

# CURRENTS

BWSC News

Jan/Feb 2021



## BWSC @ Work

Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) recently received the 2020 Public Water System Award from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection - Drinking Water Program. BWSC continues to maintain Boston's drinking water at the highest possible standards.

## Important Information About Lead

The Commission mailed an important brochure to all customers in December. The information is being sent to educate consumers of the importance of taking steps to mitigate the dangers posed by lead pipes. **Boston's water supply does not contain lead**, any lead present in water comes from private plumbing, lead water service pipes, lead solder or old plumbing fixtures containing brass can potentially leach lead.

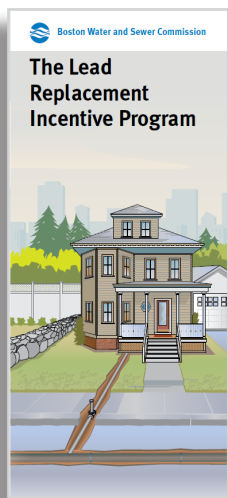
If you have an older home (built before the 1950's), have old plumbing fixtures, or if the presence of lead in your home is unknown (note; lead solder was in use until the 1980s), there is a simple mitigation measure you can take to keep you and those living in the home safe; **flush!** Flushing water that has been standing in pipes is a proven effective way to remove lead and other impurities from drinking water. Water standing overnight or for other extended periods of time should be flushed for up to 2 minutes before use. Property owners can have their water tested by a certified state laboratory. The list of laboratories can be found at [www.mwra.com](http://www.mwra.com).

The Commission is available to help. Please log on to [www.bwsc.org](http://www.bwsc.org) and see if your property is on the lead map. Call the Lead Hotline 617-989-7888, to speak to the Commission about lead. If you have a lead service pipe, investigate the Lead Replacement Incentive Program which provides up to \$2000.00 and up to 4-year interest free loans to replace the lead with copper.

## 2021 Water & Sewer Rates

Consumption (Cu. Ft./Day)	Water		Sewer	
	Per 1,000 Cubic Feet	Per 1,000 Gallons	Per 1,000 Cubic Feet	Per 1,000 Gallons
First 19	\$59.59	\$7.967	\$81.16	\$10.850
Next 20	\$63.64	\$8.508	\$88.29	\$11.804
Next 50	\$69.40	\$9.279	\$95.27	\$12.737
Next 260	\$73.97	\$9.890	\$100.60	\$13.449
Next 950	\$77.86	\$10.409	\$106.72	\$14.268
Over 1299	\$81.05	\$10.836	\$110.79	\$14.812

The above chart reflects a 8.90% overall increase in water and sewer charges for 2021. A typical household water and sewer bill will increase by an estimated \$8.29 per bill.



## Financial Assistance Programs

### Lead Replacement Incentive Program

The Lead Replacement Incentive Program offers up to \$2000.00 towards the cost of replacing a service line. The remaining costs can be spread out up to 48 months, interest free.

### Discount for the Elderly and Fully Disabled

A discount is available for homeowners 65 years or older, or fully disabled. Qualifying customers receive a 30% discount on the water portion of your bill.

### Sewer Lateral Financial Assistance Program

If your sewer line is blocked, collapsed or leaking and the repairs are verified by a BWSC inspector you could receive reimbursement up to \$4,000.

Learn more about these programs at [www.bwsc.org](http://www.bwsc.org).



## Protect Your Pipes

**Keep cabinet doors open** during cold spells to allow warm air to circulate around the pipes.

**Seal openings** in your home to prevent cold air from leaking through.

**Allow a slow trickle of water** to flow through faucets connected to water pipes that run through unheated spaces.

**Know where the main water shutoff valve is** in your home and how to turn it off.

**Insulate pipes** in unheated spaces such as garages, basements, and crawl spaces.

**If pipes freeze**, use a hairdryer to thaw lines. Thawing this way may not be fast, but it will be safe. **Never use an open flame to thaw pipes.**

If there is no water coming into your home, call BWSC's 24-hour Emergency Assistance Line at 617-989-7000.

## FOG Grease Lid Giveaway

Each November BWSC celebrates the holiday season with Boston residents by organizing a Grease Lid Giveaway at a major supermarket. This year, we also worked together with the City of Boston Main Streets. BWSC's Grease Lids are designed to help store excess cooking Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG). This is done by storing the grease in a can to cool and using the lid to cover. This is an important step in preventing FOG from entering the sink and potentially clogging the drain in your home. Didn't get a grease lid during our giveaway? No problem! Boston residents can request a FREE lid by calling 617-989-7599, or going online at [www.bwsc.org](http://www.bwsc.org).



## Help Clear Snow After a Storm

Did you know Boston has over 30,000 catch basins and over 12,000 fire hydrants? You can assist in keeping hydrants clear of snow so the Boston Fire Department can access them quickly in case of emergency. Clearing snow, ice, and debris from the tops of catch basins will also prevent street flooding as snow and ice melt. Not sure where your nearest catch basins and hydrants are located? BWSC's Hydrant and Catch Basin Locator Map can help you find them - visit [www.bwsc.org](http://www.bwsc.org).

