



IN THE PIPE

NEWSLETTER

Summer/Fall 2018

No. 23

The Importance of Checking Your Pressure Reducing Valve

Have you noticed your water pressure running higher or lower than usual? While low water pressure is easily recognized when turning on a faucet or taking a shower, many homeowners don't notice when their water pressure is higher than necessary. They also fail to realize that high water pressure is wasteful and can add to the cost of their utility bills, as well as damage their pipes or appliances.

Any appliance or fixture connected to your water system can be damaged, including faucets and taps, dishwashers, toilets, washing machines and water heaters. This can also lead to leaks, running toilets and burst pipes. A common symptom of an over-pressurized system is a sudden or gradual reduction in water pressure, or a banging or high-pitched whistling sound coming from the pipes, usually when the water is being turned off. Typically, there is no indication this may have occurred other than noticeably higher pressure at the faucet, or toilets that continue to run after the bowl is filled.

Most manufacturers recommend that plumbing fixtures or appliances that connect to your water supply be used with a maximum water pressure of 80 psi (pounds per square inch). Anything higher can cause premature failure — or a shortened lifespan — for the fixture or appliance.

Pressure Reducing Valves

Thankfully, there are control valves that reduce the pressure of the water flowing from your meter into your home. These are known as Pressure Reducing Valves (PRVs), and homeowners are required by county building codes, as well as WCSA's standards, to have them. A PRV is a device installed at the water service entry point of a home to conserve water and regulate incoming pressure from WCSA's water mains, saving homeowners money and making it safe for their plumbing systems.



These devices require routine maintenance in order to operate safely and efficiently. Homeowners are responsible for ensuring they have a PRV, and for checking it for damage or leaks on a regular basis to make certain it is working properly. While it may be easy to overlook PRVs due to time and budget constraints, they do have a lifespan and must be maintained or replaced as needed.

Expansion Tanks

Standard tank water heaters experience thermal expansion during the heating process. When water is heated from 50° F to 120° F, it expands by approximately two percent. In addition, if you have a "closed system," which means your water is prevented from flowing back into the water main, thermal expansion can cause rapid pressure increases in your plumbing system, stressing your plumbing pipes.

