

IN THE PIPE

NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2017



No. 18

WCSA, HomeServe Offer Optional Water and Sewer Line Coverage Plans to Homeowners

Owning a home would be easier if there was never any maintenance involved. Unfortunately, the need for repairs — both inside and outside the home — is often unavoidable.



In response to customers' requests for help with water leaks, WCSA recently undertook a screening process to identify an *optional* exterior water/sewer service

line and home plumbing insurance plan, and offer an affordable solution for water and sewer line repairs. WCSA has partnered with HomeServe USA, a leading provider of home emergency repair solutions, to present three voluntary coverage plans for homeowners.

"When a customer receives a high water bill, they generally call us first," says Holly Edwards, WCSA customer service manager. "We are able to provide leak tips and suggest they contact a licensed, professional plumber. We respond to customer issues like these on a daily basis. However, some customers remain uncertain about how to accomplish a repair, and that's where the need for these optional lines of coverage came from."

The new lines of coverage are expected to bridge the gap between the services provided by WCSA (to the water meter or first sewer cleanout) and homeowner insurance policies.

Depending on the option(s) selected, coverage can include the interior and exterior water and sewer lines that connect a home to WCSA's system.

"We've learned that some homeowners are unaware that water and sewer line repairs are the responsibility of the property owner, often leaving them unprepared in the event of a repair emergency," says WCSA General Manager Robbie Cornett. "This partnership with HomeServe now provides the customer with options that will cover water and sewer line repairs. This will help ensure that they are protected from any unexpected expenses or inconveniences associated with this type of upkeep."

A Homeowner's Line of Defense

Plumbing-related issues are common causes of unexpected repairs faced by homeowners each year, with most not being covered by a homeowner's insurance plan. (Customers should confirm whether they have coverage under their homeowner's plan before deciding about HomeServe coverage.)



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WCSA Project Updates

Recently Completed Projects:

The **Galvanized Water Line Replacement – Phase 2 Project** is the second step in a three-phase project to replace all galvanized pipe in WCSA’s distribution system over the next several years. Construction on the fifth division of Phase 2, which began in June of 2016, was completed in March 2017.



Site of the Exit 13 Phase 2A Sewer Project

Ongoing Projects:

The **Exit 13 Phase 2A Sewer Project**, located off I-81 at Exit 13, is the second step in a multi-phase project to extend wastewater treatment service to the Lee Highway area of Exit 13. Phase 2A will consist of installation of a sewer main from Spring Creek Road to the Virginia Highlands Airport, as well as some branch lines or laterals to provide service for customers who are not directly adjacent to the Oak Park Sewer Project. Construction began in October 2016 and is expected to be completed by late spring 2017.

The **Route 58 Corridor Water System Improvements Project** will include improvements for the water system serving the Town of Damascus, Alvarado and areas east of South Holston Lake. The installation of a new water storage

area tank project was advertised for bids in spring 2017 and is expected to be completed by fall of 2017.

The **Mill Creek Water Treatment Plant Improvements Project** will provide a new membrane filtration system and additional repairs, replacements and upgrades to the water treatment plant. Construction began in February and is expected to be completed in early 2018.

The **Haskell Station Road Water Line Extension Project** will replace and install approximately 4,700 linear feet of new water line. Construction began in March 2017 and is expected to be completed in September 2017.



Site of the Haskell Station Road Water Line Extension Project

Upcoming Projects:

The **Exit 13 Phase 3 Sewer Project** will provide sewer service to portions of McCray Drive and the Foxfire subdivision. The project was advertised for bids in April 2017 and construction is expected to begin in July 2017. 💧

Employee News

Welcome, New Employee!

WCSA welcomes our newest employee, Carlotta Barton! Barton joined the customer service department on April 10. Her skills include processing payments and bank deposits, assisting customers with questions regarding services provided, and answering and directing phone calls. She previously served as an office manager and back-up head teller.

Congratulations!

WCSA congratulates Ryan Kiser and Gene Rolan on their recent promotions. Kiser joined WCSA's engineering department in August 2012 as a staff engineer and was promoted to manager of engineering in February 2017. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental science from the University of Virginia at Wise and is a licensed professional engineer in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Rolan joined WCSA in December 2006 as a wastewater operator and was promoted to manager of the wastewater department in March 2017. He currently holds a Class 1 Wastewater License and a Class 3 Water License. Rolan's career includes more than 35 years of experience in the fields of public service and wastewater operations.



