

Fairfax Water
Occoquan River Crossing Transmission Main Project

Overview of Public Safety and Security During Upcoming Blasting Operations

The Occoquan River Crossing project is a collaborative effort between Fairfax Water, Prince William County Service Authority (PWCSA), and Virginia American Water (V-AW) to increase drinking water transmission capacity and enhance system reliability for existing and future PWCSA and V-AW customers in eastern Prince William County. This project will replace aging potable water transmission main crossings of the Occoquan River with dual 42-inch mains inside a 400-foot long tunnel to cross beneath the river near the Town of Occoquan.

Below the water table of the river, controlled blasting will be performed using explosives to demolish bedrock for tunnel and water main installations. Blasting activities, conducted by certified and licensed personnel, are anticipated to occur mid-April through September 2023. Blasting is permitted at the project site Monday through Friday, 8:00am-6:00pm, and Saturday, 9:00am-5:00pm. Over this 6-month period, a single blast will be detonated, during the allowable timeframe, every other day. This individual blast will last approximately one second.

During blasting operations, the Occoquan pedestrian footbridge, River Mill Park, Fairfax Water's North access road, and the surrounding waterway will be temporarily evacuated and closed for approximately 30 minutes. Boat traffic moving West will be stopped at the pedestrian footbridge. In addition to the temporary closure of the pedestrian footbridge, all foot traffic will be stopped at the Mill Street cul-de-sac on the South side of the river and Fairfax Water's access road on the North side. These temporary closures allow for the certified personnel to ensure the public areas are cleared and secured prior to and after the blast. Visible signage and flags will be posted at those locations.

Personnel will also release audible signal warnings to notify the area prior to and after the blast. An air horn will be used to generate these audible blast signals as described below:

- Warning Signal: A series of long audible signals occurring five minutes prior to the blast signal.
- Blast Signal: A series of short audible signals occurring one minute prior to the shot.
- All Clear Signal: A prolonged audible signal following the inspection of the blast area.