



How is the Economic Slowdown Affecting BJWSA?

Dean Moss, General Manager

The "economic slowdown" has challenged BJWSA, as it has almost every other business and public agency in America. And, like most other organizations, we are changing our business practices and

spending plans to adapt to this downturn.

The money collected from water and sewer charges and tap fees pays for our day-to-day operations and debt service payments. Many of these costs are "fixed" - they don't change with the amount of water we produce or the wastewater we treat. Faced with revenues below forecast and a difficult economy, BJWSA's staff has undertaken an "all-hands" effort to pinch pennies and find savings.

The capital contribution fee payments received from developers and new connections to the system are used to pay for expansions and improvements needed to meet demands caused by growth and development. During the years 2003-2007, these payments averaged about \$10 million a year. In fiscal year 2009, we anticipate receiving only about \$2 million. In response to this loss of revenue, we have modified our Capital Improvements Plan according to what projects must be done now and what can be postponed. We will review the Plan regularly and not undertake any project unless the funds are immediately available.

In summary, BJWSA is adjusting to this changing economic reality and does not plan a rate increase in the coming year. We are controlling our operating expenses to match our revenues and will adjust our Capital Improvements Plan as necessary to match the money available. We are confident that we can end this fiscal year below budget and still maintain the high quality, reliable service that meets your needs and expectations.

William D. Moss, Jr.
General Manager



The weather, the economy and your water saving efforts have resulted in water sales being below our forecast this past summer, fall, and winter. Tap fees are also down, due to the dramatic slowdown in housing construction. In December 2007, BJWSA installed 126 new water taps; in December 2008, that number dropped to 48. BJWSA is adjusting to this changing economic reality by reducing operating expenses and deferring non-critical capital projects.

NEW Online Customer Service

We are upgrading our customer service software to provide an easier, more efficient way to get information online about your account, to make online payments, and to communicate with BJWSA. With our new "e-care" system, you will be able to access your billing, meter reading, and water usage history through our website, www.bjwsa.org. You also will be able to make a payment, tell us you're moving and report a problem.

If you currently have an online payment account with BJWSA, you can continue to pay your bills through our website. You will be automatically enrolled in the new system and will receive an email notification of the transfer. We are temporarily sending paper bills to current online payment customers to prevent delays and to ensure that everyone receives billing and water usage information.

Until we have the new customer service software up and running, new customers cannot register to pay their bills online. Once the conversion process is complete, new customers will be able to register on our website for online payment and customers currently using online payment will no longer receive paper bills.

Our goal is to provide the best and most convenient billing service possible and we apologize for any inconvenience during this transition.

We expect to have our new online customer service ready for use in the late spring. Please check our website for availability.

Better Ways for Waterways

Sometimes the most effective efforts occur when organizations work together. BJWSA is fortunate to have a valuable partner in promoting protection and conservation of our water resources. The Clemson University Extension Service is conducting a wide variety of initiatives in Beaufort and Jasper counties, including the Master Gardener Program, presentations, and workshops. These activities are helping to teach residents about water quality, how they can reduce the impact of landscaping and gardening on our local waterways, and how to use water wisely.

The Extension Service has conducted training programs for Beaufort Master Gardeners to conduct water quality educational programs in the school district. In Sun City, the extension service has begun a pilot program, Turf Love, that provides a personalized lawn and soil analysis in order to help prevent fertilizer and pesticide runoff into local waterways.

Promoting water saving methods, Laura Lee Rose, Consumer Horticulture Agent for Clemson Extension, has presented a Green Solutions Workshop in the Town of Bluffton, demonstrating rain gardens and rain harvesting with barrels. The extension service has donated rain barrels to special projects and area schools.



For more information on extension service programs, contact the Beaufort County Clemson Extension office at 843-470-3655 or visit www.clemson.edu/extension

NewsSPLASH



A quarterly publication of
Beaufort-Jasper Water &
Sewer Authority

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Need More Information?

Contact Jerrie Legare,
BJWSA Communications Manager
at 987-9213 or jerriel@bjwsa.org.

Are You a Cactus or a Sponge?

Find out with our simple questionnaire.