Pictured above is a new wall art display that features a variety of images showcasing how WCSA serves its customers. The wall art is located outside the WCSA board room.

Did You Know?

In the summer of 2012, the residents of Clinch Mountain, along with Mountain Heritage, a St. Paul-based non-profit organization, made headway for a group of local conservationists to form a new, publicly accessed walking path: The Brumley Mountain Trail. The 14-mile walking path runs along the northern cross of Brumley Mountain, straddling the borders of Washington and Russell Counties, and connects two hidden Virginia gems — the Great Channels of Virginia and Hidden Valley Lake.

Covering an area of 61 acres, Hidden Valley Lake is located within the Hidden Valley Wildlife Management

Area. This 6,400-acre property is made up of mostly forested mountain land, with the exception of a number of clearings that have been developed and maintained to enhance wildlife habitat. At its highest elevation, the area exceeds 4,000 feet above sea level, and at its lowest, descends to around 2,000 feet, an indication of the area's steep terrain.

The beauty of this high country lake and the ruggedness of the surrounding area make it a worthy find for hikers, hunters, anglers, or anyone who simply enjoys being around water in the great outdoors. 💧

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WCSA's responsibility for water and sewer service lines typically ends at a homeowner's property line (at the water meter or first sewer cleanout from the main line), Cornett says. Homeowners are responsible for the water and sewer service lines that run from a meter to the residence, as well as any repairs or replacements that are needed. Customers are also responsible for installing a pressure-reducing valve on their side of the meter, and for locating and repairing any leaks that occur on their line between the residence and meter.

Sewer line breaks between the residence and first cleanout from the main sewer line also result in similar challenges for the homeowner and for the WCSA sewer system as pipes become overloaded during rain events.

"Everyone's costs increase when leaks occur as water and sewer treatment plants and pumps must run more often," Cornett says. "The sooner leaks are repaired, the better."

Often unaware that these types of repairs are not covered by basic homeowners' insurance policies or by WCSA, homeowners find themselves having to deal with the inconvenience of navigating emergency repairs on their own. Furthermore, they can be blindsided by the costs associated with such repairs.

Repairing or replacing lines often requires digging — which involves a long, deep trench or trenches to remove the old pipes and install new ones — as well as navigating other underground utilities. The average cost of these repairs vary widely depending on the length of the line, depth of the pipes,

type of pipes, ease of access, local rates, and code and permitting requirements. Repairs or replacements can cost hundreds to thousands of dollars.

Affordable, Accessible, Reliable Coverage 24/7

The coverage offered by HomeServe's *voluntary* water, sewer and in-home plumbing protection plans, provided by HomeServe USA, include:

- Exterior Water Service Line Coverage, available for \$4.49 per month;
- Exterior Sewer and Septic Line Coverage, available for \$6.99 per month; and
- Interior, In-Home Plumbing and Drainage Coverage, available for \$10.49 per month.

Because this is not a WCSA insurance plan, payment is not made to WCSA, but directly through HomeServe for residents who enroll in any of the coverage plans. Plan holders will also have access to a repair hotline that is available 24/7, 365 days a year, as well as licensed and insured contractors to provide high-quality home repair services in a timely manner.

If customers do not elect to receive coverage through HomeServe, WCSA recommends that they get multiple estimates and compare prices before hiring a professional to repair their water or sewer lines.

WCSA customers can visit www.homeserveusa.com/WCSA or call toll-free 1-844-849-3617 for more information. 



WCSA offices will be closed on the following holidays:

Memorial Day May 29
Independence Day July 4



Board Meetings

UPCOMING BOARD MEETING DATES

May 22, 2017
June 26, 2017
July 24, 2017
(Annual Meeting)

Board meetings are held at WCSA in the E.W. Potts Board Room at 6 p.m. The public is welcome to attend.

Actual dates may vary. Please contact our office to confirm meeting schedule.

Customer Contact Information

Should WCSA need to contact you regarding your water service, we generally do so via text message, email or telephone call. If you prefer not to be contacted by one or more of these methods, please contact our office at (276) 628-7151. If you would like to be contacted, but are not sure we have your information, please contact us at (276) 628-7151 or inquiry@wcsa-water.com with that information.

REMINDER

AVOID THE TIME AND EXPENSE OF MAILING AND POSTAGE WITH WCSA'S AUTO-DRAFT, ONLINE BILLPAY OR 24/7 PAY BY PHONE.

CALL OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT AT 276-628-7151 FOR DETAILS.

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