

WASHINGTON COUNTY SERVICE AUTHORITY IN THE PIPE

NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2020

No. 30

Addressing Customers' Current and Future Needs

WCSA's strategic plan includes infrastructure and employment goals for ensuring continued service to Washington County residents

Last year, WCSA initiated a strategic planning process to create an organizational vision and framework for accomplishing our long-term goals. These goals are driven by several critical success factors and will guide our course of action in meeting our customers' needs, both now and in the future. The plan's first two goals include maintaining a reliable infrastructure and recruiting, developing and retaining a best-in-class team.

WCSA impacts the health of more people in Washington County than all of the combined greater health care community. The residents, businesses, tourism and industrial parks in Washington County, Virginia, and surrounding areas depend on WCSA's expansive network of water and wastewater pipelines.

One difficulty in serving a rural community is the distance water must travel to reach a customer. Washington County's mountainous topography introduces a

further challenge to WCSA's distribution system, with an elevation change spanning 1,698 feet above sea level to 5,520 feet above sea level — a vertical range of 3,822 feet.

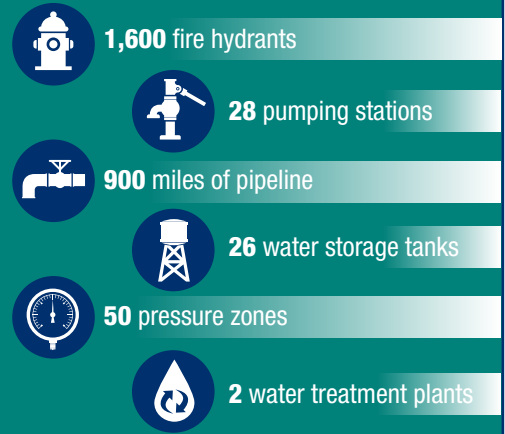
In order to provide a safe, dependable supply of drinking water from multiple sources for more than 21,500 connections in a region with such varying elevations, WCSA utilizes a 900-mile network of pipelines, 26 water storage tanks, 28 pumping stations, 50 pressure zones, and more than 1,600 fire hydrants. In addition, an environmentally safe water reclamation service, utilizing 100 miles of pipeline and 29 pumping stations, provides wastewater to approximately 2,500 connections.

Although working to extend public water to unserved communities continues to be a top priority, WCSA has a mature water system that demands the majority of our resources. WCSA's continued investment in the maintenance and replacement of

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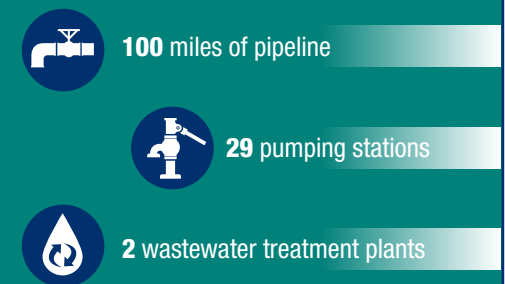
Current Water Infrastructure

Includes 21,500 connections



Current Wastewater Infrastructure

Includes 2,500 connections



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In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, WCSA's administrative office in Abingdon, Virginia, is closed to the public until further notice. Service to customers will not be affected by this change. Customers may still continue to reach us through online resources or by calling our office. Please visit our website at www.wcsawater.com for contact options and additional information.

In addition, WCSA is suspending disconnection of water and sewer service due to nonpayment of bills until further notice. WCSA customers may contact the customer service department at 276-628-7151 should they have any questions about their service.

WCSA Project Updates

To learn more about WCSA projects, visit www.wcsawater.com.

Ongoing Projects:

The **Hall Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Headworks Modification Project** will replace the aging headworks of the plant. This modification will help ensure continued efficiency in the provision of sanitary sewer service to the communities of Emory, Meadowview and Glade Spring, along with the Washington County Industrial Park (Exit 22), Highlands Business Park and Emory & Henry College. The project is underway and expected to be completed this summer.



