



DC Cooperative Housing Coalition News

Representing the interests of the cooperative community in the District of Columbia since 1984

May - August | 2010

Celebrating 26 years of service to the cooperative housing community

“ALL ABOUT THE BOARD”

A free seminar for Coalition Members!

Tuesday, September 14

Community Room at 7:00 pm

Tiber Island Cooperative Homes
429 N Street SW
Washington DC 20024

“All About the Board” will be an idea-packed seminar about board responsibilities and operations. Look for more information in the mailed announcement and direct e-mails!

Mark your calendar:

Annual Meeting
Tuesday, October 26

Held at the Broadmoor

Guest speakers will talk about the new Impervious Area Charge (See article in the adjacent column)

2011 Cooperative Assessments Drop 7%, 4th Year of Declines

The Coalition's eleventh year of tracking real estate assessments of 69 District housing cooperatives shows a 7 percent (\$100 million) decline in overall cooperative valuations from 2010. Details, page 2.

OTR Customer Service Centers Now Open at New, SW Location

The Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) Customer Service Telephone and Walk-In Centers are now located in their new location, 1101 4th Street, SW, Suite W270, conveniently adjacent to the Green Line's Waterfront-SEU stop.

Impervious Area Charge (IAC): What is it and why?

[The following article is from the DC Water and Sewer Authority web site: <http://www.dcwasa.com/customercare/iab.cfm> NOTE: The Coalition will have guest speakers at the October 26 Annual Meeting who will talk about the IAC and answer questions about it.]

DC WASA has changed the way we calculate your sewer charges. We have lowered the rate for sewer service and are now including a special charge for properties that include surfaces water can't penetrate (impervious surfaces).

Impervious surfaces such as rooftops, paved driveways, patios, and parking lots, are major contributors to rainwater runoff entering the District's sewer system. They also add significantly to pollution in the Anacostia and Potomac rivers and Rock Creek.

The new Impervious Area Charge (IAC) is a fair way to distribute the cost of maintaining storm sewers and protecting area waterways because it is based on a property's contribution

of rainwater to the District's sewer system. Because charges are based on the amount of impervious area on a property, owners of large office buildings, shopping centers and parking lots will be charged more than owners of modest residential dwellings.

All residential and commercial customers will be billed for IAC. The monthly IAC will be \$2.20 per equivalent residential unit (ERU), based on the current 2010 rates.

Frequently Asked Questions

The Impervious Area Charge is part of DC WASA's investment in reducing pollution in the Anacostia and Potomac rivers and Rock Creek. The charge applies to all lots, parcels, properties and private streets in the District of Columbia.

For more information, download [Impervious Surface FAQ \(PDF 359 kb\)](#).

- 1. What is an Impervious Area Charge (IAC)?** The IAC is based upon the amount of impervious surface on your property. An impervious surface is a man-made surface that cannot be easily penetrated by water, such as
 - rooftops,
 - driveways,
 - patios,
 - tennis courts,
 - swimming pools,
 - parking lots,
 - and other paved areas.

(Continued, page 2)

Impervious surface areas are a major contributor to rainwater runoff entering the District's sewer system and pollution entering area waterways.

2. **Why is the IAC necessary?** The charge is necessary to recover the costs of the \$2.2 billion federally mandated [Combined Sewer Overflow Long-Term Control Plan \(CSO LTCP\)](#) detailed in the "What We Do" area of this site. The 20-year plan will reduce the discharge of excess flows into local waterways from DC WASA [combined sewer system](#).
3. **Why did DC WASA decide to defray the costs of the CSO LTCP in this manner?** The DC WASA Board of Directors determined that the IAC is a more equitable way to recover the costs of the CSO LTCP than the volumetric charge (for water used), because the IAC is based on a property's contribution to rainwater runoff.
4. **Why has DC WASA decided to bill for this charge now?** The CSO LTCP program is currently under way and the IAC is designed to cover program costs. Therefore, the charge is being designed now to reallocate costs from the sewer charge formerly appearing on the DC WASA bill to the IAC
5. **How is the amount of the charge determined?** The charge is based on an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). An ERU is a statistical median of the amount of impervious surface area in a single-family residential property, measured in square feet. Initially, all residential customers will be assessed one ERU. All nonresidential customers will be assessed ERUs based on the total amount of impervious surface on each lot.

