



MURIEL BOWSER
MAYOR

June 22, 2022

The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 504
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

I am pleased to submit to the Council of the District of Columbia the enclosed Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) Relief Program Fiscal Year 2021 Report, prepared by the Department of Energy and Environment pursuant to section 113a(e) of the District Department of the Environment Establishment Act of 2005, effective September 11, 2019 (D.C. Law 23-16; D.C. Official Code § 8-151.13a(e)).

The report details the financial expenditures of the Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) Relief Program for Fiscal Year 2021.

As always, I am available to discuss any questions you may have. To facilitate a response to your questions, please have your staff contact Matt Johnson, Branch Chief—Green Infrastructure Incentives and Assessment Branch, DOEE at (202) 741-0861.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Muriel Bowser".

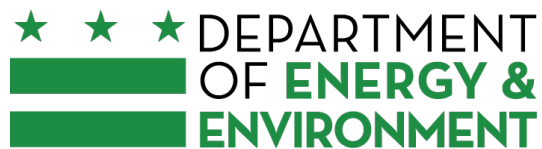
Muriel Bowser

District of Columbia
Department of Energy and Environment



Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) Relief Program

Fiscal Year 2021 Summary Report



Tommy Wells, Director
June 2022

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1. Background

a. Program Summary

Over the past ten years, the Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) rate assessed by DC Water has increased to help pay for a \$2.7 billion project to significantly reduce the discharge of raw sewage and stormwater runoff into the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers and Rock Creek. The Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Support Act of 2018 established the CRIAC Relief Programs, which are financial assistance programs intended to provide relief to eligible nonprofit organizations, renters, and homeowners located in the District of Columbia. These programs significantly reduce the CRIAC costs on their DC Water bills.

The approved monthly CRIAC rate for fiscal year 2021 (FY21) is \$19.52 per 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 and averages about 1,000 feet of impervious cover.

b. Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge Assistance Fund Amendment Act of 2019

The Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Support Emergency Act of 2019 establishes a non-lapsing fund (“Fund”) for the CRIAC Relief Programs. This Act ensures that funds added to the Fund will not revert to the unrestricted fund balance of the General Fund of the District of Columbia at the end of a fiscal year, or at any other time. If authorized in an approved budget and financial plan these funds can be used across fiscal years to pay for the costs of implementing the CRIAC Relief Programs. At the end of the fiscal year, any unspent relief funds sent to DC Water must be returned to DOEE as part of DOEE’s reconciliation process. The total amount of funding remaining in the Fund at the end of FY21 is \$1,935,927.28 (unaudited). Table 1 summarizes the remaining balance in the Fund.

Table 1: FY21 CRIAC Program Non-lapsing Fund Estimate

	FY21 Transfer to DCW	FY21 Spent by DCW	Remaining Funds at FY21 End
Residential Program	\$1,273,978.68	\$1,129,935.00	\$144,043.68
Nonprofit Program	\$2,747,591.08	\$955,707.48	\$1,791,883.60
Non-lapsing fund total (unaudited)			\$1,935,927.28

2. CRIAC Relief Program Administration

a. Program Publication Efforts

The CRIAC Residential Relief Program provides the previous program enrollees with information about recertifying towards the close of each fiscal year. For FY21 enrollees, the CRIAC Residential Relief team sent notices to households that were previously enrolled informing them that they would not have to reapply in order to continue receiving the discounts through the end of FY22. The website for CRIAC is updated on at least an annual basis to adjust income limits and certification requirements. To invite new program participants, DOEE works with DC Water to include bill inserts in each mailed billing statement. DOEE has arranged for program brochures, or rack cards, that include information for the CRIAC Residential Relief program to be featured at outreach events as well as our in-person intake centers. In FY21 the CRIAC Residential Program did not use any dedicated funding to publicize the program, however the Customer Assistance Program (CAP) was promoted through DOEE’s [Utility Discount Program](#) advertising.

The CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program notifies previous and current program participants of the upcoming relief program at the start of every fiscal year and throughout the duration of the program year via email and phone call. DOEE also updated the Nonprofit Relief Program’s website at the start of the program year with updated program applications and details of the FY21 application period. DOEE did not expend additional program funds to publicize the CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program in FY21.

b. Program Processing Time

The CRIAC Residential Relief Program notifies program participants by automated email immediately once their application is received, that it may take up to ten business days for an application determination. Once a determination is made (Approved, Denied, or Incomplete) the applicant will receive another automated email stating either that their application was categorized as incomplete or denied OR that it may take up to two billing cycles from their approval date to receive their discount.

The CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program notifies program participants that they will receive an application determination within twenty business days of the date on which their completed application is received. Once an approval determination is made the applicant receives an email indicating that it may take up to two billing cycles from their approval date to see relief applied to their DC Water bill. DOEE sends a monthly enrollment file to DC Water by the third-to-last business day in the month, indicating which accounts have been approved for the relief program and how much relief should be applied to the water bill. Table 2 summarizes the average application processing time for the CRIAC Relief Programs.

