

# NEWSSPLASH

Last year at this time, we all faced a lot of uncertainty when the coronavirus appeared on the scene and disrupted the world as we knew it.

A year later, we have learned many very important lessons. First, our workforce is strong, resilient and dedicated to the BJWSA mission to *inspire trust and enhance public health*. While many of our team adapted to working from home and spent countless hours in virtual meetings, the majority of our forces continued to report to their regular work locations. They ensured that water was produced and delivered to homes, wastewater was collected and treated, our systems and facilities were properly maintained and customer concerns were received and addressed – all while dealing with the added stresses of the pandemic. Second, effective communication is always important; however, during a crisis it is even more critical. Like most organizations, we adapted how we communicated with each other and to our customers to ensure we delivered necessary information. Many activities were converted to virtual events and we realized we needed enhanced and more frequent communications. Finally, the pandemic reminded us how important safe, clean water is to a community. As essential workers, we think about this every day and remain committed to providing the highest level of service to our customers and stakeholders.

The pandemic may have changed how we do things however; it has not slowed things down. We have a lot going on at BJWSA and I wanted to provide you with a few updates.

**Customer engagement** is one of our top priorities and this year we have a number of key initiatives including our biennial customer survey. I hope that you were able to participate, as the feedback you provide is most helpful to us in identifying how we are doing and how we can provide you an even better customer experience. One of the things we heard in our last survey was the need to provide more electronic communication and this has been an area of focus. We are also holding our first virtual Consumer Academy in May, which will provide an opportunity for our customers to learn more about BJWSA day-to-day activities and what goes into providing water and wastewater services to a community.

**Investing in our future** is another high priority and I am very pleased to share that we welcomed our inaugural class of high school interns February 8. Collaborating with both Beaufort and Jasper County School districts, we've launched a program that provides career opportunities for local students coming right out of high school. Our four interns, Travis, Kyler, Jada and Devonte are progressing through a 15-week program that will end with a potential job offer and career in the water industry.

As well as investing in our human resources, we need to invest in our physical infrastructure to keep pace with the rapid on-going development and growth in the area as well as maintain and replace our current system. Updates on several of our major capital projects are noted below:

**Purrysburg Water Plant Expansion** – We are nearing completion of the design phase of this project, which will double the plant's capacity to 30 million gallon of water per day. We anticipate taking construction bids this summer with completion by fall of 2023.

**Highway 170 36" Water Main Extension** – Construction is underway on this project which will add nearly 3 miles of 36" water transmission main to our system along highway 170. Anticipated in-service date for this new line is June 2021. **Bluffton Parkway Water Main and Elevated Tank** – We are currently still in the siting phase for the tank and have completed 60% design for the pipeline. Anticipated in-service date for the pipeline is June 2022 and for the tank, March 2023. This project includes more than 5 miles of 36" and 24"water main in the Buckwalter area of Bluffton along with a 1.5 million gallon water tank.

**North Street Transmission Main** – The design of this project is currently at 60% with an anticipated in-service date of June 2022. This project will add nearly 2 miles of 20" water main along North Street in Beaufort.

**Galvanized Waterline Replacement Program** – We continue to replace older, galvanized mains throughout the system with new PVC pipes. To date we have replaced more than 6 miles of this pipe and will be replacing several more miles this year.

**Advanced Meter Infrastructure Program** - We continue to move forward with our meter replacement initiative and have now installed more than 62,000 meters with technology that allows us to capture meter data at 15-minute intervals. The project is still on track for completion in June 2021. Customers are encouraged to sign up for the online *Eye on Water* tool, which allows you to track and monitor your daily usage and be notified of any potential leaks. If you have not signed up for this tool but would like to, please contact us at [info@bjwsa.org](mailto:info@bjwsa.org)

**Sustainability Program** – We are continually looking for innovative approaches to be more efficient and reduce our carbon footprint and are in the process of expanding our solar energy program with a new project to install solar panels at our Hardeeville and Cherry Point Treatment Facilities.

