

The Annapolis Observer is IRO's weekly update on happenings in Annapolis and highlights the progress of key bills of interest to WSSC Water, as well as provide timely updates and calendar of important dates.

A Note from WSSC Water's Intergovernmental Relations Office

The 2025 Legislative Session is in full swing. The General Assembly House of Delegates and Senate chambers are considering over 700 pieces of legislation. Committees have begun holding work sessions to discuss bills and proposed amendments, and scheduled votes on whether bills should move forward to the next phase of the legislative process.

IRO is on the front-line advocating for legislation that impacts our work. We cover a variety of subject matters and focus on legislation that helps fulfill our Smart One Water Mission and analyze the impact of state and federal legislation on WSSC Water. We ensure all communities thrive by ethically delivering safe, reliable and sustainable water and wastewater services. In every home, every business, we make everything possible by ensuring access to dependable and safe water for everyday life.

Legislative Updates

This session, WSSC Water-sponsored bills are assigned to the Prince George's County House Delegation for first consideration. WSSC Water has submitted two bills: [MC/PG 102-25](#) – Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Design and Construction – Alternative Project Delivery and Solicitation Methods; and [MC/PG 112-25](#) – Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Service Charges. Based on the subject matter, both bills are initially reviewed by the Delegation's Bi-County Committee.

On January 23, MC/PG 102-25 was placed on the Bi-County Committee's agenda for a vote. IRO staff joined the meeting to answer questions on the bill, and the bill was unanimously recommended to move forward for consideration by the full Prince George's County House Delegation. On January 24, the Delegation voted unanimously to support the bill and it will now pass onto the Montgomery County House Delegation for consideration. MC/PG 112-25 will be placed on the Bi-County Committee's agenda at a future date.

IRO is also monitoring legislation impacting WSSC Water. Three WSSC Water-related bills have been introduced: [MC/PG 101-25](#) – Montgomery County Planning Board and Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Open Meetings – Live Streaming (Palakovich Carr); [MC/PG 105-25](#) – Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Membership, Transparency, Billing, and Planning (WSSC Transparency and Reform Act of 2025) (Korman, Wilkins, Barnes); and [MC/PG 107-25](#) – Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – System Development Charge – Exemptions (Moon). As Montgomery County delegates, these bills are first considered by the Montgomery County House Delegation committees.

MC/PG 101-25 was referred to the Delegation's Metro Washington Committee. On January 20, MC/PG 101-25 was placed on the Metro Washington Committee's agenda for a vote and the bill was unanimously recommended to move forward for consideration by the full Montgomery County House Delegation. On January 24, the Delegation voted unanimously to support the bill and it will now pass onto the Prince George's County House Delegation for consideration. The Commission supports MC/PG 101-25.

MC/PG 105-25 was also referred to the Delegation's Metro Washington Committee which held its first work session on January 13. The sponsor has indicated he will be proposing amendments to the bill. The Commissioners will hold a special meeting on January 28 to consider taking a position on the bill and potential amendments.

MC/PG 107-25 was referred to the Delegation's Economic Development Committee. The bill has received amendments from the Montgomery County Executive and members of the Economic Development Committee. Commissioners will be presented amendments and will consider staff's recommendation on taking a formal position on MC/PG 107-25 at an upcoming Commission meeting.

IRO will continue to monitor legislation and provide updates. Find the status and position on WSSC Water-related bills in our [Legislative Update](#).

Around WSSC Water

WSSC Water Accepting Applications for 2025 Commissioners' Engineering Scholarship

Applications are now available for the 2024 Commissioners' Engineering Scholarship. The deadline to apply is **Saturday, February 15, 2025**.

- The scholarship, which provides \$2,000 per year, supports WSSC Water's ongoing efforts to attract aspiring engineers to careers in the water industry.
- The scholarship is open to undergraduate or graduate students with permanent residency in Montgomery or Prince George's counties and are enrolled in a full-time college or university engineering program. Graduating high school seniors accepted into a college engineering program are also eligible.
- Applicants must include an introductory video and essay, two reference letters, an official transcript and proof of residency in WSSC Water's service district.