Continued on Page 3

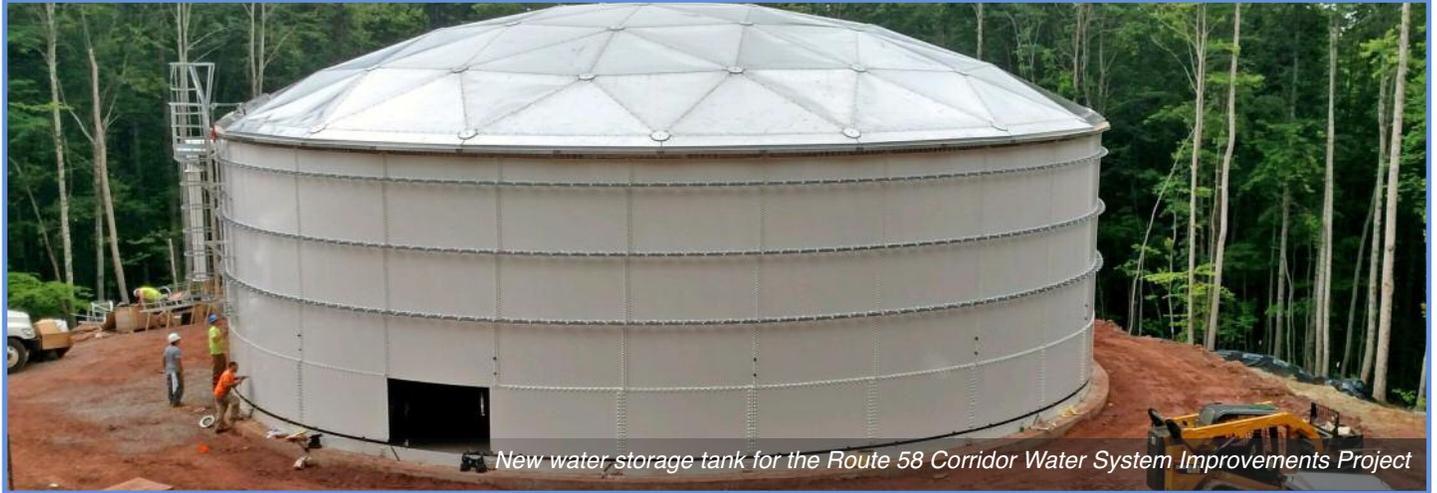
INSIDE

WCSA Project Updates.....2
 Employee News2
 New Water Service Rate Information3

Affordable Solutions for Costly Water and Sewer Line Repairs.....4
 WCSA Calendar and Board Meeting Schedule4

WCSA Project Updates

To learn more about WCSA projects, visit www.wcsawater.com.



New water storage tank for the Route 58 Corridor Water System Improvements Project

Recently Completed Projects:

The **Exit 13 Phase 3 Sewer Project** provides sewer service to portions of McCray Drive and the Foxfire subdivision. Construction began in August 2017 and was completed in the early summer of 2018. Restoration of property is underway, and WCSA will soon be notifying customers when they can connect to the new system.



Start-up of the pump station for the Exit 13 Phase 3 Sewer Project

The **Route 58 Corridor Water System Improvements Project** includes improvements for the water system serving the Town of Damascus, Alvarado and areas east of South Holston Lake. Installation of water lines in Denton Valley and on Drake Road were completed in the early summer of 2018. Construction of a new water storage tank, which began in October 2017, was completed in July 2018.

Ongoing Projects:

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 2017 and is expected to be completed in the summer of 2018.

The **Chip Ridge Water Line Extension Project** will provide water service for new customers along Chip Ridge Road. Construction began in May and is expected to be completed in November.

Upcoming Projects:

WCSA has received funding for several proposed water line projects. The **Rattle Creek Road, Rich Valley Road and Sugar Cove Road** projects are currently in the design stages, and construction is expected to begin by the early fall of 2018. The Rattle Creek Road and Sugar Cove Road projects are expected to be completed in the spring of 2019, while the Rich Valley Road project is expected to be completed in the summer of 2019.

The **Galvanized Line Replacement — Phase 3 Project** is the third step in a three-phase project to replace all galvanized pipe in WCSA's distribution system over the next several years. The project is expected to be advertised for bids by late summer or early fall of 2018. 💧

Employee News

CONGRATULATIONS

Joe Baldwin recently acquired his Tennessee Water Distribution Grade 1 License. Since WCSA serves residents of Tennessee as well as Virginia, operators must be licensed in both states. Employed with WCSA since 2001, Joe transferred from the maintenance department to the Middle Fork Drinking Water Plant in 2007, and was promoted to the plant's chief operator in 2013. 💧



An installed pressure reducing valve

If you are experiencing water pressure issues and have properly adjusted your valves, a water leak may have occurred due to a cracked or damaged pipe, or mineral buildup in your lines. It is important to resolve any existing or potential problems that may occur as quickly as possible. Please consult with your local plumber to determine the best course of action for your PRV or for proper installation of an expansion tank. 💧

How to Check Your Pressure Reducing Valve

Because it isn't always obvious when your pressure reducing valve has failed, it's recommended that you check your water pressure regularly to ensure it's working properly. To test your water pressure:

- Obtain a pressure gauge that measures in psi (pounds per square inch) with a hose bib connector from a hardware or home improvement store.
- Make sure no water is being used anywhere inside or outside your house.
- Remove the hose from an outside hose bib or faucet near or at the water meter, and screw the pressure gauge onto the fixture.
- A rubber hose gasket inside the pressure gauge will make it seal easily; simply tighten the pressure gauge by hand to make it seal. If it leaks slightly, tighten with pliers.
- Turn on the hose bib to get a water pressure reading.
- Most common pressure regulators have a maximum adjustment up to 75 psi; if the reading on the pressure gauge exceeds this, the pressure reducing valve is not functioning properly and should be repaired or replaced. 💧

While it is not required, a water heater expansion tank can be added to your plumbing system to minimize the risk of pressure damage. An expansion tank absorbs the extra water volume produced by the water heater during the heating process, and also absorbs fluctuations in the water pressure. This prevents any built-up pressure from reaching and damaging your fixtures.

