



MURIEL BOWSER
MAYOR

September 15, 2023

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

**Re: Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) Relief Program Report for
Fiscal Year (FY) 2022**

Dear Chairman Mendelson:

I am pleased to submit to the Council of the District of Columbia the Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) Relief Program Report for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, which was prepared by the Department of Energy and Environment ("DOEE") pursuant to section 113a(e) of the District Department of the Environment Establishment Act of 2005, effective February 15, 2006 (D.C. Law 16-51, D.C. Official Code § 8-151.13a(e)).

This report details the financial expenditures of the Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge ("CRIAC") Relief Programs. The CRIAC Residential Relief Program, which provides financial assistance to low-to-moderate income District households, provided assistance to nearly 4,000 households. The CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program provided funding to 124 non-profits who provide services to District residents. Finally, the CRIAC Emergency Relief Program, which provided emergency relief to income-eligible District households struggling with unpaid DC Water bills during the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency, assisted 28 households to reestablish water services.

My administration is available to answer any questions you may have regarding the report. Please have your staff contact Richard Jackson, Acting Director, to facilitate responses to any such questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Muriel Bowser".

Muriel Bowser

District of Columbia
Department of Energy and Environment



Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) Relief Program

Fiscal Year 2022 Summary Report



Richard Jackson - Acting Director
April 2023

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1. Background

a. *Program Summary*

The Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) is a fee assessed by DC Water on customer bills 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 CRIAC fee has increased substantially over the past 10 years. To help address the impact of the fee on DC Water customers, the Fiscal Year (“FY”) 2019 Budget Support Act of 2018 established the CRIAC Relief Programs, which provides financial relief to eligible District of Columbia (“District”) nonprofit organizations, renters, and homeowners through three separate programs. These programs are the CRIAC Residential, CRIAC Emergency, and CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Programs, described below. These programs significantly reduce the CRIAC costs on DC Water customer bills.

b. *CRIAC Fee Amount*

The monthly CRIAC rate for FY 2022 is \$18.40 per equivalent residential unit (ERU). An ERU is the statistical median of the amount of impervious surface area in a single-family residential property, measured in square feet, and averages about 1,000 square feet of impervious cover per ERU.

c. *Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge Assistance Fund*

The Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Support Emergency Act of 2019 established a non-lapsing fund (“Fund”) for the CRIAC Relief Programs. If authorized in an approved budget and financial plan, these funds can be used across fiscal years to pay for the costs of the CRIAC Relief Programs. The Fund is administered by the Department of Energy and Environment (“DOEE”). Each fiscal year, DOEE advances funding to DC Water and DC Water uses the funding to reduce the CRIAC fee charged to eligible customers participating in 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 FY 2022 was \$1,585,127.82 (unaudited). Table 1 summarizes the remaining balance (unaudited) in the Fund.

Table 1: FY22 CRIAC Program Non-lapsing Fund Estimate

	FY22 Transfer to DCW	FY22 Spent by DCW	Remaining Funds at FY22 End
Residential Program	\$100,000.00	\$33,025.88	\$66,974.12
Nonprofit Program	\$2,384,528.30	\$866,374.60	\$1,518,153.70
Non-lapsing fund total (unaudited)			\$1,585,127.82

2. CRIAC Relief Program Administration

a. Program Publication Efforts

DOEE has arranged for program brochures, and 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. DOEE works with DC Water to include bill inserts in each mailed billing statement. The CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program notifies previous and current program participants of the relief program at the start of every fiscal year and throughout the duration of the program year via emails and phone calls. The CRIAC Residential Relief Program provides the previous program enrollees with information about recertifying their eligibility towards the close of each fiscal year. For FY 2022 enrollees, the CRIAC Residential Relief team encouraged residents to reapply for the program.

DOEE also updated its website at the start of the program year with updated Nonprofit Relief Program applications and details of the FY 2022 application period. The DOEE website for the Residential Relief Program is updated at least annually to provide income limits and certification requirements for the program. In FY 2022, 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. DOEE did not expend additional program funds to publicize the CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program in FY 2022.