We are always interested in hearing from you, so if you have any questions or comments, please contact us at [info@bjwsa.org](mailto:info@bjwsa.org).

## MESSAGE

from General Manager Joe Mantua, P.E.



Best regards,  


## Values, projects, awards and new initiatives...

### BJWSA VOICES on VALUES

Ethics  
Teamwork  
Transparency  
Excellence



Director of Field Operations  
& Military Programs  
**Andy Mattie**

questions. The more people ask questions the more power. Being transparent doesn't mean you're going to get in trouble for doing something the way you are doing it, but it may mean the way you do it may change. Make ethical decisions and be open to change. Truth is, if you are comfortable all the time you are probably not changing, and therefore not growing. Change is good.

**Excellence.** There is always room for improvement. Ethical decisions, improving communication and doing WORK are what we all do. One of the most important things I've learned is that it's how we approach every situation that matters, and I've learned that from all of you. Ask questions, be open to change, get your point across, but keep it professional. Still the best job I ever had!"

### Ready 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 yours or have one installed.

#### When you return:

- Don't call 911 for water or sewer emergencies. Call 843-987-9200 or e-mail [info@bjwsa.org](mailto: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, water and sewer services may be interrupted. Our crews will respond as quickly and safely as possible.

#### 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 best telephone number so you'll receive our recorded notifications.

#### BJWSA Cares...

### Assistance funds help needy

BJWSA has three assistance programs for customers in need. Customers who meet the criteria for any program may contact BJWSA customer service 843-987-9200. To learn about eligibility, go to [bjwsa.org/helping-people-need](http://bjwsa.org/helping-people-need).

**UNITED WAY HARSHSHIP FUND** BJWSA's hardship fund assists customers in crisis – those with extenuating circumstances who could be in danger of disconnection of their water and/or sewer services. BJWSA refers these customers to the United Way of the Lowcountry to facilitate the eligibility and assistance process.

**THAD COLEMAN FUND** helps Beaufort and Jasper County families faced with financial hardship, helping them pay the costs to connect to the BJWSA public water and sewer system. It is funded through BJWSA and participating customers throughout our service area.

**JUANITA WHITE FUND** is dedicated specifically to residents of the historic Levy-Limehouse Bellinger Hill area of Jasper County. This fund assists with connection fees and is administered in the same manner as the Thad Coleman Fund.

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.  
**LIVE UNITED** United Way

## Sustainability Initiatives

### Practices under new umbrella

BJWSA has always been committed to sustainable practices for our facilities and operations. Our board and Tricia Kilgore, P.E. are expanding on current initiatives, developing new avenues, and infusing our internal culture with an appreciation for sustainable practices.

#### BJWSA Sustainability initiatives:

- Water reuse/reclamation for irrigation – Ten million gallons of wastewater every day is re-used beneficially for irrigation across our service area.
- Water reuse for wetlands restoration – 50% of wastewater treated in 2020 was used beneficially for wetlands restoration in the Great Swamp.
- Facility design – LED lighting. Water source heat pumps connected to the Chelsea WTP for heating and cooling, and SC's first sustainable wastewater plant.
- Solar energy – solar PV arrays at Port Royal WRF and St Helena WWTP resulted in \$400,000 in energy savings from March 2018 to March 2020.
- Savannah River Clean Water Fund – a partnership of utilities and industries in Georgia and South Carolina, is working to protect water quality through conservation and land management in the watershed. Watch our website ([bjwsa.org/sustainability](http://bjwsa.org/sustainability)) and social for updates.



Director of Technology  
& Innovation  
**Tricia Kilgore, P.E.**

## Engineering Projects

### Multi-year infrastructure project continues in the City of Beaufort

BJWSA is continuing its galvanized pipe replacement project. Over time, these lines corrode which can cause the water to look yellow or brown, can cause taste and odor issues, and can also cause issues with water pressure.