Site of the upcoming Sugar Cove Road Water Line Extension Project

The **Sugar Cove Road Water Line Extension Project** will involve installation of more than 5,000 feet of 4- and 6-inch water lines, which will provide water service for 12 residences that currently rely on wells and springs. The project was advertised for bids in December 2019; construction began in April 2020 and is expected to be completed in September.

The **Abingdon Water Storage Tank Improvements Project** will provide upgrades that will directly impact approximately 6,600 water connections. The project was opened to bids in April 2020 and is expected to be completed by spring of 2021.

The **Galvanized Line Replacement — Phase 3 Project** is the third step in a three-phase project to replace all galvanized pipe in WCSA's distribution system over the next several years. The project is widespread across Washington County and will consist of numerous contract divisions. The project was opened to bids in April 2020; construction is expected to begin in June 2020 and be completed fall of 2021.

Upcoming Projects:

The **Hidden Valley Phase 2 Project** will extend water service to 31 additional residents who currently rely on wells and springs. The project is being funded by the Virginia Department of Health, the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission, and the Department of Housing and Community Development. The project is expected to begin this spring.

The **Lee Highway Corridor Sewer Expansion Project** will extend public sewer service to residents and businesses along Lee Highway between Exit 13 and the city of Bristol, Virginia. The first phase of the project is currently in the design stage. The project is expected to begin in the spring of 2022 and be completed by spring of 2023. 💧



Site of the upcoming Lee Highway Corridor Sewer Expansion Project

Meet Our New Commissioner

WCSA welcomes **Cathy Miller** to our board of commissioners. A lifelong resident of Meadowview, Virginia, Mrs. Miller fills the unexpired four-year term of Jim McCall, which began July 1, 2017. She represents the Taylor Election District.

The WCSA Board of Commissioners includes seven members who represent the Washington County election districts of Harrison, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Taylor, Tyler and Wilson. Along with Mrs. Miller, board members include Vice Chairman **David Campbell** (Harrison District), **Kenneth Taylor** (Jefferson District), **Kevin Thayer** (Madison District), **Tim Orfield** (Monroe District), Chairman **Dwain Miller** (Tyler District) and **Vernon Smith** (Wilson District). 💧

WCSA Earns Top Ranking in Operations, Performance for Tenth Consecutive Year

For the tenth consecutive year, WCSA has been awarded a gold award by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), the highest possible ranking in operations and performance excellence for water utilities.

WCSA received a 2019 Excellence in Waterworks/Operations Performance Award following a 12-month analysis of data by the VDH Office of Drinking Water.


Each year, through Virginia's Optimization Program, the VDH recognizes drinking water plants that perform above and beyond minimum standards by optimizing and running their treatment process efficiently and effectively. The primary purpose of the program is to reduce risks to public health associated with drinking water.

"We are tremendously honored to have received this top-level performance score for a full decade," says Robbie Cornett, general manager of WCSA. "This award demonstrates WCSA's long-standing commitment to providing safe, potable water for our customers that meets or exceeds the standards set forth by the VDH."

Of the 124 conventional surface water treatment plants evaluated by the VDH during 2019, WCSA was among 39 that received a gold award, while 44 received either silver or bronze awards.



"WCSA has the largest permitted capacity and serves the largest number of service connections in the Mount Rogers Planning District," says Eric R. Herold, PE, VDH district engineer for the Mount Rogers Planning District. "WCSA has consistently been a top performer in the Virginia Optimization Program and was one of 26 plants in Virginia to receive a perfect score for 2019."


The mission of Virginia's Optimization Program is "to encourage waterworks to provide water with a quality that exceeds minimum regulatory standards (i.e., as perfect as possible) and to operate water systems in an exemplary manner (i.e., as effective and functional as possible)." 

Backflow Prevention: Protect Your Neighbor!


The majority of homes in Washington County, Virginia, are all connected by a complex network of water lines. Each home relies upon safe, potable water to perform essential tasks every day. With concerns over public health at an all-time high, take some time to consider how you can protect your neighbors through a residential cross-connection survey.