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 10 business days for an application to be reviewed and an eligibility determination made. Once a determination is made (Approved, Denied, or Incomplete), the applicant will receive another email stating either (1) that their application was categorized as incomplete or denied, or (2) that their application was approved and 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 20 business days of the date on which their completed application is received. If 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 of each month indicating which accounts have been approved for the relief program and how much relief should be applied to that account’s water bill. Table 2 summarizes the average application processing time for the CRIAC Relief Programs.

Table 2: FY 2022 CRIAC Program Average Processing Time¹

Application Status	Nonprofit Relief Program	Residential Relief Program
Approved	23 business days	10 calendar days
Denied	18 business days	10 calendar days

3. FY 2022 CRIAC Program Summaries

a. CRIAC Residential Relief Program

The CRIAC Residential Relief Program provides financial assistance to low-to-moderate income District households by providing a percentage off the monthly CRIAC fee. There are three tiers of the CRIAC Residential Relief Program, as follows:

- i. Customer Assistance Program (CAP 1)
Income eligibility: Customers with household income below 60% of state median income (“SMI”)
Approximate assistance provided: \$85 monthly.
- ii. Customer Assistance Program 2 (CAP 2)
Income eligibility: Customers with household income equal to or greater than 60% of SMI and below 80% of Area Median Income (“AMI”)
Approximate assistance provided: \$56 monthly.
- iii. Customer Assistance Program 3 (CAP 3)
Income eligibility: Customers with household income equal to or greater than 80% of AMI and below 100% of AMI
Approximate assistance provided: \$14 monthly.

DC Water fully funds the CAP 1 and CAP 2 programs while DOEE funds CAP 3. Table 3 summarizes participation in the FY 2022 Residential Relief Program. This table outlines the number of residential customers 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 the Utility Discount Program using a separate CRIAC application.

Table 3: FY 2022 CRIAC Residential Relief Discount Program Participation

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total Approvals	Average Annual Benefit	Total Spend
CAP 1	635	819	1080	784	3,318	-	\$0
CAP 2	42	48	105	64	259	-	\$0
CAP 3	207	10	5	5	227	\$166.96	\$37,900.22

¹ This is an estimate of the average number of business or calendar days DOEE took to process applications for financial assistance from the date DOEE received the application to the date that DOEE notified the applicant they qualified for assistance or that DOEE notified the applicant that the applicant did not qualify for financial assistance. This estimate also includes time needed to obtain missing application details from the program participant.

b. CRIAC Emergency Relief Program (ERRP)

The CRIAC Emergency Relief Program (“ERRP”) provided 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 were used to establish income eligibility for ERRP. Households with total income earnings up to 100% of AMI were eligible to receive bill assistance up to \$2,000 as a one-time emergency benefit. The CRIAC Emergency Relief Program ended in May 2021 due to depleted funds.

Because households were deemed categorically eligible for CRIAC-ERRP due to their CAP 1 and CAP 2 eligibility status, the total number of applicants could not be separately tracked.

Table 4: FY 2022 CRIAC Emergency Relief Program Participation

		Emergency Assistance Approvals	Average Annual Benefit	Total Emergency Funding Expenditures
CAP Levels	CAP 1	4	\$699.46	\$2,797.83
	CAP 2	-	-	-
	CAP 3	24	\$1,028.95	\$24,694.85
	Total	28	\$981.88	\$27,492.68

c. CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program

The CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program provides financial relief to eligible nonprofits 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 that have 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 resulting from payment of the CRIAC assessed on their DC Water bill and must complete a DOEE-approved stormwater mitigation project.

Table 5 summarizes the FY 2022 Nonprofit Relief Program. 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: FY 2022 CRIAC Nonprofit Relief Program Participation

Applications Received	Applications Approved	Average Annual Benefit	Total Funding Provided
133	124	\$6,986.90	\$866,374.60

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 Tranane Harris, Energy Program Specialist, at (202) 350-9649 or tranane.harris@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 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.