



## LCA SUBURBAN DIVISION

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October – December 2020

### LCA Customer Notice - Fall 2020

#### Weather Challenges & Flooding

This year has brought many challenges, including powerful storms, tragic, enormous fires out west, and numerous tropical storms, like Isaias, which hit the Lehigh Valley hard in July. Tropical storm Isaias, the worst to hit our area since Sandy, caused problems for many, including LCA! The Little Lehigh creek, behind the water treatment plant on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive crested at a record 12.76 feet, flooding the lower levels of the plant, damaging some equipment.

On the day of the storm our Customer Care team was flooded with phone calls from frantic customers who had serious amounts of water entering their homes, requesting LCA send someone out to turn off their water. However, there was nothing we could have done that would have stopped flood waters from rising or water entering the homes! Flood water from storms and heavy rain is not something we can control. But we know of some tips to help protect your property from storms when heavy rain is predicted:

- Keep gutters clear! Debris and wet leaves can cause blockages and water will spill out over the sides and potentially seep into your basement.
- Be sure downspouts are directed 5 to 10 feet away from your house.
- Make landscaping adjustments to direct water away from your home.
- If you live in a flood-prone area, consider purchasing flood insurance. {Flood damage is typically not covered by a standard homeowner's insurance policy.}
- Move possessions you care about to higher ground when possible.

Taking these steps can help you prepare your home in the event of flooding in the forecast.

#### City of Allentown Lease Update:

This summer, LCA and Allentown worked together to forge a new partnership to help us complete significant infrastructure improvements to meet system needs and new regulatory requirements. The projects will be expensive, at an estimated \$150 million over the next 10 years.

#### Learn More:

Read more about the updated agreement and the system improvements we have planned on our website:

<https://www.lehighcountyauthority.org/leaseupdate/>

**Our Water. Our Future.**

#### 2021 Suburban Rates:

We are finalizing our 2021 budget and new water rates will be published in January and sent with your bill. Rates will also be published on our website in our Customer Service / Rates & Fees section.

*Every Drop Matters. Every Customer Counts.*

## Higher than Normal Water Bill?

If you receive a bill that doesn't look quite right, it may be a sign that leaks are lurking. We encourage customers to review their bill when it arrives, whether in the mail or email, which is an option through our free, online payment portal. A significantly higher than "normal" volume of water measured by the meter may indicate there is a leak somewhere in the home. Follow these tips to troubleshoot:

**First things first:** Check your water usage over the billing period in question.

- Was it during summer when you were watering your lawn or filling a swimming pool?
- Is it possible you left a hose running in the garden for a significant period of time?
- Does the bill include dates when you had extra house guests?
- Did you have any plumbing work done over the billing period?
- Do you remember any other plumbing issues that you resolved during this time, such as a water softener cycling too often or a toilet flapper that needed to be replaced?
- Do you have a filter or other treatment device anywhere in your home? Check it to make sure it is working properly.

**Step 2: Look for Leaks** - Check for obvious leaks because small leaks can mean big waste!

A shower that leaks 10 drips a minute wastes more than 500 gallons a year. And a drippy faucet can send more than 3,000 gallons a year down the drain. The good news is many leaks are not difficult to fix.

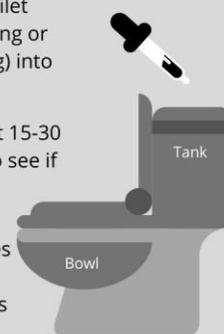
One not-so-obvious place where leaks may lurk is your toilet tank. Toilets with a bad flapper can be a silent leak and one of the biggest culprits of water loss.

It's easy to test, though: Just put a few drops of dark food coloring — blue or green work best — in the tank (not the bowl!), then wait about 15-30 minutes without flushing.

If the dye appears in the bowl, you've got a leaky flapper that needs to be replaced. Just like belts and hoses for your automobiles, flappers can deteriorate over time and not seal well.

### Do a Toilet Dye Test!

- 1** Remove the lid from the toilet tank, then drop food coloring or colored liquid (non-staining) into the water in the tank!
- 2** Do not use the toilet & wait 15-30 minutes! Check the bowl to see if water has changed color.
- 3** If water in the bowl changes color, you have a leak and need to repair! If color does not enter the bowl, your problem may be elsewhere!



Another good step is to review your water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter records water usage, you likely have a leak. Check the meter reading at night before bed, then again in the morning. If there is significant use recorded, you probably have a leak somewhere. (For digital meters, simply use a bright flashlight — LED lights work best — to activate the panel to take a reading. Some cell phone flashlights work just fine, but some will not.)

Please visit our website for more troubleshooting tips in the Customer Service section.  
[www.lehighcountyauthority.org](http://www.lehighcountyauthority.org)

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