There are many miles of galvanized pipe in the BJWSA system, especially in older areas. In order to replace these lines, BJWSA has taken a phased approach to the work. Most recently, the galvanized line was replaced on Emmons Street and property owners should have seen improvements to their water quality.

Because we are concentrating efforts this spring on some of the areas of galvanized pipe with the worst water quality conditions, the next galvanized pipe replacement will be on Laudonneire Street and another crew will be brought in to start on Pine Court North.

This construction effort will include installation of new PVC water mains, fire hydrants, water services, and meter boxes along the route. The replacement of water service lines to customers is provided only to the meter. BJWSA will not be replacing any water lines on private property between the meter and the house.

Construction crews recently replaced galvanized line on Pigeon Point Road.



Director of Engineering  
**Becca Bowyer, P.E.**

## Public Affairs Projects

### BJWSA wins National Environmental Achievement Award

The Public Affairs Team displays the National Environmental Achievement Award for Public Information & Education from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA).

The award honors the October 2019 inaugural Trick or Treatment Wastewater Tour. The team hopes to bring it back this fall, just as an article celebrating the event and the award appears in the October issue of Treatment Plant Operator Magazine. Check the website for virtual events and other public education pieces.



Director of Public Affairs  
**Pamela Flasch**  
Public Education & Engagement Planner  
**Lou Brown**  
Public Affairs Specialist  
**Morgan Ruscetta**

### Connect with our Public Affairs Department

[bjwsa.org](http://bjwsa.org) | [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) | [bjwsa instagram.com](http://bjwsa.instagram.com)

[twitter/bjwsasc](http://twitter/bjwsasc) | [facebook.com/bjwsa](http://facebook.com/bjwsa)

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# Our mission: Inspire trust and enhance public health.

SPRING 2021

## NEWS SPLASH

Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority

6 Snake Road; Okatie, SC 29909

Members of the Authority Board

Chair Michael L. Bell

Vice-Chair James E. Baker

Secretary/Treasurer Gregory A. Padgett

Donna L. Altman

Lorraine W. Bond

Brandy M. Gray

Andy Kinghorn

R. Thayer Rivers, Jr.

Gerald H. Schulze

Dr. William Singleton

General Manager Joe Mantua, P.E.

PRESORT  
STANDARD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
COLUMBIA, SC  
PERMIT #535



Keep watching for  
more information on our  
Sustainability programs.

## Learn the basics!

### Academy seeks to enhance customer experience online

Tune in at 5 pm Tuesday, May 11, 18 and 25 for a weekly, informative program hosted by different departments at BJWSA. Learn about water treatment and delivery, wastewater collection, treatment and reuse, what NOT to flush, how to fight "pink stuff" and more! Sign up in advance to receive the link at [consumeracademy@bjwsa.org](mailto:consumeracademy@bjwsa.org) and save your seat in our virtual classroom!

May 11, 18, 25 at 5 PM! Learn from BJWSA experts!



**BJWSA** [www.bjwsa.org/water-use](http://www.bjwsa.org/water-use)

**No-watering Mondays**

**Join Us!**

**TAKE THE PLEDGE & WIN!**

1: Enter for a chance to win at [bjwsa.org/water-use](http://bjwsa.org/water-use).  
2: Reduce your water usage on Mondays thru spring and summer.  
3: We'll draw three names each month, April thru September!  
4: Three customers will get \$25 off their next bill!  
5. Track your usage with **Eye on Water** app!

Not open to BJWSA employees or their families.

**Even** **Odd**

**Keep landscaping off meters and hydrants**  
Ensure that your meter can be read!

Beacon meters are cloud-based, and shrubs block the signal! Please no planting within 3 ft. of meters and hydrants. Hydrants must be accessible for BJWSA and your local Fire Department!

**Monitor your usage with *Eye on Water* app\***  
Track your usage daily and save money!



\*Not available system wide at this time.

Make this your last printed newsletter! Share your current e-mail and mobile number with us at [info@bjwsa.org](mailto:info@bjwsa.org).