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AQUASM NORTH CAROLINA Water Quality News



Summer 2020



Update on Aqua North Carolina Filter Projects

Aqua North Carolina continually invests in water system improvements and enhancements that benefit customers every day. Since 2019, the company has installed 18 new filter systems to address discolored water caused by naturally occurring iron and manganese.

The new filter systems remove iron and manganese, naturally found in North Carolina's groundwater. While these minerals don't affect health, they discolor water and affect its taste and smell. Since 2019, Aqua has invested \$6.7 million in filter installations in the following communities:

- Bayleaf - (The) Barony
- Brayton Park
- Bayleaf - Carlyle Manor
- Forest Glen



Aqua's COVID-19 Response

Over the past several months, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about so much rapid change. From the beginning, Aqua worked to ensure our customers that we would continue to provide safe, reliable water and wastewater service.

To ensure the health and safety of our customers and employees while continuing our essential work, we took the following steps:

- **24/7 Emergency Response.** The safety of our customers, employees and communities is our top priority. Our 24/7 emergency response remained active.
- **Maintaining Social**

- Bayleaf - Georges Grant
- Kensington Manor
- Mountain Vista at Luther Cove
- Bayleaf - Shannon Woods
- Snow Creek Heights
- Trappers Creek
- Upchurch Place
- Westbury
- Bayleaf - Woodvalley/Gralyn
- Avocet
- Bayleaf - Barton Creek Overlook
- Beau Rivage*
- Chari Heights*
- Duncan Ridge*
- Lake Springs*
- Olde South Trace (4392131)
- Bayleaf - Seville
- Vintage Acres*
- Whispering Pines*

*Under construction, scheduled to be completed in 2020

Aqua submitted each of these projects for pre-qualification under the state's water and wastewater improvement charge, which provides a way to accelerate and expand improvements to water and wastewater systems for customers. In addition to the completed filter installations, Aqua currently has an additional 5 filter projects under construction in 2020 and another 10 currently under review with the North Carolina Public Staff.



Distancing. When an Aqua employee must visit a home, we asked customers to notify us if any member of the household is ill. We asked that they maintain a safe distance and do not shake hands with our employees.

- **Limiting Non-Emergency Field Work.** To adhere to social distancing guidelines, we reduced field work that required close contact, and discontinued the need for multiple employees in a vehicle.
- **Providing Customer Support.** We've been committed to helping our customers during this difficult situation. For those worried about their Aqua bill, we're here to talk through your options. Please contact our Customer Service team at **877.987.2782** or custservreply@aquaamerica.com.
- **Offering Online Options.** We have reminded customers that you can pay your bill using Aqua's WaterSmart eBilling online bill pay system, accessible via AquaAmerica.com.

To help our communities during the crisis, we provided \$10,000 in donations to food banks across the state, to assist in replenishing supplies and help those most adversely affected by the pandemic.

For more than 130 years, Aqua has

been serving our communities. We are proud to continue our tradition of safe and reliable service during this challenging time.

Rate Case Update

Aqua North Carolina filed an application for increased water and sewer rates with the North Carolina Utilities Commission on December 31, 2019.

The new, proposed rates are necessary because the company has been confronted with increased capital investments and operating costs required to comply with service and regulatory obligations, increased operating costs to maintain or upgrade the level of service, and changes in consumption among its customer population.

The majority of Aqua's rate increase would be for money already spent on filter installations and upgrades to address naturally occurring iron and manganese, water quality improvements, and repairs to water and wastewater systems for customers.

Since the last rate case ended in June 2018, Aqua has invested more than \$50 million in water and wastewater system repairs and improvements statewide. Examples include:

- Replacement of aged water mains and service lines to improve water quality and flow pressure, and increase system reliability
- Filter installations and upgrades to address naturally occurring iron and manganese, and improve water quality
- Wastewater treatment plant repairs and improvements to prevent overflows, protect local waterways, and to comply with new regulatory requirements
- Meter replacements to ensure accurate billing based on actual usage versus those based on estimated usage
- Installation of monitoring equipment (SCADA) on water and sewer system assets to prevent system overflows and minimize system interruptions

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, NCUC public hearings for the rate case were held virtually on Monday, August 3 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Customers were mailed a notice advising them about the date, times and phone-in details for the hearings and an update was posted to our website at www.aquaamerica.com/our-states/north-carolina.aspx.

Drought Season and Water Use

As drought season approaches, be mindful of your water use, particularly irrigation, and adhere to voluntary water use restrictions. Seasonal dry heat can limit the amount of new water our wells receive, and place added stress on the system.

Here's what you should and shouldn't do during a drought.

Be sure to:

- Check www.ncdrought.org for up-to-date information on drought advisories in your area
- Research your community's non-essential water use restrictions and guidelines
- Water your yard only when allowed and needed, and water during the night or early morning to prevent evaporation

Be sure NOT to:

- Violate the terms of your community's current water restriction
- Pour clean water down the drain; collect it and use it to water indoor or outdoor plants
- Fertilize your grass, as it can increase your lawn's need for water
- Purchase recreational water toys that require a constant stream of water
- Leave sprinklers or hoses unattended; a garden hose can pour out more than 600 gallons of water in an hour

Based on the severity of the drought conditions – ranging from “Normal Conditions” to “Exceptional Drought” – Aqua advises that you adhere to non-essential water use restrictions as determined by the North Carolina Utilities Commission.

The non-essential water use restrictions detail when and how many times a week that property owners can irrigate their lawns or fields. It also provides guidance on when recreational water uses, like car washing and filling swimming pools, are prohibited.

For more information about water use restrictions, visit www.ncuc.net/industries/water/WaterRestrictions.html



Did You Know?

Aqua uses WaterSmart Alerts, an automated customer notification program designed for quick, reliable communication with you about your water quality and service in case of a disruption.

You can choose how you'd like us to contact you — by phone, email and/or text message. There are two quick, easy ways to sign up for WaterSmart Alerts:

- **Sign up online [here](#)**
- **Call 877.987.2782 and speak to one of our customer service representatives**

Please note: Your personal information will only be used to contact you about important water quality issues and will not be sold to third parties.



Iron and manganese are pervasive, naturally occurring minerals that affect the water supply in North Carolina. While these minerals don't affect health, they can discolor water and affect the way it tastes and smells. In 2017, Aqua North Carolina launched an aggressive water quality improvement program that includes the installation of new filters, enhanced water treatment, tank cleaning, system flushing, and ongoing monitoring to help ensure safety and overall quality of the water source.

For updates as Aqua moves ahead, visit [NCWaterQuality.com](https://www.ncwaterquality.com).

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