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wonderful team who provide our services to you and your families every day. I feel fortunate to have the opportunity to direct an organization that has been built on strong values and a compassionate culture, and I commit to carrying this forward in everything we do. At BJWSA, we have always been guided by our values. We will continue to leverage those principles as we Navigate our Future. I am grateful to Joe Mantua, P.E., who is leaving the Authority in good stead as he enjoys a well-earned retirement.

Even after more than thirty years in the industry, I've never lost sight that what we do truly matters. There is always a customer at the other end of what we are doing who is counting on us to deliver for them. I have high expectations for the years ahead, and would like to share some of those with you now.



New GM Verna Arnette, P.E.



Retiring GM Joe Mantua, P.E.

Our plans to address PFAS

In response to recent plans announced by the US EPA to limit the levels of certain forever chemicals in treated drinking water, BJWSA is taking tests and collecting data to determine baseline levels of these emerging contaminants in both our source water and the water leaving our treatment plants.

We may need to add new technologies to our treatment process to keep levels below the proposed new limits. It is important to know that BJWSA is committed to assuring that our water will meet all state and federal guidelines and will make any adjustments necessary if we need to reduce current levels.

We want you to know that we believe that the producers of these chemicals should be held financially responsible for the costs to clean up the problems they have caused. BJWSA plans to participate in one of the class action lawsuits against these companies to maximize the opportunity to offset the cost of required treatment changes and to minimize the impact on your water rates.

Read more at www.bjwsa.org/emerging-contaminants.

• **Expect transparent communication** from us – for everything from emergency shutdowns and planned maintenance to emerging contaminants such as PFAS (see inset). We have several enhancements underway, from capital improvements such as the Purrysburg Water Treatment Plant expansion to a

Through our quarterly newsletters and monthly updates to our website and social outlets, we intend to keep you informed.

- **Expect continuity in our stewardship** of our beautiful Lowcountry ecosystem. Operations will be foremost in my day-to-day management of our two water treatment plants and eight wastewater plants. Our staff of water and wastewater operators, our lab team and our maintenance and field operations crews will continue to diligently provide you with products and services that meet or exceed state and federal requirements. Our support services, including Customer Service, Information Technology and Finance and Support Services, will always consider you when performing their roles.
- **Expect our infrastructure investments to enhance your quality of life.** Over the next few years, we're spending \$160M on several projects including the Purrysburg Plant expansion, increasing storage both underground and elevated with the new tank in Bluffton and on the addition of two solar arrays at wastewater plants. In the meantime, we promote our "Use Water Wisely" irrigation plan in order to provide the highest quality of water to a growing community.

I am eager to connect with you in my new role and share more about our strategy and the many opportunities we are pursuing. There is certainly a lot to look forward to as well as important work to do, and I am excited to roll up my sleeves and get started.

Very truly yours,
Verna

Irrigation Program buys time pre-Purrysburg expansion

ensuring that customers follow our irrigation program to keep plenty of water available at all times of the day!

This simple program seeks to alleviate usage during peak (early morning) hours to ensure capacity and public safety.



High demand can result in:

- discolored water
- reduced water pressure in the distribution system
- low levels in water storage tanks

Reduced water pressure and low water levels adversely affect the performance of fire hydrants and other fire suppression facilities.

Take these steps to ensure you're using water wisely:

- Avoid irrigation on Mondays!
- Avoid irrigating on any day from 3AM to 9AM!
- Water your lawn based on your address:
 - **Odd**-numbered address - Tue | Thu | Sat
 - **Even**-numbered address - Wed | Fri | Sun
- Apply an irrigation sticker to your unit!



Please place an irrigation reminder sticker on your unit! It helps you -- or your landscaper -- remember to irrigate based on your address! See our request

Groundbreaking puts date on calendar for additional 15MGD capacity



Conducting the groundbreaking, from left: Chief of Technical Services Kenneth Frazier; Water Operations Manager Kevin Sexton; Chief Water Operator - Chelsea Mark Ferrell; Director of Engineering Becca Bowyer, P.E.; General Manager Joe Mantua, P.E.; Deputy General Manager Sarah Linkimer, CPA; Chief of Plant Operations Brian Chemsak, P.E. and Director of Technology & Innovation Tricia Kilgore, P.E.

Purrysburg Water Treatment Plant will double its capacity, expanding to 30 million gallons per day (MGD) after a groundbreaking February 22 at the plant in Hardeeville.

This expansion will increase total water system production capacity 39%, from 39 MGD to 54 MGD. Since the plant opened in 2004, Jasper County's population has increased 35% and Beaufort County's 30%. In recent years, BJWSA has added approximately 3,000 new customers annually, and growth shows no signs of slowing.

Though completion of this expansion is expected in the summer of 2025, BJWSA is looking at a variety of initiatives to stay ahead of demand and to

unnecessary burdens on the system by avoiding peak morning hours (3 AM to 9 AM) for irrigating.



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STEM Fair highlights essential careers to area high school juniors



Above, from left: Students observe engineering plans and infrastructure with Andrew Dudley, project manager, capital projects, as Tricia Kilgore, P.E., director of technology and innovation prepares to school them on BJWSA's sustainability initiatives, as well as the revisions to the Lead & Copper Rule. The Procurement and Fleet Maintenance departments were on hand to talk about acquisition and maintenance for the Authority. Patrice Moore, GIS manager, shows students how geographic information systems assist in locating and maintaining infrastructure. Robert Iovine, accountant III, plays Accounting Jeopardy with a group from JPIIHS.

BJWSA hosted a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) Career Day Friday, April 28 for high school juniors in Beaufort and Jasper counties. With significant numbers of highly-skilled, essential Clean Water Industry employees retiring in the next 10 years, finding qualified candidates to fill those positions is crucial for public health.

Students were treated to creative and engaging presentations by a dozen departments, where they were able to ask questions and learn about the variety of STEM careers at BJWSA. They also learned about BJWSA's award-winning internship program for high school seniors. (www.bjwsa.org/intern-program)

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