



Newport News  
Waterworks

# Straight from the Tap

## Customer News — Fall 2008

(757) 926-1000  
8 am – 5 pm  
Monday – Friday

### Climate Change and Water Supply

Worldwide it is clear that climates are changing. What many people don't realize is that water resources and supplies are where those changes are first felt.

Droughts seem to be coming more frequently and are more intense. For the first time in Waterworks' 100+ year history, we imposed mandatory water restrictions in 2002 due to a very severe drought that affected most of the Commonwealth.



Little Creek Reservoir - Fall 2007

In addition to droughts, storms are becoming more frequent and intense. Hurricane Floyd in 1999 drenched the Peninsula with 18 inches of rain in 28 hours. The massive rain from Tropical Storm Ernesto in 2006 caused major flooding, as did several other storms. It seems we get too much water at one time, and we cannot capture all that nature provides.

Additionally, rising temperatures increase the evaporation rate. In recent years, the Peninsula has experienced intense heat spells with heat indexes well over 100 degrees. We actually lose water from the reservoirs through evaporation caused by the heat of the sun.

The good news is that water demand has remained relatively flat due mostly to residen-

tial and business conservation efforts as well as federally mandated low flow plumbing fixtures. Existing customers have been conserving more, offsetting the addition of thousands of new residents and businesses each year. This has been helpful from a water supply management view point—stretching supplies to meet increasing needs.

The other good news is that, with permits in hand, Waterworks continues forward with the King William Reservoir project. This regional water supply project will provide water to communities from King William and New Kent counties through the lower Peninsula. Climate change as well as business and residential growth will only strengthen the argument that future freshwater supplies, in addition to conservation and desalination, are needed *now* rather than when a real water crisis occurs. For updates on the King William Reservoir go to the project web page at [www.kwreservoir.com](http://www.kwreservoir.com).



### Water-Saving Tips for Fall Gardening

- Eliminate some grassy areas and create more mulched beds.
- Plan your landscape for the most efficient water use by grouping plants with similar watering needs.
- Add organic materials like compost, to planted beds to improve water and air holding capacities.
- Choose plants native to our area — they have lower watering requirements.

Visit the Hampton Roads Water Efficiency Team web site at [www.hrwet.org](http://www.hrwet.org) for more water conservation tips.

### Water rates as of July 1, 2008:

Single-meter residential customers: *\$2.78 for the first six hundred cubic feet (6 hcf is considered "lifeline" low usage) and \$3.04 for water used over 6 hcf.*

Master metered, industrial and business customers: *\$3.04 per one hundred cubic feet.*

All customers - *An additional \$0.61 per hundred cubic feet (Summer Consumption Rate) will be charged when your summer usage exceeds your average usage for the previous winter.*



## Water News: In-home Water Filters

Our 2008 customer perception survey revealed that close to one-half (45%) of those who responded to the survey use a water treatment device at home such as a filter or softener. Most do so to “filter out impurities” or to “improve the water taste.”

Waterworks receives calls from customers who are concerned about water quality spurred by in-home water treatment system marketing, door-to-door and telephone sales pitches. When these concerns are brought to our attention, we explain that tap water goes through a complex treatment system that includes filtration, disinfection and ozonation — all highly effective processes that allow us to provide high-quality drinking water.

If the quality of our tap water is being misrepresented by another company, we will contact them and communicate our concern.

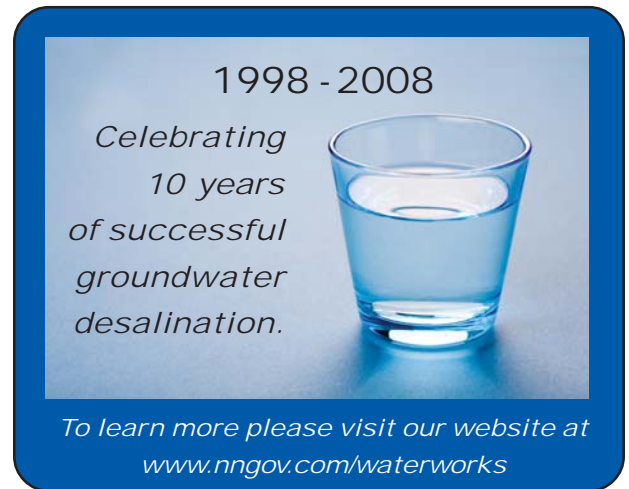
Your drinking water is treated and tested using state-of-the-art equipment and advanced procedures. If you are concerned about your water quality, please contact Waterworks Customer Service.

Don't fall for high-pressure water treatment sales tactics. Waterworks is committed to providing a reliable supply of high-quality drinking water to all our customers, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. After all, we drink it too.

## Making Life Easier for You!

Take advantage of our new services:

- **Budget Billing** - Waterworks averages your payments and levels out high bills that may occur throughout the year so that you pay a fixed amount each billing period. To sign up, call Waterworks Customer Service at 926-1000 or stop by either of our two walk-in Customer Service Centers.
- **Direct Debit** - Our automatic bill payment program allows your water bill to be paid directly from your checking account. To sign up, call Waterworks Customer Service at 926-1000, stop by our walk-in Centers, or visit our web site. (Follow the directions to register for an online account, then set up your automatic payment.)
- **Pay-By-Phone** - We're sorry. We had a “glitch” for several months. But now Waterworks' pay-by-phone service is once again available by calling 926-1000. Use your credit card to pay your bill any time of the day.



Waterworks Walk-In Customer Service  
Center locations  
(both in Newport News):

700 Town Center Drive - City Center Oyster Pt.  
2600 Washington Avenue (1 block from City Hall)

## A Community Reminder — Digital TV Transition

*Federal law is requiring television broadcasters to switch from analog TV to digital TV on February 17, 2009. Television sets with a digital tuner or that are connected to cable, satellite or other pay TV service will not be affected by this transition. However, if your TV requires the use of an antenna (i.e. rabbit ears or rooftop antenna) to access local broadcast stations, you will need a converter box.*

*To learn more about the digital television transition and to apply for a \$40 coupon toward the purchase of a converter box, go to [www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov) or call (toll-free) 1-888-DTV-2009.*

**Waterworks Mission:** to contribute to the well-being of our community through the provision of an adequate supply of high-quality drinking water.

Brian L. Ramaley, P.E., Director  
Eileen M. Leininger, P.E., Assistant Director  
Lee Ann Hartmann, Public Information Specialist  
Darlene Mormon, Customer Services Manager  
Customer Service: 926-1000 (M-F, 8 am to 5 pm)  
Emergencies - nights, holidays and weekends -  
call the Waterworks dispatcher at 234-4800  
Visit our website: [www.nngov.com/waterworks](http://www.nngov.com/waterworks)

