



# HARRISONBURG | VA FRIENDLY BY NATURE



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## Harrisonburg Public Utilities honored for excellence of drinking water

HARRISONBURG, Va. – It’s like clockwork at this point – another spring arrives, and another Silver Water Treatment Plant Performance Award for Excellence in Filtration and Backwash arrives for Harrisonburg Public Utilities.

The recognition, from the Virginia Department of Health’s Office of Drinking Water, is bestowed for achieving Virginia’s optimization program goals.

You’d think as often as Public Utilities brings home the award, it must be easy for them at this point. But to achieve this level of excellence time and again, the Water Treatment Plant crew has to be very dedicated to their craft and constantly looking for new ways to improve upon the service they provide to the Harrisonburg community.



*(Above, from left) Harrisonburg Public Utilities Water Treatment Plant team members Thomas Schroeder, Josh Baughman, Nick Hottinger, Jeff McCauley and Dennis McGuffin with the 2021 Silver Water Treatment Plant Performance Award for Excellence in Filtration and Backwash.*

“It’s a team effort to achieve the VDH optimization requirements,” Water Treatment Division Superintendent Dennis McGuffin said. “We have a very dedicated staff that works around the clock to provide safe drinking water for our customers. They not only look for ways to become more efficient in operations, but also work to improve themselves by taking training courses and striving for advanced waterworks licensure.”

So, where does Harrisonburg’s water come from?

The process begins at the source – currently the Dry River and the North River. Another source, the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, will come online in the next few years. The raw water travels through underground pipes until it reaches the Water Treatment Plant, where it is purified and disinfected before being tested for a number of health indicator parameters.

There’s also a lot to pay attention to along the way. That includes chemical addition, mixing, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, drought and weather conditions, water levels, pumps, pipes, water storage tanks, monitors, sensors, water quality, usage, natural contaminants, manpower to work around the clock and state and federal mandates. This past year, you could add maintaining the City’s water supply 24/7 while navigating the hurdles COVID-19 threw in the way to the list of challenges.

An average of more than seven million gallons of water a day heads to thousands of customers throughout Harrisonburg, or to one of a number of water tanks across the city. In addition, the Water Treatment Plant team must maintain infrastructure and assets valued at more than \$25 million.

Learn more about everything Harrisonburg Public Utilities does to serve Harrisonburg residents and businesses at [www.harrisonburgva.gov/public-utilities](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/public-utilities).

**The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to 51,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).



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