Communications and COVID-19

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Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County
- 121,000 water, 26,000 wastewater
- 320 employees
- $100 million budget
- 5-county Service Area
**Why Communicate?**

![Chart](chart.png)

According to the J.D. Power 2020 Water Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study, released May 6:

Proactive communications have powerful effect, but few utilities deliver:

- Overall satisfaction scores are 106 points higher when customers recall receiving four or more proactive communications from their utility (e.g., phone call, email, text message or social media message) than when customers do not recall a proactive communication. Despite the powerful effect proactive communications have on customer satisfaction, just 5% of water utility customers recall receiving four or more communications from their utility. Less than one-third (30%) of customers recall receiving any communications from their water utility.

• Dealing with SARS-CoV-2 was a mass learning experience, so there was a lot of concern, and willingness to share and listen.
• Each audience has some particular requirements and even legal requirements that have to be observed.
• The messages overlap at points, as should happen, because it’s consistent.

General Message
During a Crisis, your employee or your customer won’t care what you know, until they know that you care.
Virtual Conference | August 31 – September 2, 2020

External Message

Video message from Resident Manager Michael Fukunaga

Musician playing a guitar while seated on a stage.

External Message

We're at work so you can stay safe

Water is essential in this troubled time to conquer the coronavirus, and we are here for you.

Washing your hands is one of the more important things you can do to protect yourself, and you can count on us to keep water treated and flowing while we all go through this together.

https://www.mawc.org/newsletter-collection
External Message

- Newsletter
  - Get another email domain name
- Proactive News Releases to Community Media
- Map your Capital Improvements
- Consumption alerts (robocalls)
- Social Media Advertisements
- More readable Consumer Confidence Report
- Bill
Internal Messaging

Today, I wanted to help you look at the work we are doing in a different way.

Our potable water is bringing relief and prevention to 400,000 people, when they use it to wash their hands, take showers, and of course it’s necessary for cooking and laundry.

About 70,000 people depend on us to convey and treat their wastewater as well – and the environment is depending on us too. While we have temporarily suspended shutoffs, we have a group of customers who are doubly depending on us for both service and forbearance.

When you think about it, we aren’t socially isolated at all. Our product touches hundreds of thousands, and is a primary shield in the battle against coronavirus.

So, each of you are doing great things for others. I am proud of you for working hard for your families and neighbors, because we are essential, now more than ever.
Associations

Communications can also be receipt of information, or sharing.

- Platoon Operations
- Bonuses
- Shutoff Moratoriums
- Restarting Shutoffs
- Legislation and Ratepayer relief
- Notice of Employee Diagnosis
- Art to promote Social Distancing
- Vacation and Travel Guidance
- Offsite Work
- Budget Amendments

Thank You
Customers

More people at home, more consumption, robocalls

Shutoffs
Shutoffs for nonpayment to resume August 15. For properties posted July 15. These customers have failed to make payments as they agreed to.

Reprieve from shutoffs in March was meant as a temporary measure.

It’s been five months. Financial hardships affecting MAWC as well.

MAWC has a duty to the larger community to remain viable.

In recognition of the difficult times we are all in, MAWC will permit new payment plans, even though MAWC does not routinely do that once payment plans are violated.