

6 Distribution System

A network of underground water mains (pipelines) interlacing the community delivers water to homes, apartments, schools, businesses, and office buildings. This system includes more than 4,300 miles of water mains.

7 Control Valves

These valves, located primarily at intersections, permit WSSC field personnel to shut off only a small section of the water main when a pipeline needs repair. We are, thereby, able to minimize any loss of service to the customer.

8 Fire Hydrants

there are 34,937 fire hydrants located in the WSSC distribution system. The hydrants are inspected and cleaned annually by the WSSC to ensure their readiness when needed.

9 Corporation Cock

This valve enables WSSC field personnel to connect customer service lines without shutting off the water in the main and interrupting service to other customers.

10 Water Meter

A meter measured the amount of water used, and returned to the waste water system, by a customer. It is equipped with a shut-off valve, used when repairs need to be made. The meter, which is read quarterly, is the basis for your water/sewer bill. Some large customers are read and billed monthly.

11 Shut-Off Valve

In case of emergency plumbing repairs, you can use this valve to shut off the water where the pipe enters your home or business. A home may have other subsidiary valves which can be used to shut off water to individual fixtures and appliances. It is a good idea to know where all of the shut-off valves in the home are located in case they need to be turned off in an emergency, such as a plumbing leak.

*The essayist, Francis Bacon, said
"Knowledge is power."*

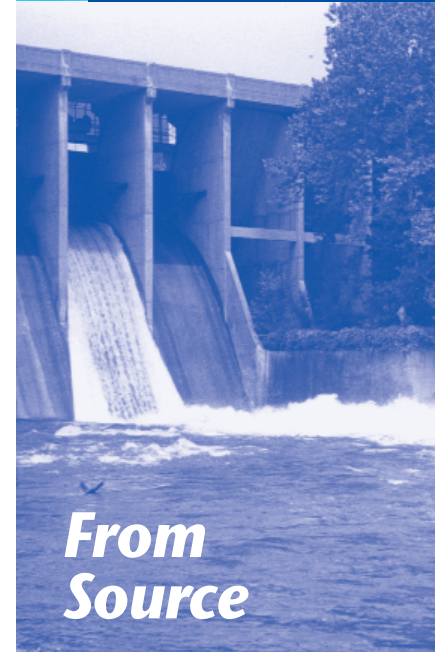
*Equipped with this knowledge about the
WSSC distribution system, you are now
better equipped to understand how the
water gets from the river to your faucet,
and prepared to take steps at home
to familiarize yourself with the plumbing
so that you are ready to respond to any
possible plumbing emergency.*



**Washington Suburban
Sanitary Commission**
14501 Sweitzer Lane
Laurel, Maryland 20707

Office of Communications
301-206-8100

Your Water



**From
Source**



**To
Supply**

**Washington Suburban
Sanitary Commission**



Water...

always plentiful and readily available, is often taken for granted. We rarely give a thought to the millions of dollars worth of equipment, vast storage and pumping facilities, and the expertise of a well-trained staff that make it all possible.

This brochure is a brief overview of the distribution system and illustrates how WSSC supplies water to its nearly 1.6 million customers in Montgomery and Prince George's counties.

1 Source

The Potomac and Patuxent rivers are the two sources of water supply for the WSSC's customers in

Montgomery and Prince George's counties. While water is taken directly from the natural flow of the river into the Potomac Water Filtration Plant, water from the Patuxent River is backed up on two reservoirs by the Brighton and T. Howard Duckett dams. The reservoirs are the Triadelphia and the T. Howard Duckett, respectively. They have a combined storage capacity of over 13 billion gallons of water.

2 Pumping Station

Water is pumped from the downstream T. Howard Duckett Reservoir, near Laurel, MD, to the Patuxent River water Filtration Plant at Route 198, west of I-95, in Laurel.

3 The Water Filtration Plant

At the plant, the raw water goes through several

stages of filtration and purification. In addition, a measured amount of fluoride, which prevents tooth decay in children, is added.

4 Pumping Station

Much of the water produced at the WSSC's filtration plants has to be pumped into the distribution system. Pumping stations are strategically located to give the water a boost, when needed, to maintain adequate pressure.

5 Storage Tanks

Elevated tanks, standpipes and ground storage structures in the distribution system are filled with filtered water in readiness for customer demand and to provide reserves for fire protection.

