



Take to Task What's not working

New meter covers don't fit

ATLANTA

In recent weeks we've reported on a number of missing water meter covers, some of which resulted in pedestrian injuries. Now, we're finding that replacement covers – if installed at all – are often ill-fitting and still a significant safety hazard.

At Taco Mac in Virginia-Highland, where a customer injured her ankle recently after failing to see an orange cone placed near a poor fitting cover, they've been waiting four months for a cover that fits properly.

"They've replaced the cover at least four times – always with ones that are just slightly too small," manager Paul Reed said. "With delivery trucks coming and going, the covers usually last about a day."

Across the street from Taco Mac, where Atlanta's Department of Public Works is wrapping up a streetscape improvement project, we found three meters sitting side by side – all with covers that don't quite fit, one of which was already broken.

Atlanta's pedestrian advocacy group PEDS has also seen a noticeable increase in reports of missing or ill-fitting meter covers, according to CEO Sal-



One of the water meter covers across the street from Taco Mac in Virginia-Highland is already broken, and the other two don't fit properly. John Becker For the AJC

ly Flocks.

"The problem is that the covers don't fit," Flocks said, "so when people step on them, the covers can break or simply fall into the hole, leaving pedestrians at risk."

Flocks is so concerned she's written Mayor Shirley Franklin asking the city to stop installing meter covers that don't fit and requesting that wrong size covers already installed be replaced.

In June, we reported on

missing meter covers at Taco Mac and near Straits Restaurant at 5th and Juniper streets. As of Monday, the meter near Straits was still uncovered.

We asked watershed department spokeswoman Janet Ward for the status of replacing the cover near Straits, and a comment on whether ill-fitting replacement covers are knowingly or inadvertently being used. We'd received no response as of Thursday morning.

Take to Task will monitor the situation and advise of further developments.

John Becker, for the AJC



Who's looking into it

Rob Hunter, commissioner of Atlanta's Department of Watershed Management, 404-330-6081, rhunter@atlantaga.gov

Days on our list

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What's broken near you?

We want tips from across metro Atlanta. Call us at 404-526-7003 or e-mail us at fixit@ajc.com