

News & Updates from
Des Moines Water Works
MAY 2020

H₂O LINE

THINK DOWNSTREAM

Can't Pay? Let's Talk.

The availability of safe water supply is critically important to the public health of our community, especially under unprecedented circumstances such as these. Water supports healthcare professionals and many essential businesses during the pandemic. And proper handwashing is an important step in curbing community spread of COVID-19.

Des Moines Water Works (DMWW) understands this is a difficult time for many customers. We have worked to offer a customer-focused response that balances sensitivity to our customers' situations with sustainable utility operations.

In mid-March, DMWW temporarily suspended service termination for delinquent accounts during this public health emergency. Customers will still receive termination notices so they are aware of their delinquent balance, but a message has been added to the bill stating that disconnections have been temporarily suspended.

It is very important for customers who receive a termination notice and are struggling to pay their bill to **call DMWW at (515) 283-8700**. DMWW customer service representatives are experienced in working with customers to discuss available options, like payment arrangements or connecting customers with other resources.

Payment arrangements are a collection assistance program that DMWW offers at all times to eligible customers. It is important that customers honor their commitment to pay or communicate with a customer service representative proactively when they are unable to do so in order to remain eligible for this assistance.

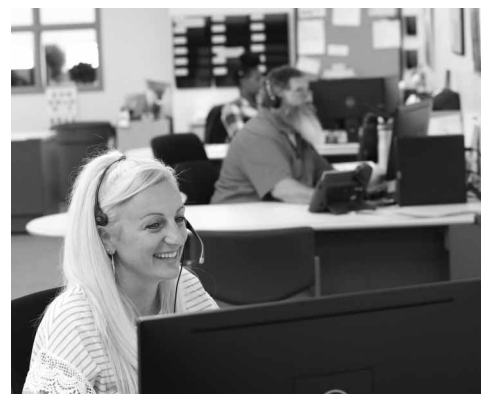
Des Moines Water Works also has limited customer assistance funds, known as **Project H2O**, for which customers may qualify. More information about this fund can be found at www.dmww.com/customer-service/project-h20.

As the COVID-19 pandemic eases, DMWW will resume terminating service for customers with delinquent, unpaid balances. Customers with delinquent balances should be aware their service could be terminated when normal operations resume, unless they have called to make arrangements with a customer service representative.

During this time, please remember Des Moines Water Works' General Office remains closed to the public. In-home customer service visits and backflow inspection visits are temporarily suspended, unless an emergency.

While walk-in customer service is temporarily suspended, Des Moines Water Works offers a variety of opportunities for your payment and customer service needs:

- **Phone:** Please call (515) 283-8700, and a Customer Service Representative is available to assist you Monday-Friday from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm. Pay by electronic check (no fee) or credit card (\$2.75 convenience fee).
- **Online Account:** Login to online account to pay by recurring credit card, direct pay or electronic check (no fees) or credit card (\$2.75 convenience fee).
- **Drop Box:** Place bill stub and payment in the payment drop box located at 2201 George Flagg Parkway.
- **Mail:** Mail bill stub and payment to PO Box 9227, Des Moines, Iowa 50306-9227.
- **Pay Stations:** Customers may make monthly payment at most local HyVee and Wal-Mart stores. The pay station may charge a fee for this service; however, these fees are not collected by Des Moines Water Works.



Call a DMWW customer service representative at (515) 283-8700.

Des Moines Water Works' COVID-19 Response

The water we deliver to your tap is safe to drink. Des Moines Water Works' (DMWW) multiple-barrier approach and traditional disinfection methods used to meet state and federal drinking water regulations require treatment to remove or kill pathogens, including viruses. The COVID-19 virus has not been detected in drinking water.

On any given day, DMWW's state certified laboratory conducts 50 to 60 tests on our various source waters and another 150 to 200 tests to ensure the highest quality of water is produced.

Des Moines Water Works has plans in place to handle a variety of emergency situations including pandemics. In fact, DMWW was one of the first water utilities in the nation to begin sequestering critical staff at its water treatment plant as part of our response plan to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Beginning in late March, DMWW sequestered employees at each of our three water treatment plants for two weeks at time. The critical staff includes operations, maintenance, repair, controls, supervision, and regulatory compliance employees to ensure a continuous supply of safe and reliable water to serve central Iowa during these unprecedented circumstances.

In addition to critical treatment plant staff, many other water utility employees are on the job performing essential functions for our community. This includes:

- Customer Service Representatives assisting customers with payments and pay arrangements, so their water service is not terminated when the suspension of water turn-offs is lifted.
- Engineering and field crews maintaining and repairing the infrastructure that supports the water system, including responding to main breaks and planned improvement projects.
- Information Technology staff safeguarding critical technology and equipment at water treatment plants and 50+ remote sites, plus work-from-home support.

Water you can trust for life. It's not just our motto; it's our mission that guides everything we do when it comes to providing over 500,000 central Iowans safe, affordable and abundant drinking water straight to their tap.

Stay home. Enjoy a glass water. Wash your hands. We're all in this together. And together, we are #DSMStrong.

Des Moines Capital Improvement Fee

Water utilities are an infrastructure intensive industry. In fact, Des Moines Water Works (DMWW) maintains approximately 1,400 miles of buried water mains inside the city of Des Moines and surrounding communities.

In a typical year, DMWW can experience up to 235 water main breaks in Des Moines. Water main replacement is a preventative approach that saves money on repairs, reduces the loss of water that occurs as a result of water main breaks, and ultimately minimizes potential disruption of service to customers.

Last October, the Board of Water Works Trustees approved a specific capital improvement fee for customers inside the city of Des Moines, starting at \$0.25 per 1,000 gallons. This fee declines for commercial and industrial customers with consumption exceeding 150,000 gallons per month. The capital improvement fee went into effect on April 1, 2020, and equates to an additional \$1.87 per month for a four-person household (using 7,500 gallons a month).

Funds from the capital improvement fee will be used to replace aging water mains in Des Moines. In 2020, DMWW will invest over \$5 million in water main replacement in Des Moines.



Water main replacement at Fleur Drive and Park Avenue.