



## LCA Customer Notice – September 2020

### LCA & City of Allentown Announce Lease Update

Lehigh County Authority (LCA) and the City of Allentown entered into a 50-year lease agreement in 2013 for the operation of the City's system. Since then, numerous legal disputes and financial challenges have arisen and the relationship between our organizations has been strained. However, LCA and the City both recognize the value of our partnership and the critical importance of having a sustainable water and sewer system to serve a vibrant community and a growing economy.

On July 10, 2020, LCA and the City of Allentown jointly announced a plan for settlement of the Lease disputes. Our water and sewer systems are interconnected operationally and financially, and our non-profit, municipal authority structure will bring the best overall value to all customers.

**Our Water,  
Our Future!**

**Regional Service Approach:** Included in the agreement are several key provisions that support a more regional or watershed-based approach to water supply and sewer capacity management in Lehigh County. Notably, LCA's water supply agreement with Allentown, which was signed in 2009, will be extended an additional 25 years to 2063, securing a reliable source of water for our western Lehigh County customers for decades into the future. This will allow us to manage all water sources (Schantz Spring, Crystal Spring, Little Lehigh Creek and our network of groundwater wells) on a more regional basis for the benefit of the watershed and the community. The amended agreement will also revise the way operating and system upgrade costs are distributed, to ensure water supply and treatment costs are shared equitably among all users. In addition, LCA and the City will work collaboratively on sewer system rehabilitation efforts needed to ensure wastewater capacity is available for future economic development in our region.

**Suburban Division Customer Impact:** The amended water supply agreement may impact water rates for our Suburban Division, and any changes will be reviewed during the development of the 2021 budget and announced late this year. *Note, Suburban Division customers do not pay any portion of the Allentown lease costs, including the lease bonds or other lease-related expenses.*

**Next Steps:** The proposed agreements were approved by the LCA Board of Directors on July 27 and Allentown City Council on August 12. LCA is finalizing refinancing of the bonds in September to complete the process. More information for customers will be shared once all approvals are complete.

Please visit our website for additional details and future updates:  
[www.lehighcountyauthority.org/LeaseUpdate](http://www.lehighcountyauthority.org/LeaseUpdate).

## LCA Response & Planning Update

Our work at LCA continues to be impacted by COVID-19, with employees working adjusted schedules, wearing masks and social distancing, and limiting our on-site customer service visits to emergencies only.



When the pandemic hit, our employees quickly responded to changes in how we do our work to deliver essential services to you. Our Pandemic Response Team and Emergency Response Plan were set in motion to respond to the rapidly changing environment.

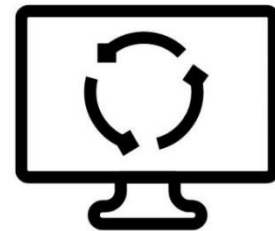
We still have many employees working remotely while our Customer Care locations remain closed. Our work to deliver safe and reliable water and wastewater service is essential, which means many of our employees still cannot stay home. Our field crews, plant operators and managers continue to show up daily, operating under new safety protocols to keep the water and wastewater flowing. We are so proud of our employees for rising to the occasion and navigating these uncharted waters.

We don't know just yet when our offices will reopen to the public, but we continue to help customers and respond to water and sewer emergencies. Stay tuned to our social media channels and check our website for updates.

## Speaking of our Website

Have you seen our new website design? In June we released a whole new look and feel, with a goal of updating the design, while making it easier for customers to find the most-used information right on the home page! The content has shifted and is user friendly on tablets and mobile devices.

Right from the home page you can pay your bill using our **FREE** online portal, tell us about a problem, start or stop service to a property, or update your contact information. Did you recently disconnect a land line or get a new phone number? While you're checking out the new site, we encourage you to take a moment and provide your up to date information so we can reach you in the event of an emergency.



Be sure to follow our Water Works blog for helpful information, topics and tips. Use the "contact us" link to find multiple ways to reach our customer care representatives. We are here to help!

**Wishing you & yours a safe & healthy fall!**