



## What's new...



### Pay by phone coming soon!

Starting in January, you'll be able to pay your Charleston Water System bill over the phone. Our new automated phone system will accept payments 24 hours a day via debit or credit card. Just dial (843) 727-6800!

### New phone system to feature Spanish option

To better serve our growing number of Spanish-speaking customers, we'll soon have a menu in Spanish. A bilingual customer service representative is also available to assist Spanish-speaking customers.



### Now easier to read!

Our water bill has a new look! The improved layout features key information organized in a more reader-friendly format. Don't forget to check out the back of the bill for a list of payment centers and other useful information. You can even sign up for auto draft and our Operation Round Up program!

## Top five culprits behind a high water bill

If you get a water bill that's higher than usual, consider these likely causes:

- 1. Running toilet.** This is one of the most wasteful—and most expensive—water leaks in the home. Fix it ASAP!
- 2. New sod or landscaping.** Watering new grass uses a lot of water!
- 3. Pressure washing.** Do-it-yourself pressure washers can use a lot of water!
- 4. Outdoor hose or spigot left on or leaking.** Even a small stream can waste a large amount of water. Keep an eye out for leaking hose nozzles.
- 5. House guests.** Visitors in your home can increase your water usage.

If you think you have a leak, turn off all the fixtures in your home and check your water meter for movement on the dial. If you discover a leak and repair it, contact us at 727-6800 to find out if you qualify for a leak adjustment. For instructions on how to fix common leaks, plus tips on how to conserve water, visit [www.h2ouse.org](http://www.h2ouse.org).

## Winter is here... protect your pipes!



If you've ever left a can of soda in the freezer too long, you have a good idea of what can happen to water pipes when they freeze. Water expands when it freezes and can burst your home's water pipes. So remember to insulate exposed pipes and let your water drip when temperatures dip below freezing!

## Charleston's water supply plentiful despite drought

While areas of the state face water shortages as a result of the drought, Charleston's water supply remains largely unaffected.

The supply available in the Bushy Park Reservoir and Edisto River is more than enough to meet the area's drinking water demand.

As always, it's a good idea to be a responsible water user and practice water conservation.

## Project Profile: Grimball Road water main



Crews recently completed construction of this 30-inch water main in Grimball Road on James Island. This is one of many water main projects included in the Capital Improvement Program and funded by the rate increase.

## Rate increase to fund capital projects

Your January bill will rise slightly to reflect a rate increase of 4% for water and 7% for sewer that took effect December 1st.

How much your bill will increase depends on how much water you use; the typical customer using 6,000 gallons per month will see an increase of \$3.49 on the monthly water and sewer bill.

The increase is part of a three-year gradual rate increase implemented last year to fund Charleston Water System's Capital Improvement Program.

## Award-winning water quality

SC DHEC has recognized Charleston Water System for treating drinking water beyond what's required by regulation. The *Excellence Award* recognizes five consecutive years of turbidity levels well below the EPA limit. *Turbidity* is a measure of the cloudiness of water and is an important indicator of overall water quality.



### Did you Know...?

The US EPA estimates the cost to replace the nation's aging water and wastewater infrastructure will exceed \$390 billion over the next 20 years.

## New meters for West Ashley and some James Island customers

If you live in West Ashley or certain areas of James Island, you'll soon be getting a new high-tech water meter.

Customers scheduled for a new meter will be notified ahead of time, as the 30-minute installation will temporarily interrupt water service.

Automated water meters allow for faster, more accurate collection of monthly meter reads by sending a radio signal to laptop computers in meter readers' vehicles. A total of 25,000 automated meters will be installed by April.



### My tap water seems to taste different during different times of the year. Why?

Just as rainfall and temperature affect the taste of fruits and vegetables, environmental factors can also influence the taste of tap water.

Charleston's drinking water comes from surface water—primarily the Bushy Park Reservoir, but also the Edisto River. Organic material such as algae exists in surface water at higher levels during certain times of the year, and can give water an earthy or musty smell and taste, even after it's treated.

Charleston Water System can remove this smell and taste by adding powdered activated carbon to the water during the initial stages of the treatment process. Just like home water filters, the carbon works by removing harmless organic molecules in the water that affect taste and smell.

Because people's sense of smell is so sensitive, Charleston Water System uses customer feedback to determine when and how much activated carbon to add to the water.