

Fairfax Water

SUMMER 2023

STRAIGHT FROM THE TAP

The Value of Tap Water

Tap water offers incredible value! It's high-quality water at a low price and it's better for the environment than bottled water. Tap water is highly regulated, and our lab regularly tests for possible contaminants. These tests showed that our water meets or surpasses all drinking water regulations. So drink smart and choose tap!



Choose Tap! ✓

- A gallon of water from Fairfax Water only costs approximately 0.4 cents. A gallon of bottled water costs approximately \$2.00 at the grocery store--that's 500 times the cost of tap water!
- Bottled water production wastes water. About 36 ounces of water is needed to produce one 12-ounce plastic water bottle.
- Choosing tap decreases reliance on single-use plastics.
- According to the Environmental Protection Agency, approximately 1 ounce of carbon dioxide is emitted for each ounce of polyethylene (PET) produced. PET is the type of plastic most commonly used for beverage bottles.

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Out and About - The Water Bar is Back!



Customers stopped by our Water Bar for an ice cold cup of Fairfax Water at Fairfax County's 2023 Earth Day Celebration at the Sully Historic Site in April. This was the first time the Water Bar has been in action since before the COVID pandemic, and Fairfax Water was happy to put it back in service!

In the News: Poly- and Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

What are PFAS, and how do they get into drinking water?

PFAS are a group of over 12,000 man-made chemicals manufactured and used in home and consumer products, such as carpets, clothing, food packaging, and cookware, since the 1940s. They are also used in firefighting foam and other industrial processes. Most of a person's exposure to PFAS is through food and other consumer products. Drinking water makes up a small portion of a person's total exposure to PFAS. Peer-reviewed studies show that exposure to elevated levels of PFAS may lead to adverse health outcomes in humans.

Due to years of use, PFAS are everywhere in the environment. Industrial sites might release PFAS into the water or air. The use of household products containing PFAS may release PFAS when those products are thrown away or washed down the drain. These chemicals do not break down naturally. They build up in the environment over time, eventually entering our bodies through food and drinking water.

What is Fairfax Water doing about PFAS?

Fairfax Water has been proactively testing for PFAS for 2 years. This has helped us get a clear understanding of PFAS levels in our source water prior to any US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations. While our testing has shown the presence of PFAS compounds, they are at extremely low levels. To learn more about our PFAS sampling and results, please visit the link at the bottom of the page.

In addition to testing, Fairfax Water is paying close attention to the US EPA's PFAS drinking water regulatory process. Currently, there are no enforceable federal drinking water regulations for PFAS chemicals. The US EPA proposed a rule for perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and the combination of four additional PFAS in March 2023. The US EPA will take the next steps in the regulatory development process before the proposed standards are finalized. These include a public comment period and a public hearing. The proposed regulations may change prior to being finalized later this year or sometime in 2024. As the rule is currently proposed, our testing indicates that treated water from the Occoquan Reservoir is slightly above the proposed limits for PFOA and PFOS.

We will continue to evaluate our treatment processes before the US EPA's final ruling in order to maintain high-quality drinking water for Fairfax Water's customers. We are also working with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and other agencies to identify possible sources of PFAS in the watershed.

How can I reduce my exposure to PFAS?

- Support efforts to protect drinking water sources and **keep PFAS out of water supplies.**
- Read ingredient lists and choose products without polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) or "perfluoro-" or "polyfluor-" in their names.
- Cook with stainless steel, cast iron, glass, or ceramics. Try not to use nonstick cookware.
- Look for coats, hats, and boots labeled "water resistant." They are less likely to have PFAS than "waterproof" products.
- Avoid ordering food in grease-resistant wrappers or containers.
- Avoid carpets and upholstery treated to be stain resistant or water resistant; decline stain treatment.
- Ask manufacturers if their products have PFAS. These chemicals are often not listed.



To learn more, visit
fairfaxwater.org/water-quality/facts-about-pfas
or scan the QR code.



Emergency Preparedness: What Can You Do To Get Ready?



Severe weather and other emergencies can happen at any time. At Fairfax Water, we never stop preparing for these types of unexpected events. Because we monitor the water system 24/7, we are ready to respond to any emergency. But we can't do it alone. We need your help to prepare your family for emergencies. Having a supply of clean water is a top priority in an emergency situation. Visit [ReadyNOVA.org](https://www.readynova.org) and complete your family preparedness plan.

