



Hurricane season is here ... Are you prepared?

Here in the Lowcountry, hurricanes are a fact of life. A major storm can damage infrastructure, including water and sewer lines, so it's important to make sure you have an emergency supply of water. Here's what you need to know.

Before the storm

- **If you're evacuating**, 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 plan to ride out the storm**, make sure you have enough drinking water on hand for at least three days. A gallon per person per day is a good rule of thumb — more if you plan to use it for bathing and cooking. It's also a good idea to fill up bath tubs and sinks with water.
- **Stay tuned to a battery operated radio** for updates. High winds may disrupt operations at the treatment plant and fallen trees can break water mains. In either case, the water may not be safe to drink, and some areas may lose water service altogether.

After the storm

- **When cleaning up debris**, be sure to keep trash piles away from fire hydrants, water meters, and other infrastructure.
- **Check for broken plumbing pipes** before turning on the water to your home.

Purifying water

If a storm causes damage to water lines, soil and groundwater may enter the public water system. Bacteria in groundwater can cause intestinal illness, particularly for those with weakened immune systems, so health officials may advise the public to boil tap water before drinking it. Bringing water to a rolling boil for a minute or more kills bacteria and ensures the water safe to drink. If in doubt, boil water before drinking it or use bottled water.

For more tips on preparing your family for a hurricane, visit www.charlestoncounty.org to download the hurricane preparedness guide.



Project Profile: New water main under Cooper River goes online



A new three-mile long water main under the Cooper River is helping serve the growing water demands of the East Cooper area.

The 40-inch steel main runs from Lincoln Avenue in North Charleston to Clements Ferry Road, near the I-526 Don Holt Bridge. It's the first steel pipe in Charleston Water's distribution system and the longest directional drill pipe project of its size in the country. The line provides a second point of delivery to fast-growing Daniel Island and the Cainhoy Peninsula, which is necessary to prevent service interruptions and maintain adequate water pressure. The line also provides enough capacity for Charleston Water to improve wholesale water service to Mount Pleasant Waterworks.

Construction of the new 40-inch water main under the Cooper River, which now serves the East Cooper area.

West Ashley and James Island customers to get automated water meters



Automated water meters save time and money by sending radio signals directly to computer equipped vehicles.

This Fall, Charleston Water System will begin installing 25,000 radio-read automated water meters in West Ashley and parts of James Island.

The technology allows meter readers to collect reads electronically with a laptop computer. The special meters are equipped with a battery-powered antenna that sends a radio signal with the meter's reading, which is picked up by a laptop as the meter reader drives by. The technology allows meter readers to collect up to 5,000 reads a day, and is safer and more accurate than collecting reads manually.

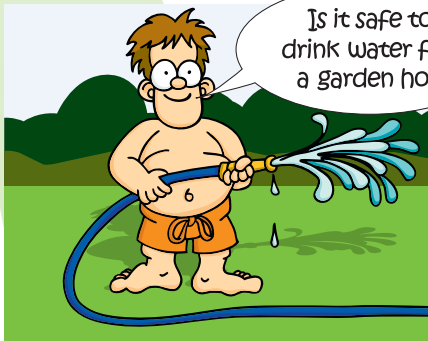
Charleston Water System began pilot testing automated meters in 2001, and about 10,000 customers in parts of West Ashley, areas west of Rantowles Creek, and areas east of the Cooper River already have the new meters. Automated meters cost about \$200 each installed, and can be installed in about thirty minutes.



How do you read this meter?

Water meters are underground, so the metal box that houses them often fills with water — either from rain or groundwater. Sometimes the water is clear enough to see through, but most of the time our meter readers either use a small hand pump to reduce the water level or simply splash the water to get a clear view of the dial and collect the reading. New automated radio-read water meters eliminate this type of obstacle since readings are collected remotely.

Water ? Why



Is it safe to drink water from a garden hose?

No, standard garden hoses are made with chemicals that keep the hose flexible. These chemicals can sometimes get into the water as it flows through the hose, so you shouldn't routinely drink it or use it to fill your pet's water bowl. There are special hoses made of food grade plastic, such as those made for RVs to connect to campground water sources.

Only Tap Water Delivers: Fire Protection

Tap water does more than provide us with a clean, safe, and reliable source of water — it also protects us against the threat of fire. The water mains beneath our streets keep water flowing to fire hydrants at the right pressure, 24/7, without fail.

Did you know?

- Charleston Water System has 7,800 fire hydrants and is responsible for maintaining them.
- Fire hydrants generally flow between 750 and 1,800 gallons of water per minute.
- The ability to provide water for fire protection is an important factor in determining fire insurance rates. Charleston's Fire Department has a "Class 1" public protection rating from the Insurance Services Office — the highest on a scale from 1 to 10!
- The original reason for building community water systems wasn't to deliver safe drinking water—it was to fight fires.

