

Pipeline

A Newsletter of South Walton Utility Co., Inc.

September 2021

SWUCI Annual Members' Meeting

**November 18, 2021 at
5:00 p.m.**

369 Miramar Beach Drive
Miramar Beach

All members are encouraged to attend. Elections for the SWUCI Board of Directors will be held. The annual audit report will be presented by Warren Averett, LLC.

As a member owned company it is important to be involved with your utility.

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Be in the know

Meet the SWU Board

Free E-billing & EFT

Locate your meter box and know how to turn off your water before you may need to shut it off for repairs.

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Twitter



A note from your General Manager

The Day in the Life of a Utility Worker

Do you know where your water comes from? Do you know what happens when you flush the toilet? Do you know the difference between flushable and biodegradable? Have you ever heard the term water conservation? I bet you search for the answers when your water pressure drops or the toilet doesn't flush, or your water utility bill is 3 times higher than last month. These are things that a utility worker deals with every day. From customer service, water operators, distribution system operators, wastewater treatment plant operators, lift station collection system operators... these are the people that make it happen on a daily basis...

First, Let's talk about biodegradable vs flushable... most anything is flushable and can travel down the sewer collection system until it gets hung up in the pump and backs up the sewer collection system... biodegradable allows the material to break down in the pipe and water and can be processed for treatment. Just because it says flushable doesn't mean its biodegradable. We like biodegradable.

Second, let's talk about water conservation. Your water comes from underground wells that have naturally occurring fluoride and this means minimal disinfection is required to provide good drinking water for your home. This means we need to be mindful of such a valuable resource. We can all live without power, but we cannot live without water. Please check for leaky toilets, dripping faucets, and broken irrigation that use our valuable water supply.

Third, this year has created very challenging times for all of us with the continuing Covid 19 pandemic. Our staff has made adjustments to continue to provide all these services for you while adjusting to social distancing, lock down parameters, and new ways to perform the duties necessary to do their job. Please remember... We are here, we are essential, we come to work every day to tackle these topics and make sure that you, our members, have safe, reliable service every time you turn that faucet on to get water.

**Be sure to Thank your utility workers for their efforts on the frontline because as long as the water flows and the toilet flushes it's just another day in paradise here on the Beaches of South Walton.

Alicia Keeter, General Manager

Our connection fees will be changing October 1st to meet the growing demand of development in our area. Below are the fee levels:

Fee levels

Decrease in fees per equivalent residential connection (ERC); however Changes in ERC factors will increase total fees for larger residential, condos, hotels, and other uses

ERCs

Single-family residential

Existing is 1 ERU per unit (one size fits all)

New rate based on 2800sf house size (larger pays more)

Hotel and motel per unit

Existing is 64% of residential and condos at 74%

New rate is 1 ERU per unit

Other land uses (commercial, etc.)

Existing is based on meter size

New is based on ERC schedule according to land use (restaurant, hair salon, etc.)

Make Your Voice Heard

South Walton Utility Company, Inc. (SWUCI) is a member-owned and operated utility that relies on a key group of volunteers to keep the company headed on the right track. As a member of SWUCI, you have the opportunity to help to decide who sits on the Board of Directors.

Members of the Board of Directors are elected to three-year terms. The current Board appoints a nominating committee to recommend candidates for upcoming vacancies. Individual members can also make Board nominations.

Directors and officers receive no compensation for their services.

Proposed Rate Increase

The Board of Directors will consider a 2% increase in water and sewer rates. If approved, members will see the increase in their bill beginning in October.



Fire hydrant flushing operation



HURRICANE SEASON IS UPON US. MAKE SURE YOUR HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS KIT IS UP TO DATE.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR ADDITIONAL INFO

- Check for leaking toilet flappers
- Retrofit aging plumbing fixtures
- Adjust toilet fill valves to conserve water
- Encourage guests to conserve water while on vacation
- Use Xeriscape Landscaping and keep irrigation use to a minimum.
- Know where your meter shut off valve is located.
- Wash full loads of dishes and laundry to conserve water

Rules for Nominations from the Membership

HOW TO NOMINATE A DIRECTOR

Any member of SWUCI can nominate a candidate for election to the Board of Directors by following these guidelines:

The individual(s) being nominated must be an eligible member of SWUCI.

- To be an eligible member of SWUCI, the individual must have an active account as of the nomination record date of September 16, 2021.
- Once elected to the Board of Directors, an individual can serve on the Board only so long as that individual remains an eligible member of the company.

You must prepare a petition nominating the individual of your choice on which you have presented sufficient information to validate that individual's status as an eligible member of SWUCI. A separate petition is required for each individual being nominated.

- The petition must include the signatures, addresses and account numbers of fifteen (15) eligible members of SWUCI **in addition to the individual being nominated** who are eligible as of the nomination record date of September 16, 2021.

You must provide a short (one page) biography of the individual being nominated which specifically sets forth the qualifications you feel this individual possesses which will make him/her an asset to SWUCI and its members by serving on the Board of Directors. Please keep in mind that this individual, if elected, will be expected to attend the monthly Board meetings, the Annual Member meetings and any special meetings as properly called.

