



Water Wise

The Quarterly Newsletter of Charleston Water System

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Water service interruptions

Your questions answered

With more than 1,700 miles of water pipes and some 107,000 connections to those pipes, leaks, breaks, and maintenance activities sometimes require service interruptions.

In most cases, leaks can be repaired without affecting customers' water service at all. For more severe breaks, our crews will isolate the area by closing the up and downstream valves. This slows or stops the flow of water in the affected stretch of pipe while repairs are made. When the work is complete, the pipe is cleaned and flushed, then put back into service by opening the valves.

Do I need to boil my water after a service interruption?

Only if Charleston Water System issues a boil water advisory or notice, which is rare. Boil water advisories are typically only issued after a major water main break, widespread loss of water pressure, or a problem at the treatment plant—problems that affect a large area. If this happens, we'll notify the media and post information on our web site (www.charlestonwater.com) and phone system (727-6800).

Boiling water for at least one minute before using it for cooking or drinking will kill bacteria in the water, if any are present. Advisories are usually precautionary and are lifted within 24 hours, once water quality samples show the water is safe.

After a service interruption

- Turn on faucets slowly. This allows any trapped air to escape and prevents water hammer.
- The water may appear discolored at first. Let the cold water flow until it runs clear.
- Any special notices will be posted on our phone system or web site.

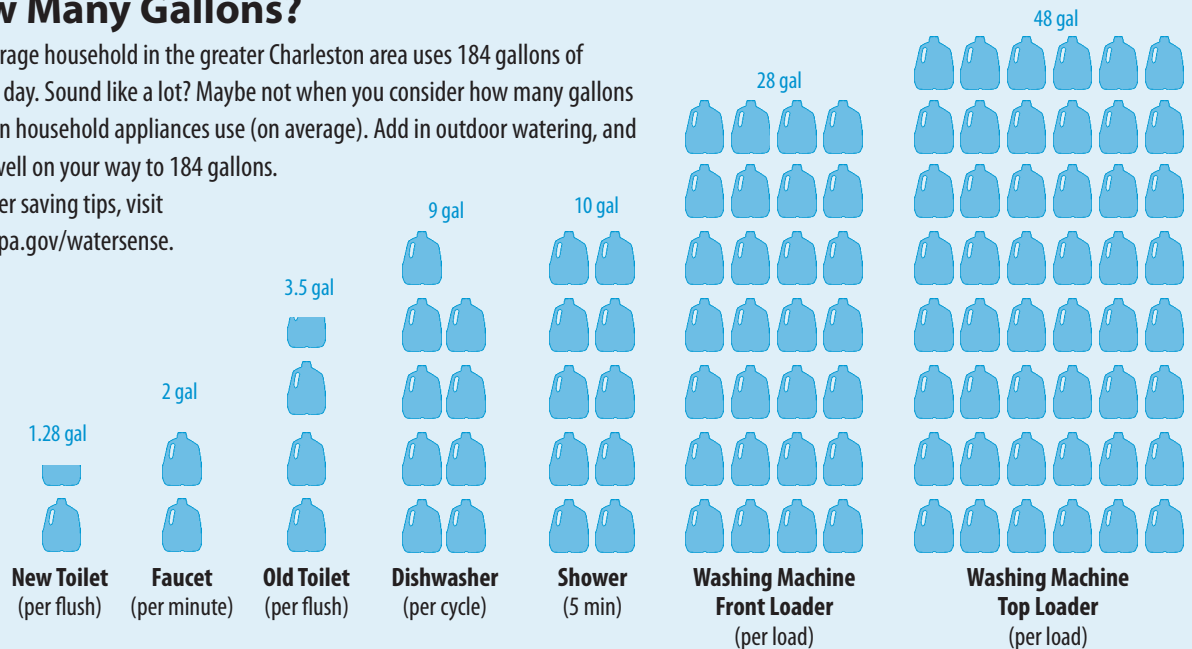


Valve cover. Water mains have valves spaced strategically along the pipeline. In the event of a leak or need for repair, crews can close valves to slow or stop the flow of water in a small stretch of pipe to limit the impact of the water outage.

How Many Gallons?

The average household in the greater Charleston area uses 184 gallons of water a day. Sound like a lot? Maybe not when you consider how many gallons common household appliances use (on average). Add in outdoor watering, and you're well on your way to 184 gallons.

For water saving tips, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.



Sources: USEPA, H2ouse.org. Amounts shown are averages. Water use varies according to make, model, and age.

Water Whys

My water bill is higher than usual, what should I do?

Think about your water use in the past month. Did you do anything that would use more water than usual, such as outdoor watering, house guests, etc.? Often, this will explain the high bill.

Check for leaks. Typical culprits are running toilets, leaking outdoor spigots, and damaged sprinkler heads. You can use your water meter to help determine if you have a leak. The little red triangle on the meter dial is a flow indicator. Turn off all water-using fixtures and appliances inside and outside your home, then check the triangle. If it's spinning, that means water is going through the meter, and you probably have a leak. Keep searching or contact a plumber for help.

Still need help? Contact our Customer Service Department at 843-727-6800 or customerservice@charlestoncpw.com.

When water is flowing through your meter, this triangle will turn—the more water, the faster it turns. Use it to check for leaks by turning off all water-using appliances inside and outside your home, then check to see if the triangle moves. If it does, you may have a leak.



Fire protection

8,400 hydrants and a water system engineered for fire flow demand

Did you know that public water systems like Charleston Water System play a crucial role in fire protection?

Our fire hydrants can provide 750 - 1,800 gallons of water a minute.

Want to learn more about your water? Contact us to schedule a speaker for your school or group: (843) 727-6856 or info@charlestoncpw.com.



Get your bill electronically! To sign up for e-Bill, visit www.charlestonwater.com and log in to your account, then select Billing Options.

It's Hurricane Season

Are you prepared?

September is National Preparedness Month—and the height of hurricane season. Review this checklist to make sure you're prepared:

- Your emergency kit should include a three-day supply of water—a gallon per person per day. Don't forget pets!
- If you evacuate, turn off the water to your home at the main shut-off valve and turn off the electrical circuit breaker to your water heater.
- Storm damage may disrupt treatment at the water plant and/or damage water lines, which can make the water unfit to drink. Stay tuned to the media for instructions, and plan to boil water for one minute before using it for cooking or drinking.

For more emergency preparedness tips, visit www.ready.gov.