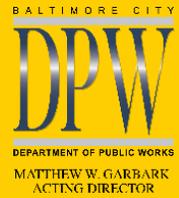


# Coronavirus (COVID-19)



# FAQ Frequently Asked Questions Specific to DPW

## **WATER and WASTEWATER**

### **Can COVID-19 survive in drinking water?**

NO. There is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus survives the disinfection process for drinking water and wastewater.

DPW checks its water for viruses and is confident in its water system. We produce an annual [Water Quality Report](#) to show citizens that we meet or exceed regulatory standards.

#### **Source:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>

### **Do wastewater treatment processes kill COVID-19?**

As noted, disinfection kills the virus. Coronaviruses are susceptible to the same disinfection conditions in the healthcare setting as other viruses.

#### **Source:**

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/controlprevention.html#solidwaste>

### **Can COVID-19 spread through the sewer system?**

The risk of transmission through feces is expected to be low based on data from previous outbreaks of related coronaviruses, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS).

The CDC is reviewing all data on COVID-19 transmission as information becomes available. At this time, the risk of transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19 through sewerage systems is thought to be low. This guidance will be updated as necessary as new evidence is assessed.

#### **Source:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>

### **Why are the reservoirs closed to recreational activities?**

Reservoirs are closed in order to comply with social distancing requirements as well as to protect the Baltimore region's water

supply. It will also allow critical staff to focus on core services such as water quality and pollution control. DPW must ensure it continues to provide healthy drinking water to everyone in the region during this crisis.

### **What is DPW doing to protect its workforce?**

To safeguard solid waste workers, we are following the advice from OSHA and the CDC. We provide all employees puncture-resistant gloves and masks. We have contracted with a vendor for laundry services for solid waste workers so that they are not bringing contaminated clothing home. DPW Supervisors are monitoring employees to make sure they follow handwashing and good hygiene.

There will be minimal staff working at the water filtration and wastewater treatment plants in order to comply with social distancing and to ensure an adequate reserve or workers who can perform these critical functions. All

workers are provided with personal protective equipment, as recommended by OSHA.

*(Note: All DPW staff capable of teleworking are being required to telework.)*

## **SOLID WASTE**

### **Which solid waste services are NOT suspended?**

Residential trash and recycling pickup

*(Note: There is has been no change to where you should place your trash and recycling.)*

- Condo trash and recycling pickup
- Disposal services at the Quarantine Road Landfill and the Northwest Transfer Facility Availability of Citizen Drop-Off Disposal Centers, they remain open
- Corner can collections

**Please do not put residential trash in corner cans or in trash cans in parks!!!**

### **Which solid waste services ARE suspended?**

- Mechanical Street Sweeping

- Street and alley cleaning
- Vacant property cleaning and boarding (Property Management)
- Maritime operations,
- Special Services - Graffiti removal, rat abatement, and bulk trash pickup

*(Note: These decisions ensure that DPW has a reserve of staff knowledgeable and capable of performing the critical functions.)*

### **Why are certain solid waste services suspended?**

One of the main reasons for suspending Bureau of Solid Waste services is to have CDL drivers and workers who will be healthy should the virus continue to spread. These workers not only ensure core services for solid waste, they are able to drive and operate commercial motor vehicles critical to this effort. We need to have as many drivers as possible available.

### **Do I have to move my car for street sweeping?**

NO. Street sweeping operations have been **suspended** to

accommodate the large number of residents required to telework.

**Parking violations are not being enforced.**

### **What do I do with my bulk trash items?**

To the extent we can take larger items in our standard trash trucks, we will.

However, we will not be able to collect large Items like beds, bed frames, dressers, sofas, and tables. If it can fit in the can, our crews will try to take it.

## **WATER BILLING**

### **Will I continue to receive water bills?**

Water billing will remain operational as of now, with bills continuing to be mailed to water customers in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

### **How can I pay my water bill?**

The City of Baltimore will only accept water bill and other payments online and by mail at this time.

DPW's Customer Support and Services Walk-in Center, located on the first floor of the Abel Wolman Municipal Building, is closed to the public at this time. To make an online payment to the City of Baltimore, please visit:

<https://cityservices.baltimorecity.gov/paysys/>.

**I have a question about my water bill and need to contact the Customer Support and Services call center?**

At this time, the Water Billing Customer Call Center will be closed as will the Customer Walk-In Center located on the first floor of the Abel Wolman Municipal Building. The water billing email address is still accessible at [DPW.Billing@BaltimoreCity.gov](mailto:DPW.Billing@BaltimoreCity.gov).

**Is DPW cutting off water services due to nonpayment?**

DPW does not shut off any water service due to water bill nonpayment. The Department halted the policy of shutting off water several years ago and certainly will not do so at this time.

**What if I fall behind on my water bill during this time due to the implications of COVID-19?**

Mayor Bernard C. “Jack” Young has announced that late fees will be waived while residents deal with the implications of the coronavirus. In addition, DPW continues to offer

[repayment plans](#) for customers who fall behind on their water bills.

**CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

**What is the status of Construction Projects?**

Essential Construction and Maintenance Projects will continue (ie: maintenance of water and wastewater, storm water systems)

Non-Essential Construction and Maintenance Projects will not continue (ie: repaving and resurfacing....)

**Please do not dispose of Fats, Oils, Grease and Wipes in Your Drain!!!**

**These decisions ensure that DPW is able to continue serving you, protect you and your family and protect our employees while adhering to the State policies on social distancing and reserving DPW employees for core essential services.**