All of this information must be delivered to SWUCI by mail or delivery to the Administrative Offices of SWUCI, 369 Miramar Beach Drive, Miramar Beach, FL 32550-4938.

This information must be received **no later than 4:30 p.m., on September 30, 2021**.

- This time frame is required to permit the individual's name and biography to be included on the printed ballot that will be mailed to all members.
- Petitions received after that date cannot be accepted and will not be considered.

Nominations for Directors will not be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

Visit our website <https://swuci.org/>

Review your account, pay your bill, find forms for new service, read important news bulletins, water saving tips and view our annual water quality report. We also post advisories, holiday hours, financial statements plus much more.

FOG - Fats, Oils and Grease

Remember to drain your fats oils and grease and place in a disposable container and dispose of properly, not pour them down your sink. Over time this creates clogs in your sewer lateral that will back up into your home and create costly plumbing repairs.

Flushable doesn't mean it is biodegradable.

Products labeled as "flushable" such as baby wipes, paper towels and diapers do not break down in the collection system and creates clogs in our pumping equipment and cause sewer overflows.

We encourage you to throw these items in the trash.



**EVERY DROP COUNTS
DRINKING WATER WEEK**

MAY 1-7, 2022

AWWA.ORG

A Letter from the SWU Board President



Greetings from your Water and Sewer Utility:

We are now into our second year of Covid19 and are seeing the number of tourists exponentially increase over previous years. As the road construction nears completion, we are all looking forward to a relief in the traffic or at least a more streamlined and efficient pattern.

This being said, the volume of water being used has increased as well as sewer output. This in turn indicates that we are soon in need of more infrastructure upgrades. Over the past few years, we have been upgrading sewer lines that are close to the end of safe life helping to decrease the number of potential spills.

Water lines are also being inspected and replaced where needed. Some of these lines have been in place since the utility first began putting lines in the ground in 1968.

The employees of South Walton Utilities are diligent with inspections and troubleshooting all our systems. Thanks to them, we have a safe, top of the line sewer and water system that far exceeds the state regulations for a utility.

We are still striving to keep our employees safe with sanitization procedures for workspaces, trucks, and equipment to stop the potential spread of Covid19.

There are six other board members that are committed to supporting the management and staff do the best possible job for you, our members. We have all made adjustments over the last couple of years to meet needs, as they seem to change weekly, and we will continue to do so.

Moving forward, we will see more upgrades to pipes, pumps, lift stations, and wells to provide you with the best service and safest water possible.

Thank you for letting me be a part of the great organization, South Walton Utility.

Mike Richardson
President

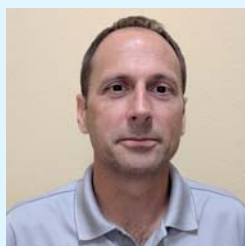
Water Conservation

SWUCI has a retrofit program in place. We will provide showerheads, faucet aerators, and leak detection tablets to you at no charge. Here are simple ways you can save. Ask at our office front desk for more information.

Meet your SWUCI Board of Directors:



*Vice President
Dave Brown*



*Secretary
Steve Dixon*



*Director
Mike Abt*



*Director
Dustin Terry*



*Treasurer
Pastor Jason Scheler*



*Director
Dave Stowe*

Did you know: A continuous leak from a 1/8" hole over a 3 month period wastes about 18,500 gallons of water.



South Walton Utility
Co., Inc.

369 Miramar Beach Dr.
Miramar Beach, FL 32550

Presorted First Class
US POSTAGE PAID
Fort Walton Beach, FL
Permit No. 182



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

E-Billing & Electronic Funds Transfer

South Walton Utility offers **two free services** to our members to help you make payments fast and easy:
E-Billing and Automatic Draft.

E-Billing allows you to receive your bill each month by email. This is an excellent way to receive your bill fast, especially if you live out of town. Send an email to admin@swuci.org to request this free service.

Automatic Draft is a hassle-free way to pay your bill on time each month. Your bank account will draft on the first business day of each month. To sign up for this free service, complete and return the attached form or download the form off our website www.swuci.org

AUTHORIZATION FOR ELECTRONIC TRANSFER OF FUNDS

South Walton Utility Co. Inc.
369 Miramar Beach Drive, Miramar Beach, FL 32550
Phone: (850) 837-2988; Fax (850) 837-7648

Customer Name _____

SWUCI Customer Numbers:

Please deduct payments from my:

Checking Account Saving Account

South Walton Utility Company, Inc. is hereby authorized to process an electronic debit from the Account described above once a month in the amount of my monthly water/sewer bill.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please be sure to include a voided check for bank account verification, and mail together with this completed form to:

South Walton Utility Co., Inc.
369 Miramar Beach Drive
Miramar Beach, FL 32550



Lift Station rehabilitation

Do we have your current email
address and phone number?
Please update your contact info for up to date
information from our office.