

# water rings

January - March 2015

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## Annual System Flushing

“System flushing” is the phrase used to describe the routine procedure of operating valves and fire hydrants in the water distribution system in order to maintain the highest level of water quality.

This year, system flushing will be done between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, beginning on March 30 and continuing through May 29. You will receive an automated call from our public notification system approximately one week before flushing is scheduled for your neighborhood. To hear the message repeated, you may call 877-699-2420.

This year’s schedule is:

Montgomery and New Britain Townships - March 30 - May 22 (including Candlelight Farms, Parsons Lane, Meetinghouse Road, The Villages at Trewellyn, Gwynedd Knoll and Hunt Club sections of Lower Gwynedd Township)

Upper Dublin Township - March 30 - April 10 (including the Delaware Valley Industrial Park and Llewellyn, Annasmead, Baker and Llanfair

Road sections of Lower Gwynedd Township)

Whitpain Township - April 9 - April 17

Lower and Upper Gwynedd Townships & North Wales Borough - April 20 - May 29 (including Normandy Farms, Normandy Farms Estates, Windermere and Amberley Sections of Whitpain Township)

You may notice reduced pressure or cloudy water when flushing is being done in your area. This is expected and is not harmful. Simply let the **COLD** water run from your taps until it becomes clear.

If problems persist, please call 215-699-4836. Our Customer Service Representatives are available between 8:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Friday. If you call after hours, your call will be taken by our answering service and you will be contacted by one of our on-call staff.

## Smart Water-Clean Energy

The North Wales Water Authority is proud to announce installation of Pennsylvania’s first inline potable water low head hydroelectric generation project. Implementation of this new technology is a significant addition to the Authority’s long list of “green” business practices.

This innovative program, known as Smart Water-Clean Energy, will use water that is passing through existing water piping, along with the water pressure in the pipe, to power an in-line hydroelectrical generator. This means the water will be generating electricity!

This pilot project will generate enough

electricity to power 10-12 homes and will pay for itself in less than five years. Once the program is underway, we will evaluate installing the generators in other locations throughout our system.

Other water utilities in Pennsylvania and beyond are actively following our project and may also take advantage of this unique opportunity to offset their operational costs and improve operational efficiencies.

This project has been in development for several years and is a partnership with NWWA, Rentricity, Inc., a leader in clean, renewable energy and their technology partner, Xylem Corporation.



**NWWA**

North Wales Water Authority

PO Box 1339  
200 West Walnut Street  
North Wales, PA 19454-0339  
215-699-4836  
www.nwwater.com  
wizard@nwwater.com



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## Celebrating the Safe Drinking Water Act

Every day of our lives we rely on clean, safe water. We take for granted that the water we use for brushing our teeth, bathing and drinking from the tap is safe. We can thank the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) for this.

The SDWA celebrated its 40th anniversary on December 16, 2014. Signed into law by President Gerald Ford, the intent of the law was to protect public health by regulating the nation's public drinking water supply. Drinking water faces threats from a variety of sources, including improperly disposed of chemicals; animal wastes; pesticides; human wastes; wastes injected deep underground; and naturally-occurring substances.

Initially, the law focused primarily on treatment as the means of providing safe drinking water at the tap. Amendments in 1986 and 1996 increased the effectiveness of the law and protection of drinking water and its many sources: rivers, lakes, reservoirs, springs, and ground water wells. The 1996 amendments greatly enhanced the existing law by recognizing the following as important components of safe drinking water: source water protection, operator training, funding for water system improvements and public information. This approach ensures the quality of drinking water by protecting it from source to tap.

Enforcement of the SDWA falls to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA sets health-based standards for drinking water to protect against both naturally-occurring and man-made contaminants that may be found in drinking water. EPA, states and water systems then work together to make sure that these standards are met.

The SDWA applies to more than 170,000 public water systems in the United States. Currently NWWA and other community water systems are required to monitor their drinking water multiple times per day to test for more than 90 contaminants and report any violations that may have occurred. Federal drinking water standards classify contaminants into one of the following groups: microorganisms, disinfectants, disinfection byproducts, inorganic chemicals, organic chemicals or radionuclides.

Our Water Quality Report, a mandate of the SDWA, is distributed by email and published online in the spring each year and is a summary of the prior year's testing results. Print copies are mailed upon request.



**Q:** *What are “microbeads” and why are they hazardous to the environment?*

**A:** Microbeads are tiny, polyethylene spheres that have been added to thousands of cosmetics, skin care and personal care products such as facial scrubs and shower gels. In the cosmetics industry, they are used as exfoliating agents and give products a silky texture and greater spreadability. Microbeads in different colors also add visual appeal to the products. These microbeads, hardly visible to the naked eye, flow straight from your bathroom drain into the sewer system. These products are sold world-wide and impact the environment globally.

Research on microbeads has linked the tiny plastic particles to water contamination and aquatic wildlife poisoning. The problem is that microbeads are designed to be small enough to wash easily down the drain, but they are too small to be removed by conventional wastewater plants. Instead they flow into waterways and eventually the oceans. They can last in the environment for over a hundred years and during that time can carry toxins into waterways and the animals and aquatic life that ingest these particles. In many cases, fish, shrimp, mussels and crabs consumed by people are also affected.

Several states have moved to introduce legislation that bans the manufacture and sale of products containing microbeads. The Personal Care Products Council, a trade group for the cosmetics industry, has come out in support of these measures. Additionally, major beauty companies such as the Body Shop, Johnson & Johnson, L’Oreal and Proctor & Gamble have pledged to phase out plastic microbeads from their products. The water and wastewater industries also support these measures to ban microbeads from consumer products.

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