



FALL 2021

Fairfax Water

STRAIGHT FROM THE TAP

Be 'Winter Salt Smart' and Help Protect the Region's Water Supply



What's the problem?

In the winter, salt keeps us safe while we are on the move, but it also leads to higher levels of salt in the region's drinking water supply, including the Potomac River and Occoquan Reservoir. Learn more and be winter salt smart!

What is winter salt?

Winter salt is rock salt (sodium chloride) or ice melt (a blend of sodium chloride, magnesium chloride, and other salts). These materials are used in the winter to prevent icing of sidewalks, parking lots, and roadways.

What are the benefits of winter salt use?

- Results in fewer slip and fall injuries.
- Reduces number of vehicle crashes.
- Enables businesses, government, and social services to continue with minimal interruption.

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Proposed Changes to the Commodity Rate

Important Rate Information for 2022

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 16, 2021, the Fairfax Water Board will hold a public hearing on proposed revisions to the schedule of rates, fees, and charges. Proposed revisions include a change in the commodity charge from \$3.33 to \$3.46 per 1,000 gallons, effective with meter readings taken on or after April 1, 2022. See page 2 for a list of some of the proposed changes.

The public hearing will be held at Fairfax Water's main office at 8570 Executive Park Avenue in Fairfax. Visit fairfaxwater.org/rates for a copy of the proposed changes and directions to the main office. To speak at the hearing or obtain a hard copy of the proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges, call 703-698-5600, TTY 711.

Even with this increase, Fairfax Water's commodity rates will remain among the lowest in the Washington metropolitan region. The chart on page 2 compares regional utilities based on current commodity rates and service charges.

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Important Rate Information for 2022 (Continued from page 1)

The following tables show some of the proposed revisions to Fairfax Water's rates, fees, and charges. If approved, the revisions will be effective with meter readings taken on or after April 1, 2022. For a complete list of the proposed revisions, visit fairfaxwater.org/rates.

Charge	Description of Rate, Fee, or Charge	Current	Proposed
Commodity Charge	The charge per 1,000 gallons of water used in the previous three months.	\$3.33*	\$3.46*
Quarterly Billing Service Charge	Based on meter size, it offsets the cost of meter reading, repair and replacement, service repairs, billing, collecting, accounting, etc.	\$14.85**	\$14.95**
Peak Use Charge	The charge per 1,000 gallons of water applied to established accounts during billing periods from June through November for water consumption that is 1.3 times the winter quarter consumption or 6,000 gallons above the winter quarter consumption, whichever is greater.	\$3.90*	\$3.85*
Account Charge	Appears only on initial bills to cover the cost of the office and field work to open a new account.	\$40	\$41

* Fees for the use of Fairfax Water fire hydrants would also change to include the proposed increase in the commodity charge.

** Charges reflect fees associated with standard 5/8 inch residential meter. Charges for larger residential and commercial meters are proposed to increase and are reflected in the proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges, available on our website at www.fairfaxwater.org/rates.

New Connection Charges	Description of Rate, Fees, or Charge	Current	Proposed
Availability Charge	For service to be furnished through each new separate service connection.	\$4,400	\$4,510
Local Facilities Charge	For each new service connection to an existing water main.	\$19,610	\$19,400
Service Connection Charge	For each new service connection and meter installation prior to the approval of the application.	\$1,430	\$1,480

Comparison of Regional Water Rates

This comparison is based on rates as of July 1, 2021, and on 18,000 gallons of residential water use by an established customer over a three-month winter period. The amount shown for each jurisdiction/utility includes the service charge and the commodity charge, which is the rate charged for a certain number of gallons.

Jurisdiction/Utility	Quarterly Water Charge
City of Manassas Park	\$205.50
Town of Leesburg (Outside)	\$202.57
Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (Montgomery / Prince George's counties, MD)	\$162.00
Town of Leesburg (Inside)	\$154.45
Virginia-American Water Company (Prince William County)	\$149.61
DC Water	\$147.45
City of Bowie, MD	\$140.17
Virginia-American Water Company (City of Alexandria)	\$123.83
City of Rockville, MD	\$123.17
Town of Vienna	\$121.19
Arlington County	\$88.38
City of Manassas	\$88.32
Loudoun Water	\$86.16
Prince William County Service Authority	\$82.65
Fairfax Water	\$74.79
Town of Herndon	\$66.75

What About Sewer Charges?

Fairfax Water does not provide your sewer service, but we do assist Fairfax County and the cities of Falls Church and Fairfax with sewer billing. This is a cost-saving measure and a convenience for our customers. Your sewer rates and associated billing methodology are established by your sewer service provider. It is a combination of a base charge and usage. It may also include taxes and/or other fees. Visit fairfaxwater.org/sewer-charges to learn more.

Be 'Winter Salt Smart'

(Continued from page 1)

What are the downsides of salt use?

- Salt on impervious surfaces (sidewalks, parking lots, roads, etc.) is washed into storm drains, creeks, and rivers. This results in higher concentrations of salt in the region's drinking water sources: the Potomac River and Occoquan Reservoir.
- Salt corrodes vehicles and infrastructure (roads, bridges, sidewalks, parking lots).
- Salt increases the salinity in streams and groundwater, impacting freshwater fish and other aquatic life.

What are Fairfax Water and other agencies doing to address this problem?

The Virginia Salt Management Strategy (SaMS) was established by a diverse group of stakeholders (including Fairfax Water) and coordinated by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ).

SaMS provides recommendations for improving winter practices through efficient and effective use of salt while maintaining the same levels of safety. The ultimate goal of SaMS is to raise awareness of these impacts, show how individuals and organizations can participate, and provide guidance for monitoring and research to support action on SaMS recommendations.