You may access and submit your application online [here](#), or via US mail. Applications submitted via mail must be postmarked by February 15, 2025, and addressed to: Julianne Montes de Oca, Corporate Secretary, Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, 14501 Sweitzer Lane, Laurel, MD 20707.

Please visit wsscwater.com/scholarship to get complete details and application requirements.



WSSC Water is Winter Ready – Are You?

As colder temperatures settle into the region, water main breaks increase. However, WSSC Water crews are prepared for the increase in breaks and leaks with people, pipes, trucks and tools at the ready! WSSC Water experiences an increase in water main breaks and leaks a few days after the temperature of the Potomac River hits a new low. The river is the primary source of drinking water for 1.9 million WSSC Water customers in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. When a new low temperature is reached, the colder water can shock pipes, increasing the number of breaks and leaks. One of the nation's largest water utilities, WSSC Water spends approximately \$17 million each year for emergency water main repairs, with about \$10 million spent November through February.

Customers are encouraged to report water main breaks and leaks as quickly as possible. There are three simple ways to report a break or leak to WSSC Water's 24-hour Emergency Services Center:

- By phone: 301-206-4002
- By email: emergencycallcenter@wsscwater.com
- Via mobile app: [WSSC Water's Mobile App](#)

The "Report a Problem" feature on the mobile app allows customers to easily snap a picture of a possible water main break or leak and send it directly to the Emergency Services Center. The app uses GPS to pinpoint the location of the image, which allows dispatchers to send an inspector to the site.

WSSC Water maintains the pipes in the streets and the connections up to the property line. If a pipe in a home freezes, it is the homeowner's responsibility to repair. For more information, including tips on what customers can do to help winterize their homes, visit www.wsscwater.com/winterready.



Can The Grease

Fats and oils can build up inside pipes and over time restrict wastewater flow - if they are poured down the drain. Pouring fats, oils or grease down the drain will cause clogs, possible sewer backups into your home and sewage overflows in the WSSC Water system. Do your part by properly disposing of fats, oils and grease:

- Pour the oil or grease into a can
- Put a lid on the can
- Cool the can of grease in the refrigerator
- When it's full, toss the can into the trash
- Be sure the can is covered so that if the grease melts, it does not spill into your trash.

WSSC Water will send you free "Can the Grease" lid covers. Just email your address to communications@wsscwater.com, and we will do the rest. (Note: there is a limit of two lids per family.) Most food cans will work with the lids. We do not provide the cans.

Just remember: To keep the grease out, "*Can it. Cool it. Toss it.*"

Be Salt Wise

Do your part to
keep excess salt
out of local
waterways



wsscwater.com/saltwise

Reminder to be Saltwise in Winter

Did you know using salt on walkways, driveways and roads is harmful to our environment? That includes sources of drinking water and the pipes and pumps needed to supply water to our customers.

Once the ice and snow melt, the salt doesn't go away. It seeps into the ground and wells, and travels with stormwater into streams, wells and drinking water reservoirs. It also corrodes pipes.

Please remember to be saltwise! A 12-ounce coffee mug full of salt is enough to treat a 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. Please visit wsscwater.com/saltwise to learn more.

WSSC Water FY 2026 Proposed Budget Hearings

WSSC Water is hosting two public hearings for interested customers and stakeholders to ask questions and provide feedback on its \$1.8 billion preliminary proposed Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) operating and capital budget. Staff will provide an overview of the budget, answer questions and receive public comments.

