



Water Wise

The Quarterly Newsletter of Charleston Water System Volume 6, Issue 1

March 2011

Investing in our infrastructure

Overview of the 2011 – 2013 Capital Improvement Program

Water and sewer services are only as reliable as the pipes, pumps, and other infrastructure that provide them.

That's why Charleston Water System conducts periodic master planning to identify infrastructure needs, then develops Capital Improvement Programs to fund priority projects.

The 2011 - 2013 Capital Improvement Program includes seven critical projects—four water and three wastewater projects—totaling \$85 million. The projects are funded by a bond issue and water and sewer rate increases.

Over the last four years, Charleston Water System completed more than 30 projects associated with the last capital program, the 2006 Capital Improvement Program (see photos at right).



This water storage tank at the Hanahan Water Treatment Plant, completed in 2010, was part of the 2006 Capital Improvement Program.

2011 - 2013 Capital Improvement Program Project List

To learn more about these projects, visit www.charlestonwater.com.

Project	Cost Estimate
Water System Projects	
New 24-inch water main under the Ashley River	\$13.5 million
Bees Ferry Road Water Storage Complex	\$9.9 million
Hanahan Water Treatment Plant - Stoney Filter Rehabilitation	\$8.6 million
SC DOT/Roadwise Water Main Relocations	\$2 million
Sewer System Projects	
SC DOT/Roadwise Wastewater Main Relocations	\$2 million
West Ashley Sewer Tunnel Replacement Project	\$51 million
West Ashley Wastewater Pump Station 77 Rehabilitation	\$3 million



This 4-foot diameter transmission main off Murray Drive in Hanahan was also completed in 2010 as part of the 2006 Capital Improvement Program.

What's that smell?

Spring weather brings harmless change in water taste and smell

Each Spring, Charleston Water System's water develops what's most often described as an earthy or musty taste and smell. It's caused by warm temperatures and increased sunlight, which promote algae growth and water turnover in our primary water supply, the Bushy Park Reservoir.

This natural process produces a harmless, but sometimes unpleasant, taste and odor that can be detected by the human nose at very small levels. Charleston Water System minimizes this by adjusting our treatment process, namely by adding activated carbon to our water, which adsorbs the compounds responsible.

Charleston Water System is a public water and wastewater utility serving the Greater Charleston area. We are a not-for-profit public agency funded by water and sewer rates and fees.

Our Mission is to protect public health and enhance the environment of our service community by providing clean water services of exceptional quality and value.



Backflow preventers protect Charleston Water’s public water supply from potential contamination by blocking backflow. All commercial buildings and irrigation systems are required to have a backflow preventer. Pictured above is a typical residential backflow preventer for an irrigation system.

Water Whys

What is a backflow preventer?

As the name suggests, a backflow preventer stops water from flowing backwards—back into the public supply after it passes through a water meter and into a customer’s private plumbing.

This could happen if a sudden drop in water pressure created a suction effect (think of someone sucking on a hose to siphon gas out of a tank). Backflow can potentially contaminate the public water supply if, say, a hose is in a bucket or the private plumbing system is connected to some other source of contamination.

To prevent this, regulations require water utilities to identify cross connections between private plumbing systems and the public water supply and take steps to prevent backflow.

Charleston Water System does this by requiring residential customers with a pool or sprinkler system and all businesses to install a backflow preventer. To learn more about our backflow requirements, visit our web site.

Have a question? Send it to info@charlestoncpw.com.



Fix a Leak Week

March 15-21, 2

From dripping faucets to running toilets, an estimated ten percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or more per day.

That’s why the US Environmental Protection Agency has declared March 14 - 20th Fix a Leak Week—to remind you to check for and fix water leaks.

Most leaks are easily stopped with do-it-yourself repairs. Or, replace old faucets, shower heads, and toilets with WaterSense labeled products that use less water.

For tips, visit the EPA’s WaterSense web site at www.epa.gov/watersense.



Toilet leak?

Here’s how to find out: Put several drops of food coloring in the toilet tank and wait about 15 minutes. If color shows up in the bowl, you have a leak.