Here are a few things to consider at your home:

1. Garden hoses pose a risk to the county-wide distribution system. Submerging a garden hose to mix chemicals or fill a pool could put your neighbor at risk for consuming potentially harmful substances. When filling and mixing with a hose, make sure a physical separation between the hose and the solution is present (air gap).
2. Check your hose bibs and consider installing an atmospheric vacuum breaker on each spigot that does not currently have anti-siphon protection. These devices are easy to install and are often needed on older spigots.
3. Inspect your irrigation system. Pooled water on top of a sprinkler head may siphon back into the distribution system if pressure loss occurs. Consider how you may increase drainage around your sprinkler head or consult with WCSA on a suitable backflow device.
4. Finally, if your home or residence has a backflow device, it must be tested annually. Contact WCSA or get in touch with a certified tester of backflow devices to ensure you are doing your part in protecting public health.



WCSA's distribution system reaches approximately 90% of Washington County, Virginia, residents. While WCSA assumes the responsibility of maintaining a distribution system that is of the highest quality, WCSA has little influence over the residential and commercial properties that are connected to that system. Therefore, it is imperative that backflow prevention is practiced by our customers at all applicable locations to ensure everyone's water is always safe to drink.

To have a cross connection/backflow survey scheduled for your property, contact WCSA's Cross Connection Control Director, Drew Langston, at 276-676-6760 or dlangston@wcsa-water.com. 

Addressing Customers' Current and Future Needs

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existing and aging infrastructure, along with new infrastructure in unserved areas, ensures our ability to meet the needs of our customers, both now and in the future.

Maintaining the proper infrastructure also requires a top-notch team. WCSA has an outstanding and experienced workforce; however, approximately 40% of our staff is eligible for retirement within the next few years, and WCSA is challenged with recruiting employees with the dedication and necessary skills for the work we perform. A focus on attracting, training,

motivating and rewarding exceptional employees is crucial for continued achievement.

A number of challenges face WCSA as we look ahead, including continuing to meet the needs of an aging water system and employing exceptional personnel. The strategic plan addresses these challenges, helps guide investment and allocation of resources, and provides a road map for the most optimal solutions to achieve our goals and objectives, both current and future. 💧



COVID-19 and Water Transmission: What You Need to Know

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has answered numerous questions regarding the COVID-19 virus and how it spreads. Fortunately, the CDC has made it clear that we don't have to worry about the virus spreading through our drinking water or wastewater systems. There is no evidence showing anyone has gotten COVID-19 through drinking water, recreational water or wastewater. Conventional water treatment methods using filtration and disinfection and standard municipal wastewater chlorination practices should be sufficient for removing or inactivating the virus. Visit <https://www.cdc.gov> for these and other questions regarding COVID-19.



WCSA Calendar

WCSA offices will be closed on the following holidays:

Memorial Day	May 25
Independence Day	July 3



Board Meetings

UPCOMING BOARD MEETING DATES

May 18, 2020
June 22, 2020
July 27, 2020

Board meetings are held at WCSA in the E.W. Potts Board Room at 6 p.m. The public is welcome to attend.

Actual dates may vary. Please contact our office to confirm meeting schedule.

Customer Contact Information

Should WCSA need to contact you regarding your water service, we generally do so via text message, email or telephone. If you prefer not to be contacted by one or more of these methods, please call our office at 276-628-7151. If you would like to be contacted but are not sure we have your information, please contact us at 276-628-7151 or inquiry@wcsa-water.com with that information.

E-CHECK PAYMENTS

WCSA NOW OFFERS A 24/7 E-CHECK METHOD FOR PHONE AND ONLINE PAYMENTS. YOU MAY PAY BY CALLING 276-628-7151 AND CHOOSING OPTION 2, OR BY ACCESSING YOUR ONLINE ACCOUNT. CALL CUSTOMER SERVICE AT 276-628-7151 FOR DETAILS.

WCSA

25122 Regal Drive
Abingdon, VA 24211
P: 276-628-7151
F: 276-628-3594

Email: inquiry@wcsawater.com
www.wcsawater.com