

# Water Wise

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF CHARLESTON WATER SYSTEM

*Clean Water for Life*

**Give the gift of clean drinking water for less than a dollar a month.**



Enroll in Operation Roundup today!

Every year, **millions of children die** of waterborne illnesses. Join Charleston Water System in the fight against the **world water crisis** by signing up for **Operation Round-Up**. We'll round your water bill to the nearest dollar and the extra change will benefit the Charleston-based non-profit **Water Missions International**. For pennies a month, you'll be literally saving the lives of children. See the back of your bill to sign up!

## Only Tap Water DELIVERS...

- ▲ Public health
- ▲ Fire protection
- ▲ Support for our economy
- ▲ Quality of life

In a world where millions of people die every year from preventable waterborne diseases, clean tap water is more than a convenience, it is central to our everyday lives.

## New water tanks and sewer lines to kick off capital improvement program

The James Island area and Charleston Water System's water treatment plant are in line for new elevated storage tanks, and the Red Top area of West Ashley will soon see major sewer improvements.

These projects are part of Charleston Water System's 2006 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), which includes 45 water and sewer projects necessary to meet population growth demands and regulatory requirements. All told, the program will cost more than \$150 million over the next three years, funded by an April bond issue.

The James Island tank will replace the smaller abandoned tank on the City golf course off Maybank Highway. The tank and new water mains connecting it to existing pipes in the area will help maintain water pressure in the event a power outage reduces pumping power. The sewer improvements for the growing Red Top area include a new regional pump station and larger mains. Additional improvements will allow Charleston Water to remove several old and inefficient pump stations.



A new water tank will replace this abandoned tank on James Island.

Check out all the projects included in our 2006 Capital Improvement Program! [www.charlestonwater.com](http://www.charlestonwater.com).

## Are you ready for hurricane season?

After a hurricane or other natural disaster, broken water mains may interrupt water service for days after the storm, so it's important to be prepared. If you evacuate before a storm, remember to turn off water to your home at the main shut-off valve and switch off the electrical circuit breaker to your hot water heater. If you decide to ride out the storm, here are a few tips on water storage and purification.

### Storing Water

- ▲ Store gallons of water in a cool, dry, dark place and replace every six months.
- ▲ Store several gallons for each family member. Remember you'll need it for drinking, cooking, bathing, and brushing teeth. Don't forget pets!

### How to purify water

- ▲ Boil vigorously for at least one minute
- ▲ Purification tablets (at drug stores)
- ▲ Use eight drops of unscented liquid household bleach (hypochlorite, typically 5.25%) per gallon of water and let stand for 30 minutes. Do not use scented or granulated bleach.

# Water Wise



## Water Whys

***I keep finding a pinkish film on my showerhead, around the drain in my sink, and other places in the bathroom. What is it and how can I get rid of it?***

That pinkish film is caused a common group of airborne bacteria that multiplies rapidly in warm, moist areas—particularly bathrooms. It's not harmful to healthy individuals, but it can leave an undesirable stain on showerheads, in toilets, and around drains. Staining may be particularly noticeable during the summer months, as warmer air and water temperatures tend to encourage bacterial growth. A good cleaning will eliminate the film, but to keep it from reappearing, try to keep your bathroom as dry as possible by fixing leaking faucets and airing out shower curtains. Regular cleaning will also help prevent the film from reappearing.

Send us your question!  
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Member of the **Partnership for Safe Water**, an elite group of water utilities committed to exceeding water quality standards.

**ISO 14001** Certified  
Committed to protecting and improving our environment.



## Bottled water: a waste?

A report by the Earth Policy Institute says the popularity of bottled water in nations with high quality tap water produces unnecessary waste and burns massive quantities of fossil fuels.

The report, entitled "Bottled Water: Pouring Resources Down the Drain," says the manufacturing of plastic bottles and the transport of bottled water consumes vast amounts of fossil fuels—a nonrenewable energy source. In addition, 86% of plastic water bottles in the US end up in landfills instead of being recycled. It takes up to 1,000 years for plastic bottles to biodegrade.

Tap water in the United States is regulated by the US Environmental Protection Agency, which has more stringent standards than the Food and Drug Administration's regulations for bottled water. In fact, an estimated 40% of bottled water comes straight from the tap, according to the report.

## Report raises concern about high fluoride levels

### Charleston water has safe levels

A report by the National Academy of Sciences says the US Environmental Protection Agency's limit on the amount of fluoride in tap water is too high.

Under the EPA's current regulations, drinking water may have up to 4 parts per million (ppm) of fluoride. The report found that fluoride at that level and above may cause pitting or staining in children's teeth or strip away the protective enamel.

The report focused on utilities whose source water contains naturally high fluoride levels—typically ground water—and did not address artificially fluoridated water, which generally has much lower levels. Fluoride added to water at levels between 0.7 and 1.2 ppm is proven to help prevent tooth decay, and is endorsed by the American Dental Association. Charleston water has a fluoride level of 1.1 ppm.

In response to the report, the ADA emphasized that the report in no way calls into question the safety of water fluoridation, adding that it is one of the ten greatest public health achievements of the 20th century.

**Water FACT: The US leads the world in bottled water consumption, followed by Mexico, China, and Brazil.**

## Message to our Customers

Every year, water-related diseases kill an estimated 5 million people—*5 million people*. These deaths could be preventable with basic health education and by giving people access to clean drinking water, which forms the basis for good nutrition.

Tap water is so readily available and such a routine part of our lives that we often forget its value. Clean water protects public health, supports our economy, helps to ensure quality of life, and provides fire protection. These services support the very foundation of communities across the nation, and allow us to enjoy a level of health and prosperity that is rare in many areas of the world.

We believe it is our moral duty to share our prosperity. That's why Charleston Water System is supporting the work of Water Missions International, a Charleston-based non-profit organization that delivers water treatment units to communities all over the globe. Our Operation Round Up program lets customers sign up to "round up" their water bill to the nearest dollar each month, and the extra change will benefit Water Missions International. Sign up on the back of your bill, or call (843) 727-6800 for more information. Together, we can make a difference in the fight against the world water crisis.