In addition to assisting SaMS, Fairfax Water will continue to monitor source water quality and work closely with the county and other agencies to analyze trends and explore solutions.

What can I do to help?

- Shovel early. Remove snow from pavements before it turns to ice. Use salt only after snow has been cleared and only in areas needed for safety.
- Use less. More salt does not mean more melting. A 12-ounce coffee mug of salt should be enough for a 20-foot driveway or about 10 sidewalk squares.
- Spread de-icers evenly. Try not to distribute them in clumps.
- Watch the temperatures. When it is colder than 15°F, do not apply winter salt. It will not work. In those cases, consider building traction with alternatives like sand or native bird seed. Visit fairfaxwater.org/winter-salt to learn more!

Glad You Asked!

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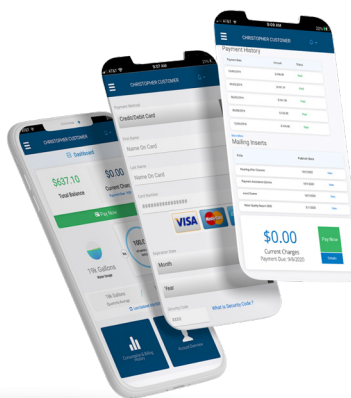
How can I prevent pipes from freezing in my home this winter?

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Whenever the temperatures dip into the teens, we suggest that you leave a thin, steady stream of water running from a faucet. This stream should measure out to be about a quarter gallon of water per minute. Doing so costs very little and can prevent expensive leaks and pipe repairs.

Visit fairfaxwater.org/your-plumbing for more information on how to prepare your pipes for winter.

Welcome to Fairfax Water's Online Customer Portal



You now have the ability to manage your Fairfax Water account online. Enjoy the convenience of paperless billing, viewing your bill, paying your bill as a one-time payment, setting up recurring payments, or reviewing your water usage trends.

If you have a question or concern, contact us at pr@fairfaxwater.org or call 703-698-5600, TTY 711.



Newsletter Feedback

If you have comments or suggestions about the newsletter, please send an email to pr@fairfaxwater.org, call us at 703-289-6291, or write to us at this address:

Straight From the Tap Editor
Fairfax Water
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

Important Numbers

Fairfax Water Services

Questions about water service or billing
703-698-5800

After hours/emergencies
703-698-5613

To report a water main break

703-698-5613 or email
watermainbreak@fairfaxwater.org

All other Fairfax Water departments
703-698-5600

Sewer Services

Fairfax County

Department of Public Works, Wastewater
Trouble Response Center
703-323-1211
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/wastewater

City of Falls Church

Department of Public Works
703-248-5350
www.fallschurchva.gov

City of Fairfax

Department of Public Works
703-385-7810
www.fairfaxva.gov

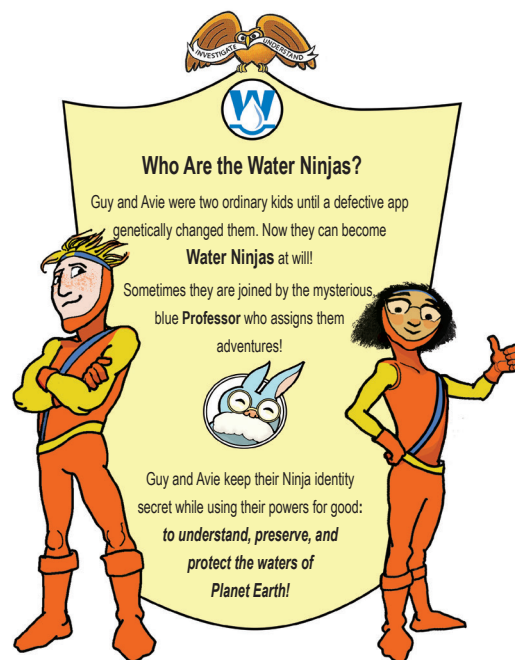
Dig with C.A.R.E.

Miss Utility at 800-552-7001 or 811
va811.com/homeowners/how-to-when-to



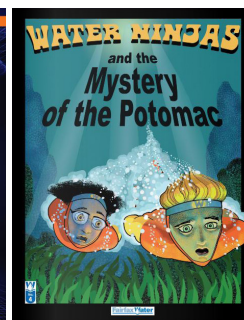
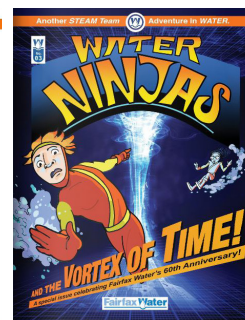
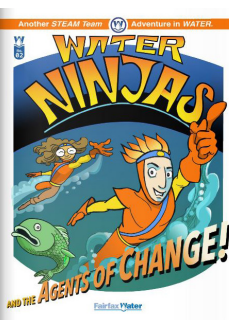
Use TTY 711 (Virginia Relay) for all numbers unless otherwise stated.

Join Our Water Ninjas for Incredible Water Science Adventures!



Five amazing stories about your drinking water!

Available now at fairfaxwater.org/comics



Want to know when we're closed for holidays?
Check out our website!

fairfaxwater.org/holidaycalendar

Fairfax Water

Fairfax Water is a public, nonprofit water authority serving nearly 2 million people in the Northern Virginia communities of Fairfax County, Loudoun, Prince William, Fort Belvoir, Herndon, Dulles, Vienna, Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax City.



Water-Saving Tip

Lawn care is less demanding during the fall but should not be ignored. A healthy lawn requires at least 1 inch of water every week. For more water-saving tips, visit www.wateruseitwisely.com.