Table 2: FY21 CRIAC Program Average Processing Time¹

Application Status	Nonprofit Relief Program	Residential Relief Program
Approved	13 business days	5 calendar days
Denied	11 business days	3 calendar days

¹ This is an estimate of the average of the number of business days DOEE took to process applications for financial assistance, from the date DOEE received the application, to the date that DOEE notified the applicant that they qualify or assistance; or the date that DOEE notified the applicant that the applicant did not qualify for financial assistance.

3. FY21 CRIAC Program Summaries

a. CRIAC Residential Relief Program

The CRIAC Residential Relief Program provides financial assistance to low-to-moderate income District households assisting with water and sewer services charges along with a percentage off the monthly CRIAC fee, as follows:

- i. Customer Assistance Program (CAP 1) for eligible customers with household income below 60% of State Median Income;
- ii. Customer Assistance Program 2 (CAP 2) for eligible customers with household income equal to or greater than 60% State Median Income and below 80% Area Median Income; and
- iii. Customer Assistance Program 3 (CAP 3) for eligible customers with household income equal to or greater than 80% Area Median Income and below 100% Area Median Income

DC Water covers total expenditures for CAP 1 and CAP 2 while DOEE covers expenditures for CAP 3. Table 3, which summarizes participation in the FY21 Residential Relief Program, can be found below. This table outlines the number of residential customers that were approved for financial assistance, the average annual award provided for CAP 3, and the total amount of funding provided to residential customers, broken down by Customer Assistance Program (CAP) income limits.

The total number of applicants for the CRIAC Residential Relief Program cannot be separately tracked as households are approved through both the Utility Discount Program and a separate CRIAC application. In addition, In FY21, DOEE partnered with the STAY DC program to enroll additional households.

Table 3: FY21 CRIAC Residential Relief Discount Program Participation

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total Approvals	Average Annual Benefit	Total Spend
CAP 1	2,141	1,324	744	563	4,772	-	\$0
CAP 2	359	54	77	70	560	-	\$0
CAP 3	124	22	21	16	183	\$190.00	\$34,803.96

b. CRIAC Emergency Relief Program (ERRP)

In response to the public health emergency, the District developed a financial assistance program to provide emergency relief to income eligible District households struggling with unpaid DC Water bills during the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency and 105 days thereafter. The Department of Health and Human Services’ (HHS) federal income guidelines informs income eligibility for ERRP. Households with total income earnings up to 100% Area Median Income (AMI) could receive bill assistance up to \$2,000 as a one-time emergency benefit. This funding was depleted May of 2021.

Though all CRIAC enrollees are assessed for Emergency Relief, benefit amounts are dependent on the applicants’ outstanding balance amounts. The CAP levels do not impact the amount of emergency assistance received. Table 4 summarizes participation in the FY21 Emergency Relief Program. This table outlines the number of customers approved for financial assistance, the average annual award provided, and the total amount of funding provided to residential customers, broken down by Customer Assistance Program (CAP) income limits.

As households were deemed categorically eligible for CRIAC-ERRP through their CAP1 and CAP2 status, the total number of applicants could not be separately tracked.

Table 4: FY21 CRIAC Emergency Relief Program Participation

		Emergency Assistance Approvals	Average Annual Benefit	Total Emergency Funding Expenditures
CAP Levels	CAP 1	1,760	\$604.00	\$1,064,225.00
	CAP 2	153	\$660.00	\$101,073.00
	CAP 3	47	\$577.00	\$27,122.00
	Total	1,960	\$1,841.00	\$1,129,935.00

c. CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program

The CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program provides financial relief to eligible nonprofits located in the District, assisting with the payment of the impervious area charges assessed on their DC Water bills. Annual relief is available to nonprofit organizations in the District of Columbia with a real property or possessory interest tax exemption as a local charitable organization, a cemetery, a religious house of worship, or a continuing care facility, as determined by the District’s Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR). Nonprofit organizations seeking relief must also demonstrate financial hardship in paying the CRIAC assessed on their DC Water bill, and must complete a DOEE approved stormwater mitigation project.

The FY21 Nonprofit Relief Program application period opened on September 21, 2020, and closed on August 31, 2021. Table 5, which summarizes the FY21 Nonprofit Relief Program, can be found below. This table outlines the number of nonprofit organizations that applied for financial assistance, the number of nonprofit organizations that received financial assistance, the average annual award provided, and the total amount of funding provided to nonprofit organizations.

Table 5: FY21 CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program Participation

Applications Received	Applications Approved	Average Annual Benefit	Total Funding Provided
141	129	\$7,408.58	\$955,707.48

4. More Information

The CRIAC Residential Relief Program is managed by the Utility Affordability Administration in DOEE’s Utility Affordability Division. Additional questions about the CRIAC Residential Relief Program may be directed to Taylor Smith, Energy Program Specialist, at (202)673-6732 or taylor.smith@dc.gov.

The CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program is managed by the Green Infrastructure Incentives and Assessment Branch in DOEE’s Regulatory Review Division. Additional questions about the CRIAC Nonprofit Relief

FY21 CRIAC Relief Program Summary Report

Program may be directed to Beatrice Ohene-Okae, Environmental Protection Specialist, at (202)844-5880 or beatrice.ohene-okae@dc.gov.

Please visit doee.dc.gov/service/criacrelief for more information about DOEE's CRIAC Relief Programs.