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News Release

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Washington Aqueduct to hold media briefing on water treatment process changes

Baltimore - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District's Washington Aqueduct and the Aqueduct's three wholesale customers will hold a joint media briefing on Oct. 11. At the briefing, Aqueduct officials will explain the change to the water treatment process, why this change is necessary and answer media questions related to this change.

The media briefing is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. at the Dalecarlia Water Treatment Plant, 5900 MacArthur Boulevard, NW, Washington, D.C.

While the Washington Aqueduct meets all current standards, a new water treatment process is necessary to ensure continued compliance with EPA's new Stage I, Disinfectant/Disinfection By-Product Rule. These new EPA standards lower the permissible quantities of certain by-products of disinfection.

To ensure that water supplied by the Washington Aqueduct meets these new standards, on Nov. 1 the Aqueduct will begin producing water that has been disinfected with chlorine as the primary disinfectant and chloramine as the secondary disinfectant. Current practice is to use only chlorine. This new process will produce water that has less of a chlorine taste and smell while continuing to be an effective disinfectant.

No human health effects are associated with these changes. However, those individuals who keep fresh water or salt water fish in aquariums or ponds will need to take special precautions to remove chloramine and monitor the build up of ammonia in the water. These procedures differ from some practices that may currently be in use.

The Washington Aqueduct is responsible for the treatment and the wholesale distribution of drinking water to the District of Columbia, Arlington County, Va., and the Falls Church service area in Virginia.