1. How many times a week do you take a bath?

a) 2 or less b) 3 or more

2. How long a shower do you take?

a) 7 minutes or less
b) 8 minutes or more

3. Do you have a low-flow toilet?

a) yes b) no

4. Do you have aerators on your faucets?

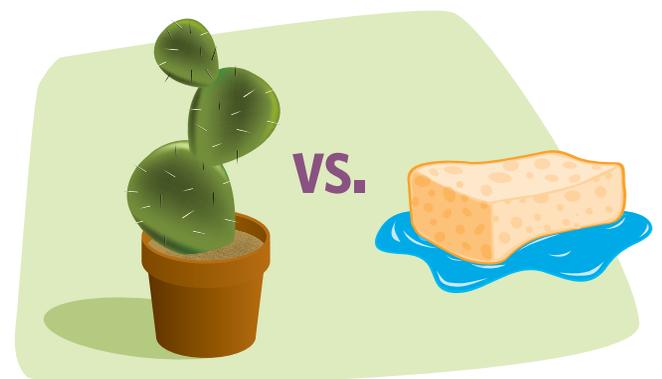
a) yes b) no

5. Do you run the dishwasher when it's not full?

a) no b) yes

6. Do you run the water when you brush your teeth?

a) no b) yes



Add your points together:

a) = 0 points b) = 2 points

0-4 You're a cactus! Well done!

You're doing a great job. Keep using water wisely.

6-10 You're a flower! Well, you're doing ok, but there's room for a few improvements.

10+ You're a sponge! You can do better than that! Start now to be a wise water user.

For many tips on how to save water, visit www.h2ouse.org

Rural Communities Now Part of BJWSA

BJWSA has acquired the Levy, Limehouse and Bellinger Hill Water Company in Jasper County (LLBH), which has provided drinking water to 850 customers in this rural area for the last 20 years. We have been managing this company almost since its beginning. The non-profit LLBH Board, consisting of seven elected members, decided last year to sell the company to us in order to more adequately provide for the needs of the growing community.

The LLBH Board has become a Community Advisory Board to work with BJWSA to ensure a smooth transition and to suggest service improvements for the area.

BJWSA will eventually convert the current LLBH groundwater system using two wells to a surface water system that uses the Savannah River, a more reliable water source. Our plans also include improved fire protection for the community.