The public hearings schedule are as follows:

Wednesday, January 29, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Stella B. Werner Office Building

3rd Floor Hearing Room

100 Maryland Avenue

Rockville, Maryland 20850

[Register to comment](#)

Can't attend? Streaming is available via [County Cable Montgomery](#)

Tuesday, February 4, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Wayne K. Curry Administration Building

1st Floor Hearing Room

1301 McCormick Drive Curry

Largo, MD 20774

[Register to comment](#)

If you are unable to attend, streaming is available via: [Prince George's County Council](#)

Please visit wsscwater.com/fin for complete details on the budget process and register to comment (not required). **Note:** Links to view the meetings do not display until closer to the meeting date.



Customer
Notification
System

**Receive alerts about WSSC
Water-related incidents near
your home, office, school, or
other important addresses.**



Register for *text or email* alerts
on up to three addresses.

REGISTER AT [WSSCWATER.COM/CNS](https://wsscwater.com/cns)

Customer Notification System (CNS)

In our continuing effort to provide excellent customer service, WSSC Water offers a Customer Notification System (CNS) to alert you about our work in your area that may affect your service or daily routine.

Once you sign up, you will receive email or text alerts about water main breaks, sanitary sewer overflows, road or lane closures caused by WSSC Water work, boil water advisories and occasionally other important messages from us.

Sign up [here](https://wsscwater.com/cns) for CNS and never be in the dark about water main repairs and water emergencies in your neighborhood.

Customer Assistance and the Water Fund

WSSC Water remains committed to making water/sewer bills more affordable. We want to do everything in our power to help you avoid a water service shutoff and ensure our safe, clean water continues to flow to your tap. Learn more at [WSSC Water Financial Assistance Programs](#).



Customers may also help by making a tax-deductible donation to [The Water Fund](#) to help more neighbors have access to clean, safe water. The Water Fund is administered by The Salvation Army. Every dollar of your donation goes directly to local families who need financial assistance paying their water/sewer bills. Click [here](#) to donate online.

Customer Advocates

Our Customer Advocates are in your communities every day, carrying out their mission to serve as liaisons between you and WSSC Water, and ensuring that we are providing a high level of customer service.

Northern Prince George's County (areas north of Central Avenue, MD 214)

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Southern Prince George's County (areas south of Central Avenue, MD 214)

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Southern Montgomery County (areas south of Randolph Road)

Brandon Stewart

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Northern Montgomery County (areas north of Randolph Road)

Phil Callahan

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240-204-2123

Find your Customer Advocate [here](#).

Calendar

- February 3, 2025 – Senate Bill Introduction Date
 - February 5, 2025 – Governor delivers State of the State Address (noon)
 - February 7, 2025 – House Bill Introduction Date
 - March 13, 2025 – WSSC Water's Legislative Luncheon
 - March 17, 2025 – Crossover
 - April 7, 2025 – Sine Die
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Related Links

[Maryland General Assembly](#)

- [Session Calendar](#)
- [Track Legislation](#)

[Montgomery County Delegation](#)

[Prince George's County Delegation](#)

[Maryland Association of Counties](#)

[Maryland Municipal League](#)

About IRO

WSSC Water's **Intergovernmental Relations Office (IRO)** team works to promote the *value of water* and the *value of WSSC Water*; engage *federal, state, county and local government* and elected stakeholders and advocate for WSSC Water's strategic interests and priorities; and foster *relationships* with organizations and promote collaborative interests.

In Annapolis, the IRO team works with members to support administratively and fiscally responsible legislation, in addition to championing policy that benefits all water utilities throughout Maryland. WSSC Water is committed to increased statewide investment in water and wastewater infrastructure and sound regulatory initiatives.

Meet the IRO Team

Monica Marquina – Government Affairs Director

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Please click [here](#) for a printable sheet of our key contacts.



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For over 100 years, WSSC Water has proudly served the citizens of Prince George's and Montgomery counties – providing drinking water that has always met strict Safe Drinking Water Act standards and protecting the environment through vital water resource recovery services. Our vision is to be THE world-class water utility, where excellent products and services are always on tap. www.wsscwater.com

WSSC Water | 14501 Sweitzer Lane | Laurel, MD 20707 US

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