



From the Tap...

Fairfax Water Turns 50 This Year!

We thought it would be interesting to share some of our history with you. This is the third in a series of four articles.

Part Three: 1983–1994

On June 28, 1985, after 27 years of service as Fairfax Water's first engineer-director, James J. Corbalis, Jr., retired. In July of 1985, the Board of Directors voted to change the name of the Potomac Water Treatment Plant to the "James J. Corbalis, Jr., Water Treatment Plant." It was the least they could do to honor a man who worked tirelessly for the people of Northern Virginia.

Fred P. Griffith, the first deputy director of Fairfax Water, was appointed to succeed Mr. Corbalis as engineer-director.

The 1980s was a period

of exponential growth for Fairfax County. Many farms and fields became subdivisions filled with new homes. Applications for new water service ballooned to as high as 7,500 new connections per year. During this time, Fairfax Water continued to bolster system capacity and reliability through new transmission lines and upgrading of storage and pumping facilities.

In 1991, Fred Griffith retired and Floyd F. Eunpu, then the deputy director of Fairfax Water, was appointed engineer-director. In 1993, he was succeeded by Charlie C. Crowder, Jr.

Fairfax Water's commitment and focus became obvious on March 28, 1993, when emergency operations commenced to combat a ruptured oil pipeline. Much of this oil flowed into Sugarland Run, a tributary of the Potomac River above Fairfax Water's raw water intake.

The spill forced an emergency shutdown of the Corbalis treatment plant. Fairfax Water quickly lost production capability at a plant that normally provided 50 percent of the potable water to a population of more than a million people. Fortunately, Fairfax Water's almost unique ability to draw

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Winterizing Tips

Fall is a good time to begin preparations around your home for the coming winter.

You should locate and mark your main shut-off valve. It would be a good idea to turn the valve off and on to make sure it

functions properly. You should also locate any valves that control outside faucets. Turn these valves off whenever freezing weather is anticipated. To avoid damage, be sure to drain the water lines feeding these faucets.

Also, check unheated areas in your home, such as crawlspaces and garages, that may house water lines. Unprotected plumbing should be insulated and wrapped with heat tape.



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and distribute water from two different sources prevented a total crisis.

Within hours, water restrictions were announced and emergency personnel were deployed to monitor water quality and provide additional support in the production and distribution of the water. Interconnection agreements with other water companies were exercised and production capabilities were maximized at our Occoquan facilities.

Water pumps and valves were re-configured to reverse water flow through the distribution system.

Instead of water flowing out of the Corbalis treatment plant, water produced at the Occoquan treatment facilities was routed through the Corbalis distribution system. This action enabled Fairfax Water to continue service in areas that would have had service disrupted due to the spill.

For 17 days, emergency operations prevailed until the threat to the water system passed.

Barely nine months later, another disaster struck with unusually frigid temperatures from January 15 through January 23, 1994. In eight days, employees serviced

17,500 customer calls, thawed 7,000 frozen water meters, repaired 54 main breaks, and worked 11,500 hours of overtime to provide continuous water service to the customer base.

By the end of 1994, Fairfax Water had more than 2,700 miles of water mains, more than 17,300 fire hydrants and more than 197,300 meters. Revenues were \$87 million and full-time employees numbered 394.

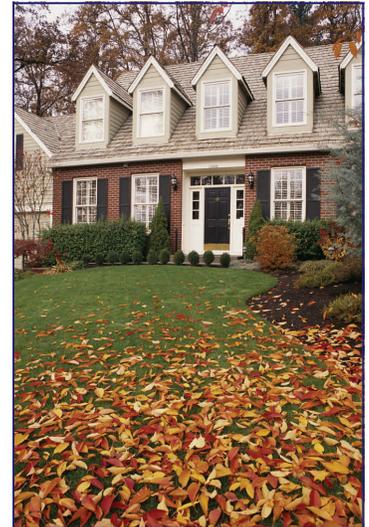


Water-Saving Tip #14:

Use a layer of organic mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and save many gallons of water a year.

Mulching around plants and trees will not only save water, but will help protect your plants during winter months as well.

For more information and other water-saving tips, visit www.wateruseitwisely.com.



Editor's Note

If you have comments or suggestions about this publication, let us hear from you.

E-mail us at jbailey@fairfaxwater.org or write us at the address below. If you have questions regarding water service, please call Customer Service at (703) 698-5800, TTY 711.

For all other departments, call (703) 698-5600, TTY 711; After-hours emergency, call (703) 698-5613, TTY 711.

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