



# WHAT'S ON TAP?

NEWS FOR WATER CUSTOMERS



## Cost of Service Task Force Finalizes Recommendations

In June, after 14 months of work, the KC Water Cost of Service Task Force finalized 20 recommendations for the City Council's consideration. The goal of the recommendations is to ensure that the City's water, wastewater, and stormwater services are funded in a fair and equitable way while also providing long-term financial stability.

The most prominent recommendation is that Kansas City pursue a strategy to modify the federal consent decree with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Justice that ensures sustainability of the Overflow Control Program (OCP).

"The Overflow Control Program has put most of the pressure on our customers' bills," said KC Water Director Terry Leeds. "The objectives of the decree – protect human health and the environment – won't change, but the Task Force believes we need to achieve those objectives without unduly burdening customers' pocketbooks."

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## KC Experiencing Fewer Water Main Breaks

Just five years ago, in 2012, Kansas City averaged about five water main breaks a day due in part to aging pipes.

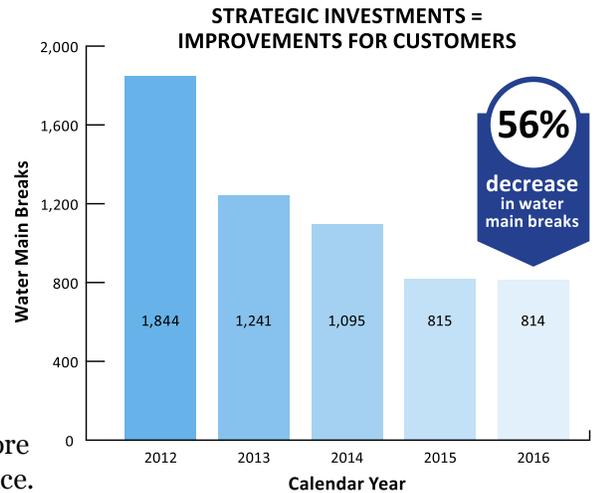
KC Water responded by undertaking a comprehensive Water Main Replacement Program that targeted water pipes that were more susceptible to breaks due to age or other factors.

The result? A 56% drop in water main breaks, giving customers more reliable and consistent water service.

Earlier this spring, City officials celebrated completion of 100 miles of the program in a pipe-signing ceremony on a residential street in the Northland.

"We look forward to many years of ongoing water main replacement to protect the public health and safety of our customers now and in the future," said KC Water Director Terry Leeds.

KC Water has replaced water mains by using a \$500 million water revenue



bond authorization that voters approved several years ago.

The strategic and data-driven Water Main Replacement Program calls for replacing 1% of the City's 2,800-mile water distribution system annually. 💧

FOR MORE INFORMATION

See a short video about the 100th Mile of the Water Main Replacement Program [www.youtube.com/kcmowater/videos](http://www.youtube.com/kcmowater/videos)

## CNG Truck Fleet Saves Thousands of Dollars

Many of the bright blue KC Water trucks you see maintaining pipelines and sewers all over town are powered by clean-burning compressed natural gas (CNG) instead of diesel fuel, saving about \$200,000 annually and keeping about 1,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases out of the Kansas City air.

KC Water first used CNG-fueled vehicles 20 years ago. Now, other City departments and other public

agencies also use CNG to save money and protect the environment.

The CNG pilot program began at KC Water in 1997 with 12 vehicles. Over the years, the City has received grants to allow the program to expand to more than 150 KC Water vehicles today.

It's another example of KC Water taking the lead to improve efficiency for customers. 💧

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In the first seven years of the 25-year, \$4.5 - \$5 billion program, KC Water has made planned improvements on the agreed upon schedule, but the area's median household income has not grown at the rate either the City or the federal government expected. As a result, customers are paying a greater percentage of their household budgets than originally anticipated.

The Task Force recommended that the current OCP be modified to ensure both affordability for customers and successful completion of improvements.

In addition to regulatory relief and other state and federal funding assistance strategies, the Task Force recommended new approaches to billing, customer assistance, and stormwater funding.

The 15-member citizen task force, chaired by Mayor Pro Tem and 1st District At-Large Councilman Scott Wagner, plans to present its recommendations to the City Council this summer.

For a complete list of all recommendations, visit [kcwaterservices.org/cost](http://kcwaterservices.org/cost). 

*What's On Tap?* is a bimonthly newsletter for KC Water customers. If you have story ideas, comments, or suggestions, please email us at [water.communications@kcmo.org](mailto:water.communications@kcmo.org).

## Smart Lawn Care Helps Water Quality, Saves Money



**P**HF's – pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers – can cause big problems for our local waterways, and it's not just an issue for farmers. Homeowners use up to 10 times more chemicals per acre on their lawns than farmers use on crops.

Here are tips to save money and protect our local water quality:

- *Get a soil test.* Finding out what your soil needs will allow you to pick only those lawn chemicals that are necessary, saving you money.
- *Use lawn chemicals sparingly.* Never apply more than the manufacturer's recommendations.
- *Choose a low or no-phosphorous fertilizer.* Usually, only newly seeded lawns need phosphorous. It only takes one pound of phosphorous to produce 10,000 pounds of wet weeds and algae in ponds!
- *Avoid fertilization before heavy rain storms.* A heavy rain storm may wash costly fertilizer into the storm drain.
- *Use native plants that are adapted to our local soils and climate, and follow directions on the plant tag.* When planted appropriately, native plants don't need fertilizer and rarely need to be watered after the first year. 

## Follow Us On Social Media!

If you're on social media, there's much more you can learn about KC Water.

You'll find more than six dozen videos on KC Water's YouTube channel that explain everything from how we make river water drinkable to how we treat wastewater so we can return it to the river cleaner than we found it.

Our Twitter and Instagram accounts will keep you apprised of both important system developments and interesting facts about the value of water. We're on Facebook and Nextdoor with news you can use, links to news and feature stories and notice of neighborhood meetings we hold before we start construction projects.

For more information about KC Water's social media accounts, please see the social media icons below. 



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