



City of Richmond Department Of Public Utilities UTILITY TALK

Natural Gas | Water | Wastewater | Stormwater | Streetlighting

Serving Richmond, Henrico and North Chesterfield.

Fall 2021 Edition

DPU Is Here For You! We Have Financial Assistance To Help



The pandemic has impacted us all in many ways. The City of Richmond launched RVAStrong.com at the beginning of the pandemic to ensure all those in need could find available resources. A moratorium was also issued on disconnections for utility services so that all customers had access to clean and safe water, an important component in fighting the coronavirus. With the state of emergency lifted and other resources expiring, we want to be sure customers are aware of the financial assistance the City of Richmond Department of Public Utilities has available.

Get Help With Overdue Utility Bills

DPU is accepting new applications from customers who have fallen behind on their utility bills as a result of an economic hardship due to COVID-19. Utility relief can cover past due consumption charges for water, wastewater and natural gas services from March 1, 2020 to present. Previous CARE utility relief recipients are eligible to reapply for a different service period. Applications are available at www.rva.gov/public-utilities. Eligible customers are strongly encouraged to apply to avoid future late fees and disconnections. Funds are limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. *DPU is partnering with PROMISEPay to provide an easier application process for utility relief. This partnership will allow DPU to better reach customers in need of financial assistance.*

Payment And Budget Plans Offer A Convenient Way To Come Current

For customers that are not eligible for CARES utility relief, or for those with outstanding balances after receiving relief, DPU offers payment plans. Additionally, equal monthly payment plans are available to budget gas bills. Customers that would like to enroll in either program should call our Customer Care agents at (804) 646-4646. There are other utility assistance programs to help customers.

For more information, visit www.rva.gov/public-utilities/billing or call (804) 646-4646.



Pay Your Bill Electronically

DPU has a variety of methods for customers to pay their utility bills. One user-friendly, electronic method is EZ-Pay. For this option and others, visit www.rva.gov/public-utilities/billing.



Tips for Timely Meter Reads

When DPU is unable to obtain a usable meter reading for billing purposes, your utility bill will be estimated. DPU uses an electronic device to transmit data from the utility meter to its billing system. This technology can collect data without a technician physically inspecting the meter.



Meter readers load electronic computers in their cars and drive through neighborhoods daily to record meter readings.

The meter reading cannot be transmitted if the radio signal is blocked, so please keep the tops of the water meters clear of flower pots, trash cans, dirt, mulch, or other obstructions, and don't park cars over them. To learn more about how DPU reads meters electronically, visit our blog: www.rva.gov/public-utilities/news.



It's important to keep your gas and water meters clear of obstacles.

DPU Is Award Winning

DPU is proud of all the work our employees do to ensure all utility services are delivered safely and efficiently. We are especially proud when that hard work is recognized by respective industries. Two recent awards include:

Richmond Gas Works Earns SOAR Award

Richmond Gas Works recently received the 2021 American Public Gas Association Bronze System Operational Achievement Recognition (SOAR) Award. The award is recognition by peer companies of our commitment to excellence in system integrity, improvements, safety and workforce development.

City Water Certified Gold

The Water Treatment Plant received the Gold Award from the Virginia Department of Health for surpassing regulatory standards and providing clean drinking water in 2020.



Pictured above is our award-winning Richmond Water Treatment Plant.



CITY OF RICHMOND
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

30901-I-0247



Help Find Solutions to Make Richmond Climate-Ready

Climate change is making Richmond hotter and stormier. The impacts of this are hitting historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged communities the hardest. The City of Richmond's RVAgreen 2050 initiative is working with these local communities to find solutions that will make them climate-ready and resilient.



RVAgreen's 2050 mission is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 45 percent by 2030, achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and help the community adapt to Richmond's climate impacts of extreme heat, precipitation, and flooding. This initiative is led by the city's Office of Sustainability. Last spring, they asked the community to rank drafted climate action and resilience strategies. Through the survey process they learned that the top priorities of our citizens are green spaces and trees; parks planning and operation; maintain existing and create new public outdoor space; urban agriculture; air quality; and complete streets.

The Office of Sustainability staff and RVAgreen 2050 Working Groups have been working on incorporating this and additional community feedback into the draft RVAgreen 2050 plan, which will be released for public review this coming Earth Day, April 22, 2022!

They need your voice as part of this process. Contribute your input to create a more equitable, healthy, and resilient Richmond. If you want to know what's happening right now or ways you can participate, check out www.rvagreengreen2050.com/participate.



Directions: Aim your phone's camera at this QR code to bring up the web page on your phone.

SCAN ME

NATURAL GAS SAFETY INFORMATION

Hazard Awareness and Prevention

The U.S. natural gas transmission and distribution system has the best safety record of any type of transportation system in the country. Natural gas is clean, convenient and efficient, which makes it the popular energy choice.

Like all forms of energy, however, it must be handled properly. A natural gas leak caused by damage to a pipeline may pose a hazard and has the potential to ignite. Richmond Gas Works operates diligently to ensure pipeline safety through a variety of measures, including Contact 811 programs, inspections, design and construction practices, workforce qualifications, public education, industry safety practices and government oversight, pipeline markers and facility mapping, natural gas leak surveys, and patrols of critical natural gas facilities.

Leak Response

A natural gas leak is usually recognized by the smell, sight, or sound.

Smell: Natural gas is colorless and odorless. We add a distinctive pungent odor -- a rotten eggs smell -- so you will recognize a leak quickly.

Sight: You may see a white cloud, mist, fog, or bubbles in standing water, or vegetation that appears to be dead or dying for no apparent reason.

Sound: You may hear an unusual noise like roaring, hissing or whistling.

What should you do if you suspect a leak? Protect life first. Go to a location where the smell is no longer present and call 911 or Richmond Gas Works at 646-4646.

Do not strike a match, use telephones, switch on or off appliances, lights or even a flashlight in the area where you smell natural gas. Those actions could produce sparks that might ignite and cause an explosion.

How to Get Additional Information

Richmond Gas Works -- 804-646-4646

Web -- www.rva.gov/public-utilities/natural-gas-safety

Phone (Virginia) -- 811 or 800-552-7001

Web -- www.va811.com; Office of Pipeline Safety -- www.phmsa.dot.gov



Dispose Of Your Leaves Properly

Fall leaves may be beautiful, but when they're swept into catch basins and block storm drains, they contribute to flooding. Natural dams are created, catching more leaves and litter and inhibiting the flow of water. When the leaves eventually decompose, the nutrients they release can lead to excessive algae growth in our waterways, which harms aquatic life.

Do your part to limit the leaves that ride with the rain by mulching or composting them, or bagging them in proper containers for curbside pickup. Vacuum service is also available for a fee. Be on the lookout for the City of Richmond leaf collection pickup schedule in October.



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Official DPU Twitter:
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PHONE:
(804) 646-4646
TTY: 711 to 646-4646



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Richmond DPU



Official DPU Website:
www.rva.gov/public-utilities



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Richmond Gas Works Website:
www.richmondgasworks.com