank #4

Rehabilitation is well underway of Tank #4 at our Village Green Tank farm located in Aston Township, Delaware County. The two manholes are now completely hydro-blasted in preparation for the installation of steel stress plates required for the installation of the manhole closure. The reinforcing wires, which keep the tank in tension, will be re-tensioned to prevent the hydrostatic pressure from blowing the manhole out once the tank is filled.



The old ladder from the floor to roof hatch was removed and new ladders at each of the two manholes will be installed after the walls are coated with a flexible internal spray-on liner (CIM) which will stop the leaks through the original tank wall. The exterior painting will likely begin in the spring 2013 due to winter weather conditions and the dome roof fall protection system will be installed after the exterior painting.

The Tank was constructed in 1951 along with three other similar tanks at this location. At that time, this was the largest tank farm in the country composed of pre-stressed concrete tanks. Once Tank #4 is completely rehabilitated, the service life of the tank should be extended at least 25 years.

## Preparing for Cold Winter Months

There are several measures that can be taken to prevent winter water disasters.

It is a good idea to locate and mark your master valve. This valve controls all water flowing into your home and is usually found near where the water line enters your building. Marking the valve will allow you to quickly turn off the water if a pipe should burst or you have other water problems.



Make sure the water line to outside faucets is turned off and the line is drained. Drain each outdoor spigot after turning off the valve to prevent any remaining water from freezing and bursting the pipes.

Eliminate drafts. Check around the home for areas where water supply lines are located

in unheated areas and take measures to prevent the flow of cold air in these areas. Look under the house, in the basement, crawl space, attic, garage, and under kitchen and bathroom cabinets. Both hot and cold water pipes in these areas should be insulated. A hot water supply line can freeze just as a cold water supply line can freeze if water is not running through the pipe, and the water temperature becomes cold. Insulation supplies are available at your local home improvement or hardware store.

If your water pipes do freeze, never try to thaw a pipe with an open flame or torch. If your pipes do freeze, contact our Customer Service Department at (610) 876-8181 or (800) 793-2323.

If you will be away from your home, keep the thermostat at a reasonable temperature to make sure all areas with water pipes are kept above freezing.

**Quality•Service•Value**  
[www.chesterwater.com](http://www.chesterwater.com)



# Chester Water Authority

## Contact Information

### Business Hours and Phone:

Walk-in: 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM  
Telephone: 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM  
Monday through Friday  
Telephone: (610) 876-8181  
(800) 793-2323

### Mailing Address:

P. O. Box 467  
Chester, PA 19016

### Physical Address:

**Chester Office:**  
415 Welsh Street  
Chester, PA 19013

### Kennett Square Office:

148 West State Street,  
Suite 101  
Kennett Square, PA 19348

### Web Site:

[www.chesterwater.com](http://www.chesterwater.com)

### Emergency Hours and Phone:

24 HOURS A DAY  
7 DAYS A WEEK  
Telephone: (610) 876-8181

## Customer Safety: CWA Cares About Your Safety

**S**afety for our customers is important. Chester Water Authority wants to help you stay safe.

This includes helping to protect you from impostors and scams relating to your water services (see page 2 - "Consumer Information").

All CWA meter readers/installers and all of our construction crew wear uniforms and carry identification cards that indicates they are employees of CWA.

### Three things to know:

- We do not call customers with offers for free water testing.
- CWA **does not** show up unexpectedly asking for entrance into your home. Authority personnel should always have an appointment before they come to your home.
- Chester Water Authority personnel **do not** collect water bill payments while at your home. Payments should be made either in person at our Main Office Building, mailing your payment in the envelope provided with your water bill, or paying your bill on-line at: [www.chesterwater.com](http://www.chesterwater.com) and finding the button "Pay Bill Online". It is a red button and is located on the left hand side of the web page.

Before letting a stranger into your home, look at the uniform or ask to see their identification. If you have questions about the authenticity of a CWA employee and the nature of his or her visit, please call us at (610) 876-8181 or (800) 793-2323. We will be glad to confirm the identity of our employee.

## CWA is Closed On:

**Christmas Day**  
December 25, 2012

**New Year's Day**  
January 1, 2013

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**  
January 21, 2013

**President's Day**  
February 18, 2013

## Need a Speaker?

**C**hester Water Authority provides a speaker bureau (free of charge) to educate you—our customers—about the straight facts about water.

If you are interested in having someone give a presentation, call our Public Relations Department at 610-876-8185.

## Satellite Branch!

**A**re you located in Chester County and need to contact CWA? We have representatives in our Kennett Square office located at 148 West State Street, Suite 101. You can also call Customer Service at 610-876-8181, or you can visit us on the web at: [www.chesterwater.com](http://www.chesterwater.com).