



News You Can Use for Customers of the Richmond Department of Public Utilities and Richmond Gas Works

Flood insurance is one of the most important needs for homeowners

Virginia Flood Awareness Week is March 14-20 this year, and the City of Richmond Department of Public Utilities is joining the statewide effort to inform citizens about flood risks and flood insurance.

Flooding is a common and costly natural hazard. Anywhere it rains, it can flood. Just one inch of water in a home can cause up to \$25,000 in damages, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

One of the most important steps Richmonders can take to be prepared is to obtain flood insurance. Flood insurance, whether it is through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) or a private carrier,

allows individuals, businesses, and communities to quickly and sufficiently recover after a flood. Most homeowners and renters insurance policies do not cover damage caused by floods.

The City of Richmond participates in the NFIP, which means all citizens are eligible for flood insurance, even if they don't live in a high-risk flood zone.

Flood insurance policies take a minimum of 30 days to go into effect so it is vital to protect assets and purchase coverage well in advance of a disaster, flood event, and the 2021 hurricane season. Contact an insurance agent and visit FloodSmart.gov for further details on flood insurance.

Only Rain Should Go Down the Curb Drain

April showers bring May flowers -- as well as flooded streets when storm drains already filled with fall leaves, add road debris and litter.

Anything thrown out of car windows or dropped into gutters and sidewalks eventually finds its way to the nearest storm drain. Once it goes into the drain well, it piles up and prevents storm water from properly draining away. The result is a flooded street.

Carry disposal bags in your vehicles for trash and empty it into trash cans, not out the window!



We're Here to Help in These Difficult Times

MetroCare Heat Program

DPU is accepting applications through April 30, 2021 for those in need of financial assistance with their heating bills. If approved, you are provided a one-time assistance up to \$500 per heating season. To apply, contact CAPUP at 804-788-0050.



MetroCare Water Program

Applications are accepted year-round to provide financial assistance toward water and wastewater charges. If approved, you could receive up to \$500 in assistance once every 12 months. To apply, contact CAPUP at 804-788-0500.

Fuel Assistance and Crisis Assistance

Offers heating financial assistance. To apply, contact the Department of Social Services for Richmond city residents at 804-646-7046, for Henrico County residents at 804-501-4001, or Chesterfield County residents at 804-748-1100.

ENERGYSHARE

Offers heating and cooling assistance for Richmond city residents through CAPUP at 804-788-0050, Henrico County residents through Senior Connections at 804-343-3000, and Chesterfield County residents at 804-748-1100.

MetroCare Water Conservation Program

This program can assist with making your water usage more efficient by replacing showerheads and toilets at no cost to you. If you own your home and reside in the city of Richmond, contact Project Homes for more information and applications at 804-410-1501.



Interested in where the Department of Public Utilities' (DPU) crews are working? Follow DPU's Street Closing Twitter feed @DPUSStreetNews. Information about closed streets, and water main breaks that impact the public - are all there.



www.RichmondGov.com

Follow us on Twitter @RichmondDPU and at @DPUSStreetNews for information on all utility work, read the latest news at www.cordpu.blogspot.com, and join DPU on Facebook at www.facebook.com/rvadpu

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Customer Service: 646-4646
Streetlight Outages, Gas, Water and Sewer Emergencies: 646-4646
TTY: 711 to 646-4646
Miss Utility: (Call Before You Dig): 811



Our customer photos!

The Department of Public Utilities and Richmond Gas Works would like to see photos of *you* using anything related to our five utilities -- water, wastewater, stormwater, streetlighting or natural gas. We'd like to share them with the readers of *Utility Talk* and on our blog at www.cordpu.blogspot.com. See all this quarter's entries on the blog.

You can send a digital photo (1-3 MB) to dpuc@richmondgov.com. If your photo is selected for the next *Utility Talk*, you'll win a \$25 credit on your gas or utility bill!

This quarter's feature was submitted by Jocelyn Richardson of Koen, age 7, filling up water jugs from the rain barrel to water the garden, fill up the sand and water table, and wash pollen off the porch furniture. He's a busy youngster!



Fix those leaks and save

Fix a Leak Week is March 15-21, 2021. Now is the time to fix those household leaks that cost homeowners 10,000 gallons of water a year. Fixing leaks doesn't have to be difficult. Common leaks found in the home include worn out toilet flappers, dripping faucets, and other leaking valves. These are easily fixed, requiring few tools and inexpensive

new hardware. Fixing them pays for itself in savings! Here's how:

- Track your water usage during a cold month when you're not watering the lawn. If a family of four exceeds 12,000 gallons per month, you may have a serious leak.

- Check your water meter before and after at least a two-hour period when no water was used. If the meter changed at all, you probably have a leak.

- Identify toilet leaks by placing a drop of food coloring in the toilet tank and don't flush. If any color shows up in the bowl after 15 minutes, you have a leak. The most common cause of toilet leaks are old or worn out flappers (also known as valve seals). Flappers are inexpensive and easy to replace. You can find videos on YouTube showing how to do it, or ask for a pamphlet at your local hardware store. Bring the old flapper to the hardware store to ensure you buy the correct size.

- Examine faucet gaskets and pipe fittings for any water on the outside of the pipe to check for surface leaks. Look in the cabinets under sinks for dampness

- Twist faucet valves and tighten pipe connections.

- Check your garden hose for leaks at its connection to the spigot.

Our Payment Remittance Address Has Changed

The City of Richmond Department of Public Utilities and Richmond Gas Works changed its "remmit to" address on customer bills last June 2020 to increase customer satisfaction and processing efficiency. **If you have not updated your bill payer records with your financial institution, please do so now!** If you use paper checks, please use the yellow return envelope included with your bill. To avoid lost or delayed payments, update to our new address today!

Old address was a post office box in Richmond, Virginia. The new address is City of Richmond Utilities, PO Box 71210, Charlotte NC 28272-1210.

Call 811 Before You Dig

Many utility lines are buried underground. Hitting a line while digging or excavating can cause a lot of damage. Before digging, call Miss Utility at 811. It's that easy.

This one call will notify the owners of all underground cables and pipelines in the area, so that they can mark the location of their lines prior to excavation. This includes underground natural gas, water, sewer, telephone, cable TV, electric and others.

Excavators are required to allow time for utilities to mark their lines and are required to take certain precautions when working in the immediate area of underground lines. The use of mechanized equipment is prohibited within two feet of either side of any utility.

The one-call Miss Utility center can provide the specific details of what is required. Failure to comply with this law can jeopardize public safety, and can result in costly damages and substantial fines.

How to Get More Information:

Call (Virginia) 811
or 800-552-7001 before you dig,
or visit <http://www.VA811.com>.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**