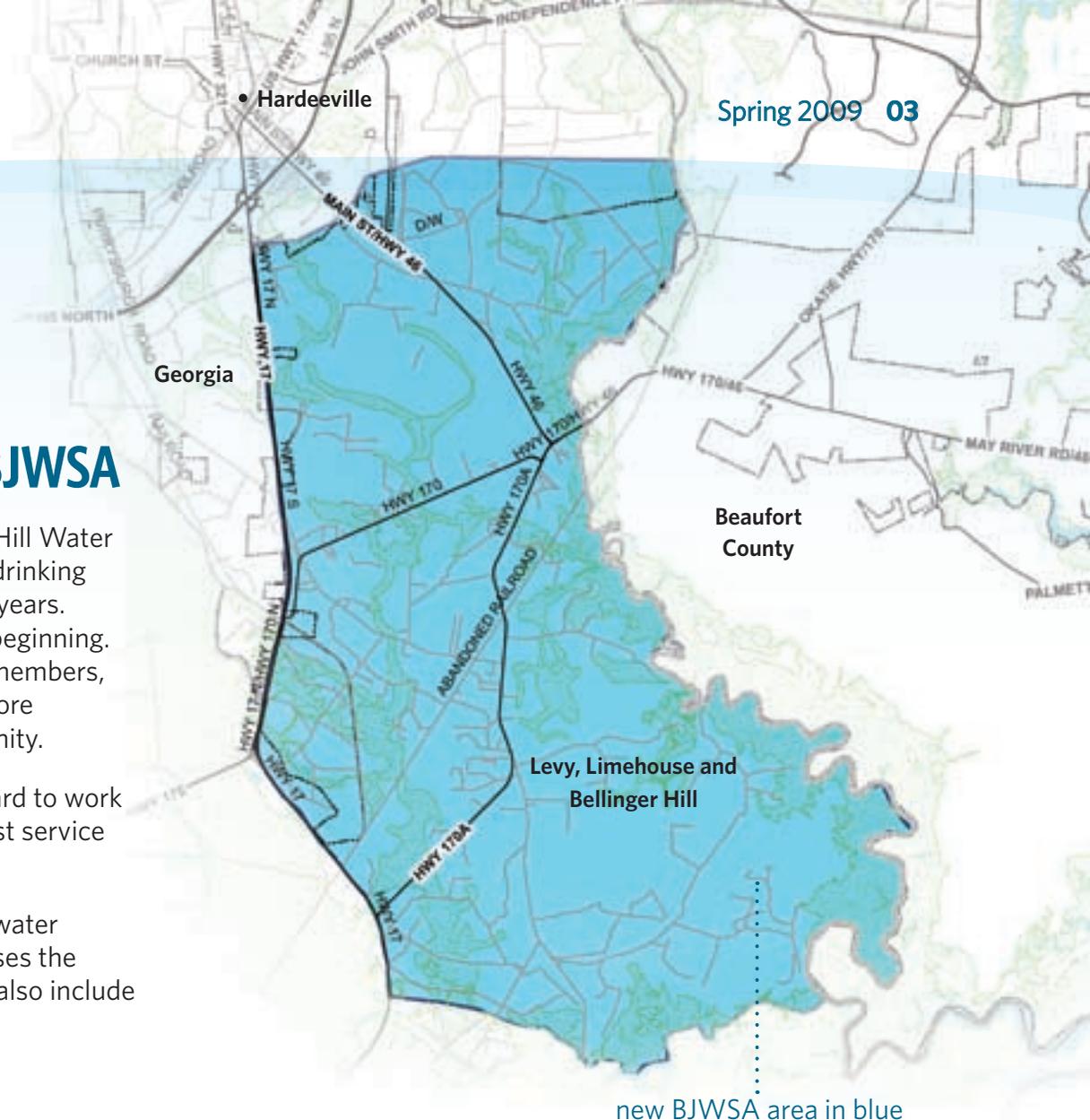
New Technology for Clean Water

For almost 100 years, water and wastewater utilities have used chlorine gas to kill harmful bacteria and viruses in drinking water and wastewater in order to protect the public health. Chlorine gas is very reliable, inexpensive, and readily available. However, gaseous chlorine is extremely toxic if accidentally released into the atmosphere. While our industry has done a good job of enforcing safe handling practices, chlorine gas always poses a risk and we have chosen new alternatives.

Instead of chlorine gas, BJWSA is using a sodium hypochlorite generator to produce a disinfectant at our Purrysburg Water Treatment Plant. We are also currently converting the system at our Chelsea Water Treatment Plant, which is scheduled to be on-line this spring. Sodium hypochlorite, commonly known as bleach, is now widely accepted as one of the best and safest alternative forms of disinfection in water treatment.

Chlorine is an ingredient in sodium hypochlorite, but sodium hypochlorite is produced and stored in a very stable liquid form, eliminating the danger of an accidental chlorine gas leak. We must use a chlorine-based disinfectant because the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires every drinking water treatment system to maintain a certain residual level of chlorine throughout their water distribution system at all times.

BJWSA has replaced chlorine gas disinfection systems at the Cherry Point and Port Royal Island Water Reclamation Facilities with ultraviolet (UV) light to disinfect wastewater. UV technology does not require chemicals and has low operation and maintenance costs. The chemical-free process results in reclaimed water that can safely be recycled into the environment.



National Clean Drinking Water Week May 4-8

Come visit us on Customer Appreciation Day
Thursday, May 7th

Enjoy refreshments and see "Water...Use it Wisely" posters done by local students

Where: Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority
6 Snake Road, Okatie (off Highway 170)

When: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

All during National Clean Drinking Water Week, we'll have light refreshments and handouts for you in our Customer Service Department. Drinking Water Week Poster Contest entries from local students will be displayed the entire month of May.



Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority

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Visit bjwsa.org to learn about:

- Water quality
- Water conservation
- Wastewater treatment
- Outages and emergencies
- Payment policies and options
- How your money is used
- Meter reading
- Rates

What is that Pink Stuff on My Bathroom Fixtures?

That “pink stuff” that you may be seeing around your sink drains or in your toilets is naturally occurring airborne bacteria that has nothing to do with the quality of your water. These bacteria thrive on moisture, dust, and phosphates. Once airborne, these bacteria seek moist environments to grow.

What You Can Do

Always keep bathtubs and sinks wiped down and dry. Frequently clean your sinks with a cleaning solution that contains chlorine. Chlorine bleach (3 to 5 tablespoons) can be periodically stirred into the toilet tank and flushed into the bowl itself. Cleaning and



flushing with chlorine will not necessarily eliminate the problem, but will help control the bacteria growth. If you have a septic tank, use a non-chemical cleaner, such as borax to avoid damaging your septic system.

Important! Follow the manufacturer’s cleaning instructions for your plumbing fixtures and countertops; chlorine cannot be used with some designer products. Use care with abrasives to avoid scratching fixtures, which will make them even more susceptible to bacteria.



Use Water Wisely...Every Drop Counts!