

**Summer 2023****A quarterly publication of Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority**

NEWS SPLASH

MESSAGE

July marks my second month living in the beautiful Lowcountry. I appreciate the many warm welcomes and the wonderful hospitality; it feels more like home every day. The people and communities of our area are absolutely amazing.

I'm also impressed by our employees' passion and dedication to the BJWSA mission – providing quality water and wastewater services to our current and future customers in the Lowcountry. In a nutshell, our focus is delivering quality service to customers – that is why we exist.

I spent my first weeks with the utility touring our service area and becoming familiar with our water plants and water reclamation facilities. There's a flurry of activity as the expansion at the Purrysburg Water Treatment Plant is well underway. Our plans for expansion of the Cherry Point Water Reclamation Facility are also in progress. Many other system improvements are in development or under construction, such as water main replacements, water



about our ongoing projects in this newsletter's articles about our technology updates and the Purrysburg expansion. You'll discover even more in our annual water quality report with added information about the wastewater systems. We hope you'll take the time to follow this link and read more about our services: www.bjwsa.org/publications.

While quality is at the forefront of what we do, we must acknowledge that the cost to provide quality water and wastewater services continues to grow.

We've worked diligently to arrive at a budget to cover expenses which involves adjusting water and wastewater rates to meet the increasing costs. These new rates will go into effect on July 1 (please see page 2). We know rates impact customers differently and are sensitive to that reality. Our website offers suggestions to help reduce water and wastewater bills at www.bjwsa.org/water-use. We also offer programs to help people having difficulty making ends meet here: www.bjwsa.org/helping-people-need.

Please know we are always working to deliver dependable and reliable water and wastewater services. Have a wonderful summer.

Very truly yours,
Verna

We are listening to Customers through Focus Groups and Surveys



In odd-numbered years, BJWSA conducts Customer Satisfaction Surveys, using local consultants EMG, LLC, who recently completed our third such report. This reporting alternates with biennial Focus Groups, also conducted by EMG.

This year's electronic survey was sent to customers in March, measuring customer satisfaction, resolution satisfaction and communication among other topics. Overall customer satisfaction with BJWSA services rose to 89.7%.

The journey of providing customers with a positive experience starts from the

operations.

BJWSA system upgrade team recognized



The BJWSA team assembled to complete the radio upgrade were: Jonathan Carey; Clayton Balassi; Stephen Rucker; Chanse Breland; Bryan Brantley; Travis Barnes and Craig Yates.

The vital system used to monitor our treatment systems and the network of pipes, pumps and valves throughout our 750-square mile service area is called Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition. We call it SCADA (scay-da) for short. It allows us to monitor things like water tower levels, flow rates and pump status and make adjustments in real-time.

It is a huge efficiency improvement over the way water and wastewater systems were previously run, which required workers to be dispatched to inspect and adjust equipment in the field. We now use technology to send sensor readings and instructions across Beaufort and Jasper Counties.

service. This threatened to make our system obsolete. In response, we formed a cellular upgrade team to plan and implement the replacement of 357 units, doing so without service interruptions.

Our team was recognized recently by AT&T and *Government Technology Magazine* as a Special Districts Program “Ideas Worth Sharing.” Through careful planning and coordination across our departments, the team was able to upgrade our vital transmitters in just six days with no impact to our operations. Thanks to everyone who helped make this transition a success.

FY24 Rate Schedule		
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS		Current Rates
		New Rates
WATER		
Basic Facility Charge	\$9.55	\$10.50
Volume – per 1,000 gallons	\$3.66	\$4.12
SEWER		
Basic Facility Charge	\$14.70	\$16.00
Volume – per 1,000 gallons	\$6.81	\$7.15
Maximum Charge (7,000 gallons)	\$62.00	\$66.00
IRRIGATION		
Basic Facility Charge	\$9.55	\$10.50
Volume – per 1,000 gallons	\$4.41	\$5.20
COMMERCIAL CUSTOMERS		Current Rates
		New Rates
WATER		
Basic Facility Charge	\$13.80	\$15.00
Volume - per 1,000 gallons	\$3.69	\$4.12
SEWER		
Basic Facility Charge	\$14.70	\$16.00
Volume – per 1,000 gallons	\$6.92	\$7.50
IRRIGATION		
Basic Facility Charge	\$13.80	\$15.00
Volume – per 1,000 gallons	\$4.41	\$5.20

New rates effective July 1, 2023

Prepare your home or business for hurricane season



Where is my shut-off valve?

Homes built after 1990 should have a main shut-off at the home. Older homes have meters similar to the one in the photo. Identify the location of yours or have one installed.

Before you evacuate:

- Locate your water shutoff valve now. Shut off the valve when you evacuate.
- Turn off the irrigation system at the timer, and the power or gas to the water heater.
- Shut off and secure outside faucets.
- Fill unbreakable containers with fresh drinking water and store in a safe place.
- Fill bathtubs with water for non-potable use, such as cleaning and sanitary purposes.
- Monitor BJWSA's website and social media for messages and system outage updates.
- Ensure we have your MOBILE telephone number so you'll receive our recorded notifications.

When you return:

- Call 843-987-9200 or e-mail info@bjwsa.org.
- Public warnings may be issued to boil your drinking water because of possible contamination.

Pay careful attention to these advisories. We will post these on our website and social media.

- If you remove debris from your property, do not place it over meter boxes or near hydrants.
- Please heed any warnings to conserve water during the recovery period.

If you choose to stay during a MANDATORY evacuation:

BJWSA's hurricane plan includes stay-behind crews at four locations to keep water and sewer systems operational. Depending on the severity of the storm,

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 form here: www.bjwsa.org/irrigation-sticker-requests/.



Water Use can be Customer Game-Changer

Get water-use monitoring and leak detection in the palm of your hand with the free *EyeOnWater* app! Beacon Meter Cellular Technology allows customers and staff to access

water usage, helping you find leaks and better manage water usage. Meter readings are updated once daily.

Scan the QR code with your smartphone camera to get the app. Use your account/customer number combination to sign up.



www.eyeonwater.com/signin

Purrysburg Water Treatment Plant Expansion Update

Work continues on the expansion at the Purrysburg Water Treatment Plant, doubling capacity at the plant from 15 MGD (million gallons/day) to 30 MGD. Work is expected to be complete by summer 2025. At that time, total system capacity will reach 54 MGD.



Take a look at our award-winning Water and Wastewater Quality Report

Confidence Report (CCR), also known as a Water Quality Report, with our own Wastewater Report.

Public Affairs Liaison Haley Hughes took the reins on the project, which was submitted for a South Carolina Public Relations Society of America (SCPRSA) Mercury Award. The publication received a Silver Wing Award of Excellence for Annual Reporting.

Haley is shown at right with the award. See this year's statistics at www.bjwsa.org/water-quality-report/.



Connect with CUSTOMER SERVICE

Call 843-987-9200

Email: INFO@BJWSA.ORG

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