



BOIL WATER ADVISORY UPDATE CITY OF COVINGTON, VIRGINIA

**Monday, March 30, 2026
PWSID#: 2580100**

The City of Covington continues to respond to a major water line break impacting portions of South Covington. This advisory applies only to affected areas and is not citywide.

On the afternoon of Thursday, March 25, 2026, Public Works staff were notified of low water pressure in the South Covington area. Crews responded immediately and identified a significant break in a 10-inch water line located near Carpenter Drive, adjacent to CSX railroad property.

Due to the location and surrounding terrain, access to the damaged line has been challenging. The City has remained in continuous coordination with CSX representatives, including engineers, and escalated the matter to CSX headquarters in Jacksonville, Florida. The City has also been working closely with state and regional partners, including the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Office of Drinking Water (ODW) and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM).

Public Works crews worked continuously through the evening of Thursday, March 25, 2026, overnight, and throughout Friday, March 26, 2026, to locate and operate valves in an effort to isolate and control the break. On Friday, March 26, 2026, at approximately 9:54 PM, a valve was successfully located, allowing crews to begin controlling water loss from the damaged line. Additional measures, including coordination with contractors for a potential emergency insertion valve, were also evaluated.

On Saturday, March 27, 2026, and Sunday, March 28, 2026, crews continued restoration efforts. Water service was gradually restored to many areas as system pressure improved. However, as pressure returned, an additional water line break occurred near Carpenter Drive and Cedar Hill Cemetery, believed to be related to the increased system pressure.

The affected line is part of a loop system that helps maintain water pressure in South Covington and supplies a storage tank near Carpenter Drive. The City's water treatment plant continues to produce safe drinking water, and other portions of the system remain operational. City schools, including Jeter Watson Elementary School and Covington Middle School, are not served by this portion of the system and continue to have safe, reliable water service.

Fire protection was addressed early in the response on Friday, March 26, 2026, through coordination with local fire departments. The City's wastewater treatment plant has remained fully operational throughout this incident.

MANDATORY BOIL WATER NOTICE

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) requires a mandatory boil water notice for affected areas due to loss of pressure in the system.

Residents are advised to:

- Boil all water used for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth, and making ice.

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- Bring water to a rolling boil for at least one (1) minute before use.

Water quality samples are currently being collected and will continue over the next several days. This notice will remain in effect until testing confirms there is no risk of contamination.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS

We understand many residents experienced water returning and then being lost again. As pressure is restored to the system, it can place additional stress on water lines, which may lead to additional breaks or temporary service interruptions. This is part of the stabilization process and does not mean crews have stopped working.

Public Works crews have been working continuously, including overnight hours, to locate valves, control water flow, and restore service as safely and quickly as possible.

What to Expect

- Water service may continue to fluctuate until repairs are fully completed.
- Some areas may temporarily lose water again as crews work to stabilize the system.
- Updates will continue to be provided as progress is made.

Water Safety

- The boil water notice is a precaution required by VDH due to loss of pressure.
- It does not indicate confirmed contamination. The City is continuously testing water quality and monitoring for any changes.
- Boil water before ingesting: Drinking, Cooking, Brushing teeth, Making ice.

Everyday Use

- Water may be used for flushing toilets.
- Showering is generally safe (avoid ingesting water).
- Businesses must follow health department guidance for food and beverage service.

WHAT RESIDENTS MAY BE EXPERIENCING

Residents may notice fluctuations in water pressure, including periods where water service improves and then decreases again. As pressure is restored, it can place additional strain on water lines, resulting in temporary service disruptions.

Crews are actively working to stabilize the system, and these fluctuations may continue until repairs are fully completed.

The boil water notice remains a precaution required due to loss of system pressure. At this time, it does not indicate confirmed contamination, and water quality testing is ongoing.

We truly appreciate everyone who has stepped up to help their neighbors during this time.

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If you or someone you know is still in need, please contact Public Works at (540) 965-6321 or Parks and Recreation at (540) 965-6360.

The City is working diligently to resolve this situation as quickly and safely as possible. We understand the inconvenience this has caused and sincerely appreciate the patience and support of our community.