



UTILITY TALK

September/October 2026

Natural Gas Wastewater Stormwater Water

Serving Richmond, Henrico and North Chesterfield

Source Water Protection Week

September 27- October 3, 2026



Richmond's wastewater system serves the entire city and includes roughly 58,000 direct service connections tying into over 1,500 miles of sanitary and combined sewer lines.

Richmond's Wastewater Treatment Plant sits along the south bank of the James River and is the largest of its kind in Virginia. The facility can treat up to 75 million gallons of sanitary sewage and stormwater each day in dry weather before the treated water is returned to the James River. Protecting the river, our drinking water source, starts long before wastewater reaches the wastewater treatment plant.

DPU's Pretreatment Program helps protect the wastewater treatment process from harmful substances that could interfere with treatment or damage equipment by:

- Monitoring wastewater discharges and investigating unlawful discharges into the sewer system and waterways
- Working with industrial users and waste haulers to ensure proper disposal
- Issuing permits to industrial users

Why does this matter?

The less pollution that enters the system in the first place, the better we can protect the wastewater treatment process and the James River.

However, infrastructure is only part of the solution. What we put down our drain matters. What we leave on the ground matters. What we do during a rainstorm matters. This is a shared responsibility. Every Richmond resident has a role in protecting the James River and the water resources our community depends on.

**Only
Rain
Down
the
Drain**

Storm drains are designed to carry rainwater. Never dump paint, chemicals, oil, fertilizer, litter or other pollutants into a storm drain. What enters the storm drain can eventually reach local waterways.

**Fats,
Oil &
Grease
Free
Pipes**

Fats, oils and grease can cool, harden and stick to the inside of sewer pipes. Over time, buildup can contribute to blockages, backups and costly sewer problems. Instead: Let grease cool, place it in a container and put it in the trash.

The Wonders of Water Creative Writing Contest

September 14 - October 16, 2026

What does water mean to you? In recognition of Source Water Protection Week, DPU invites Richmond students to write about the role water plays in your life, your community or the future of Richmond. Scan QR code to enter, all entries must be received by end of day on October 16.



**DID YOU
KNOW?**

Citizens Academy returns in October. Want to learn what happens behind the scenes to deliver water and natural gas service throughout the Richmond region? Citizens Academy offers residents an inside look at the infrastructure, operations, and the dedicated professionals who help keep essential services running every day. Visit rva.gov/public-utilities/news for registration information and check out the highlights on our social media.

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Help Protect the James River with Native Plants



Did you know that the rain falling on your yard can eventually flow into the James River? As stormwater moves across rooftops, driveways and lawns, it picks up pollutants like fertilizer, oil and pet waste before entering the James River. Planting native plants is a simple way to help. Native plants are species that naturally occur in Virginia and are adapted to our climate and soils. Their deep root systems absorb rainfall, reduce stormwater runoff, filter pollutants and help prevent erosion. They also provide essential food and habitat for birds, butterflies, bees and other wildlife.

Fall is the perfect time to plant native species because cooler temperatures and still-warm soil encourage strong root growth, allowing plants to become well established by spring. Fall planting also requires less watering than planting in the summer.



Before you dig, remember to call 811 or submit a ticket online at va811.com at least three working days before your project. Having underground utility lines marked is free and easy, and it helps keep you, your family and your community safe.



Ready to make a difference? Visit PlantVirginiaNatives.org to discover native plants for Virginia's Capital Region and find local retailers where you can purchase them. Every native plant added to your landscape helps create cleaner water, healthier habitats and a healthier James River.



National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week

National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week is observed October 25–31, 2026. This annual campaign, supported by the Centers for Disease Control, Environmental Protection Agency and Housing and Urban Development, raises awareness about preventing childhood lead exposure from common sources such as lead-based paint, drinking water and contaminated soil. This year's theme is "Keep Kids Safe from Lead."

Throughout the week, the City and its partners will be sharing information and resources to help residents identify potential lead hazards and learn simple steps to protect their families.

Visit go.rva.gov/leadfreewater to learn more about our Lead Free Water program, available resources and ways to help keep children safe.

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