6. **Who sets the IAC?** The DC WASA Board of Directors sets the IAC. Beginning October 2009, each ERU will be billed at \$2.20 a month.
7. **Is the IAC a one-time fee?** No. This is a monthly charge.
8. **Do other cities have an IAC?** Yes. Other cities have this charge to cover the cost of managing pollution from rainwater runoff.

If You Have Questions or Comments

Email info@dcwasa.com

Phone 202-354-3600

Fax 202-787-2795

Mail Customer Service
810 First St., NE,
Suite 1100
Washington, DC
20002

Related Documents

- [Community Meeting Presentation \(PDF 261 kb\)](#)
- [Impervious area billing fact sheet \(PDF 2.7 mb\)](#)
- [Notice of proposed changes to the DC Municipal Regulations to set IAC rates \(PDF 31 kb\)](#)
- [Notice of proposed changes to the DC Municipal Regulations to allow for Impervious Area Charges \(PDF 107 kb\)](#)

2011 Cooperative Assessments Drop Again

For the fourth year in a row, District cooperatives, as a group, dropped in overall value. In Tax Year 2011, the tracked cooperatives lost \$100 million in aggregate value compared to Tax Year 2010, a 7 percent drop. In 2010, the cooperatives had a combined assessment value of \$1.544 billion; in 2011, it was \$1.443 billion.

For the past 11 years, the Coalition has tracked the assessment values of 69 District market-rate cooperatives located in all Wards, except for Wards 4 and 8. Over the years, the District's cooperatives have followed the general trend of other forms of home ownership—increasing valuations in the early years, peaking in 2007, followed by declining values.

On closer inspection, it is apparent that changes in values varies by ward (location, location, location). Even within wards, value changes for co-ops range, reflecting their proximity to Metro, amenities, and neighborhood.

In Tax Year 2011, individual cooperative valuation changes ranged from a 30 percent decline in valuation to a 15 percent increase in valuation. Twenty-nine cooperatives had no change in their assessment, 31 experienced a decline in assessments, and 9 experienced an increase in their valuation.

Wards 1, 2, and 3 are where the majority of cooperatives are located. Ward 2 experienced the greatest decline in valuation (-10%), followed by Wards 3 (-3%) and 2 (-2%).

The Coalition will post the individual cooperative assessments, grouped by Ward, along with their historical assessments, on the Coalition's web site.



The ABCs of CHC— Who We Are

The D.C. Cooperative Housing Coalition exists to advance the common interests of cooperative housing associations in the District of Columbia and promote cooperative housing as a desirable form of home ownership. It is therefore both an advocacy organization that articulates the interests of members before government officials and regulatory agencies and a service organization that provides information and education to members.

Membership is open to all District housing cooperatives, regardless of size. A volunteer board of directors, elected by member co-ops, governs the Coalition. At least three seats on the board must be filled by representatives of small (50 or fewer units) cooperatives. Activities are financed through annual dues determined by the members at the annual meeting.

The Coalition grew out of an ad hoc group of District cooperatives that formed in 1984 in response to a judicial ruling that had cast a cloud over many cooperatives by banning proportionate voting. By marshaling the forces of more than 3,000 units, the ad hoc group persuaded the D.C. City Council to resolve the matter. Recognizing the importance to the cooperative housing community of speaking in a single voice and maintaining the ability to respond quickly and knowledgeably to matters affecting cooperative housing,

the ad hoc group decided to form a permanent organization. The Coalition was established in 1984 and was incorporated as the DC/CHC, Inc., a nonprofit organization in the District of Columbia, in 1993.

The Coalition's most important accomplishment was its work toward the passage of the Cooperative Housing Procedure Act of 1988 (D.C. Law 7-205), a law that provides for uniform procedure and an equitable formula to assess real property owned by cooperatives.



Up to that time, the District did not have a prescribed method to estimate fair market value, and as a result the assessments were arbitrary and unpredictable. It also successfully opposed a move to charge each cooperative association \$3.00 per unit to fund a new government agency to oversee cooperatives and condominiums. It testified before the City Council in support of a recycling tax credit in lieu of the city collecting recyclables and successfully opposed a 50 percent reduction in the trash collection tax credit, which co-ops and condominiums receive in lieu of the city collecting their trash.