Be sure to also sign up for local emergency alerts. You decide the type of alerts you want on any or all of your electronic devices. Visit the sites below to sign up.

- Fairfax Alerts (County): [fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/alerts](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/alerts)
- Falls Church Alerts: [fallschurchva.gov/alerts](https://www.fallschurchva.gov/alerts)
- Fairfax City Alerts: [fairfaxva.gov/services/about-us/fairfax-city-alert](https://www.fairfaxva.gov/services/about-us/fairfax-city-alert)

2023 Annual Water Quality Report



Our Annual Water Quality Report contains important information about your water quality and Fairfax Water's services. Under federal law, we are required to provide this information to our customers every year.

By July 1, the report will be available online at [fairfaxwater.org/waterqualityreport](https://www.fairfaxwater.org/waterqualityreport), or you can request a printed copy.

To request a printed copy, fill out the online form located at [fairfaxwater.org/reportrequest](https://www.fairfaxwater.org/reportrequest) or call 703-289-6285, TTY 711, and provide your name, mailing address, and phone number. A report will be mailed to you.

Fairfax Water Online Customer Portal:

View Your Water Account 24/7/365!

Fairfax Water's self-service customer portal is a web-based platform that provides you with a convenient, single access point to account information that you can use on your desktop or mobile device via [fwcustomer.org](https://www.fwcustomer.org) or our mobile app.

Once registered, you can conduct transactions (such as making payments, viewing bills, checking quarterly usage, and sending online messages) at your convenience.



Visit [fwcustomer.org](https://www.fwcustomer.org) or scan the QR code to jump to the portal!





Kid's Corner

Careers Word Search

We Want To Know . . .

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

Info on water service and billing:

703-698-5800

After hours/emergencies:

703-698-5613

To report a water main break:

703-698-5613 or e-mail

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

fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/wastewater

City of Falls Church

Department of Public Works:

703-248-5350

fallschurchva.gov

City of Fairfax

Department of Public Works:

703-385-7810

fairfaxva.gov

Dig With C.A.R.E.

Miss Utility at 800-552-7001 or 811

va811.com/how-to-when-to/

Use TTY 711 (Virginia Relay)

for all numbers unless stated otherwise.

Did you know Fairfax Water has a lot of different types of employees on our team? Try finding some of these careers in the word search below! Visit workforwater.org/careers-in-water/ to learn more about careers in the water industry.

M	M	I	A	Y	F	R	Y	P	O	L	G	Y	J	B
V	V	A	U	C	L	E	S	G	Z	X	T	K	Y	Q
Y	M	U	N	E	C	P	S	R	Y	D	G	G	R	R
T	N	G	F	A	Z	O	P	B	R	M	D	M	F	N
S	X	F	F	H	G	T	U	U	U	O	W	D	E	Q
E	N	G	I	N	E	E	R	N	S	W	G	A	L	J
N	M	O	J	N	Y	E	M	C	T	I	A	S	L	I
Y	B	V	K	V	P	B	I	E	H	A	Q	D	A	B
Y	H	O	J	A	W	E	C	H	N	T	N	J	A	P
K	N	U	I	B	N	H	H	L	A	T	U	T	X	F
H	X	R	L	T	A	P	R	E	F	H	V	N	J	U
X	C	Y	I	L	X	B	W	C	T	C	M	P	N	U
D	T	S	E	C	U	R	I	T	Y	I	V	T	D	D
V	T	W	M	P	E	U	E	G	E	U	A	O	B	K
S	V	N	M	U	D	Y	L	U	S	M	G	V	R	S

Accountant
Engineer
Management

Repair
Scientist
Security

Supply
Tech

Want to know when we're closed for holidays?

Check out our website!

fairfaxwater.org/holidaycalendar



Fairfax Water is a public, not-for-profit water authority serving over 2 million people in the Northern Virginia communities of Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, Fort Belvoir, Herndon, Dulles, Vienna, Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax City.



Designate one glass for your drinking water each day, or refill a water bottle. This will cut down on the number of glasses to wash. For more tips on saving water, visit wateruseitwisely.com.