In addition to performing routine checks and maintenance on your PRV, it is also important to check the pressure in your expansion tank on an annual basis. Record your tests so you can notice trends within your system and fix any issues before they become disastrous.

New Water Service Rate Information

WCSA is almost exclusively funded through the sale of its water and sewer services (connection and monthly user fees). Other than an occasional grant, WCSA receives no outside financial support.

The following water rates went into effect on July 1, 2018. Please note these rates apply to water service only; wastewater service rates have not changed.

Water Rates:

Monthly Minimum Rate: \$23.21

| Monthly Use | Usage Rate per Thousand Gallons |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Residential (0 to 2,999 gallons) | \$5.07 |
| Residential (3,000 to 5,999 gallons) | \$7.40 |
| Residential (6,000 or more gallons) | \$10.35 |
| Non-Residential (per 1,000 gallons) | \$6.14 |

If you have a question about your water and sewer rates, please contact our Customer Service Department at 276-628-7151 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. 💧

Affordable Solutions for Costly Water and Sewer Line Repairs



Water line replacement

Homeowners are often unaware that they are responsible for the water and sewer lines extending from their home to WCSA's water and sewer main connections. In addition, emergency repairs to those lines are not covered by basic homeowners' insurance policies, which can leave homeowners with unexpected costs for which they are not prepared.

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. Homeowners are 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 the meter. Repairing or replacing lines often requires digging and navigating other underground utilities, and can cost from hundreds to thousands of dollars.

In response to customers' requests for help with water leaks, WCSA has offered an affordable solution for water and sewer line repairs since early 2017. Through a partnership with HomeServe USA, a leading provider of home emergency repair solutions, optional service plans for interior and exterior water lines are available to help bridge the gap between the services provided by WCSA and homeowners' insurance policies.

"WCSA's partnership with HomeServe provides customers with options that cover water and sewer line repairs," says WCSA General Manager Robbie Cornett. "This helps ensure that they are protected from any unexpected expenses or inconveniences associated with this type of upkeep."

Customer benefits include covered repairs completed at no charge, up to the annual benefit amount, with no deductible or service trip fees; a 24-hour-a-day toll-free hotline, offered seven days a week, 365 days a year; and local, licensed, insured and qualified contractors dispatched to make necessary repairs to covered systems, eliminating the need to search for a qualified contractor in an emergency.

Since HomeServe's partnership with WCSA began, nearly 1,900 WCSA customers have taken advantage of this service. Fifty-one covered repairs have been completed to date, with a customer savings of \$60,000.

Repair plans include:

- **Exterior Water Service Line** (\$4.49 per month), which includes unlimited annual coverage for locating, excavating and repairing leaks or replacing segments of pipe;
- **Exterior Sewer/Septic Line** (\$6.99 per month), which includes unlimited annual coverage for work to replace a collapsed or damaged section of sewer pipe, or to unclog a sewer line; and
- **Interior Plumbing & Drainage** (\$10.49 per month), which includes \$3,000 annually for repairs to or replacement of interior leaking water and drainage piping, or unblocking clogged sinks and toilets.

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:

Labor Day Sept. 3
Columbus Day Oct. 8



Board Meetings

UPCOMING BOARD MEETING DATES

Aug. 27, 2018
Sept. 24, 2018
Oct. 22, 2018

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.

E-CHECK PAYMENTS

WCSA NOW OFFERS A 24/7 E-CHECK METHOD FOR PHONE AND ONLINE PAYMENTS. YOU MAY PAY BY CALLING 276-628-7151 AND CHOOSING OPTION 2, OR BY ACCESSING YOUR ONLINE ACCOUNT. CALL CUSTOMER SERVICE AT 276-628-7151 FOR DETAILS.

WCSA
25122 Regal Drive
Abingdon, VA 24211
P: 276-628-7151
F: 276-628-3594

Email: inquiry@wcsawater.com
www.wcsawater.com