At the heart of many of these efforts was the defense of cooperatives before the City Council to maintain parity

between cooperative homeowners and single-family homeowners rather than to be treated as rental complexes. Perhaps most important, the Coalition successfully defended the assessment system it had worked hard to put in place in 1988 when it warded off proposals to change the system in recent years.

The Coalition has co-hosted mayoral candidate forums and recognized Council members who work on behalf of the interests of housing cooperatives. It has also promoted public awareness and interest in cooperative ownership by sponsoring events, most notably a tour of several D.C. housing cooperatives in 1995 to mark the 75th anniversary of the first housing cooperative in the District.

One of the most important benefits Coalition members receive is timely information. The Coalition has conducted seminars and issued newsletters covering topics as diverse as elevators, rentals, taxes and oil and gas bulk purchasing agreements, among others. As a consequence, members receive information that enable them to anticipate and address changes affecting their operations.

Twenty-six years later, the Coalition remains the premier organization devoted to advancing and protecting the interests of the owners of the District's approximately 15,000 cooperative units.

Board of Directors

President

Carl Gerber
The Cathedral Avenue, 145 units

Vice President

Fred Dyda
Tilden Gardens, 170 units

Secretary

Art Leabman
1870 Wyoming Avenue, 28 units

Treasurer

Jill Golden
3028 Porter Street, 11 units

Directors

Jim DeMartino
Capitol Hill Towers, 344 units

Paul St. Hilaire
Tiber Island, 389 units

Art Howland
Naylor Gardens, 318 Units

Stephen McKevitt
Beverly Court, 39 units

Michael O'Dell
Harbour Square, 447 units

Nancy Skinkle
The Broadmoor, 194 units

Sue Stephens
The Porter, 28 units

JoAnn Wells
Potomac Plaza Apartments, 249 units

Counsel

Joseph Douglass
Whiteford, Taylor & Preston, LLP
1025 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
202- 659-6779
jdouglass@wtplaw.com

Administrative Assistant

Jim Smith
700 7th Street, SW #633
Washington, DC 20024
200-488-3670
DCCHC@aol.com

Contact us:

CooperativesDC@aol.com
www.CoopsDC.org



About DC/CHC, the Coalition

Established in 1984, the DC Cooperative Housing Coalition exists to advance the common interests of cooperative housing associations in the District of Columbia and to promote cooperative housing as a desirable form of home ownership. It is therefore both an advocacy organization that articulates the interests of members before government officials and regulatory agencies and a service organization that provides information and education to members.

Membership is open to all District housing cooperatives, regardless of size. A volunteer board of directors, elected by member co-ops, governs the Coalition. Activities are financed through annual dues, \$1.50 per unit per year (12.5 cents per month)

The Coalition grew out of an ad-hoc group of District cooperatives that formed in response to a judicial ruling that had cast a cloud over many cooperatives by banning proportionate voting. By marshaling the forces of more than 3,000 housing cooperative units, the ad-hoc group persuaded the District's City Council to resolve the matter.

Recognizing the importance to the cooperative housing community of speaking in a single voice and maintaining the ability to respond quickly and knowledgeably to matters affecting cooperative housing, the ad-hoc group decided to form a permanent organization.

The Coalition was established in 1984 and was incorporated as DC/CHC, Inc., a nonprofit, IRS Code Section 501(c)(6) organization in the District of Columbia, May 24, 1993.

Member Profile Page

Does your cooperative have its own dedicated page on the Coalition's web site? It's free and it is one of the Coalition membership benefits. See what your co-op is missing at www.CoopsDC.org/Membership.htm and click on members with the

LEARN MORE +

icon next to their names. Don't let your co-op miss out on this members-only benefit!

Reproducing DC|CHC News Articles

No special permission is required to use or reproduce articles contained in **DC|CHC News**. However, each reproduced material should contain proper acknowledgement of the DC Cooperative Housing Coalition and its **DC|CHC News** as the source of the article.

Need a web site or have one that needs updating?

CHC is fortunate to have found a talented web designer to create our web site. Luckier still, he is willing to create sites for our member coops at reasonable rates. Go to our web site, <http://www.CoopsDC.org/services.htm>, and click on "Scott D. Seligman." Scott has done several web sites for co-ops in addition to the profile pages on our web site.