



Pipeline

A Newsletter of South Walton Utility Co., Inc.

September 2023

SWUCI Annual Members' Meeting

**November 16, 2023 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.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

SWUCI News

Water Conservation

How to Nominate a Director

Letter from the President

Did You 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. Pg. 2

Find us on
Facebook &
Twitter



A note from your General Manager

Wow, what a year it has been for all of us at South Walton Utility! I can barely take in all the growth and changes before something new happens. While we welcome our new residents with open arms I can't help but feel a little apprehension as we see our area transforming at such a rapid pace. Our utility is handling those changes in stride and our staff here at SWU are training, adapting and installing new technology to tackle the demands that added growth brings to your water and wastewater system.

This past year has brought us weather extremes, from the most frigid December to the greatest heat wave the southeast has seen in a very long time. Hurricane Ian spared the northwest Florida only to wreak havoc on the southwest coast. We responded to help our friends in Lee County and brought back with us lessons learned to help improve our system to be storm ready for this next hurricane season. Speaking of storm ready, are you and your family prepared? I urge you to make a plan, know your evacuation zone and visit your Walton or Okaloosa County EOC page for further details to aid you in your preparedness plan.

In closing, I take this opportunity to say THANK YOU to our office manager, Nancy Kennedy, and her many years of hard work and dedication to you, our members, at SWUCI. Nancy turned in her keys and made the giant step into retirement on July 7th and we wish her well in her new adventures. She will be missed.

In closing, I encourage you in the words of Billy Graham, "To take one day at a time. Today, after all, is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday."

Thank you all for a great year at South Walton Utility and I look forward to serving you this next year!

Your General Manager,
Alicia Keeter

Credit Card Fees

SWU has plans to implement a convenience fee of \$2.00 which will be charged per credit or debit card transaction when paying your bill through Paymentus. This will help offset the fees SWU pays to process credit cards.



**BE READY FOR AN
EMERGENCY**

Sign up for Alert Walton at
www.waltoncountym.org

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.

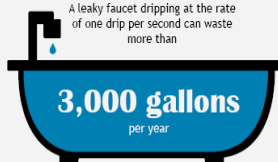
Proposed Rate Increase Oct. 1st

The Board of Directors will consider a 3% increase in water and sewer rates. If approved, members will see the increase in their November statement. Check our website for additional updates

THE FACTS ON LEAKS

10

percent of homes have leaks that waste 90 gallons or more per day



Did you know?

Minor water leaks account for nearly



trillion gallons

of wasted water each year and is equal to annual household water use in nearly



A shower leaking at

10 Drips

per minute wastes

more than

500

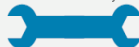
gallons per year



million homes

Repair

leaks by checking faucet washers and gaskets for wear and replacing them if necessary



Replace old toilets with WaterSense models to save



13,000

gallons of water savings for the average family

Homeowners can save



10 percent on their water bills



epa.gov/watersense

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 15, 2023.
- 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 15, 2023.

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 29, 2023**.

- 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.

Backflow Devices

- ⇒ Has your backflow device been tested this year?
- ⇒ Do you know what a backflow device is?
- ⇒ They are the culprits of leaks after a big freeze.
- ⇒ Required to protect your drinking water system

For those who are in compliance with backflow testing we say **thank you!**

If you have a commercial backflow device please note that these require **yearly** testing by a certified backflow testing company.

SWU Turn off valve

Get to Know Your Meter



Owners Valve

A Letter from the SWU Board President



We have just entered our 55th year of servicing our members. Our membership has grown from 100 members in 1968 to 10,916 today. We are steadfast in our goal, to provide the best quality service and product to our members, it is a challenge we don't take lightly.

Our area is continually growing, we have seen landmarks like the Golf Garden close to begin planning for the "Botanic" development. Likewise, "The Grove" at Seascape, is a new development in planning. We constantly assess our system for new projects like these, and proactively modify our water delivery and sewer collection systems, as needed, to stay ahead of the increased demand.

I would like to give special recognition to Nancy Kennedy on her recent retirement as office manager at South Walton utility, we wish her all the best. I would also like to recognize Robert Stygar for 35 years of employment with SWU, we appreciate his continued loyalty and support.

Many of our employees have long tenures with us. We currently have 13 employees with 15-35 years of employment with the SWUCI. We maintain a smaller number of dedicated employees at South Walton Utility, they are efficient in their duties and responsibilities for our members, and we appreciate them all.

South Walton Utility has received awards this year for our water quality and sewer processing system. Our system was awarded the FDEP Water system of the Year for the State of Florida for medium size water systems. In addition, we were awarded the FRWA Wastewater Treatment Plant of the year for the state of Florida. We are proud of all their accomplishments and say THANK YOU for a job well done!

Our board members are vested in our community and keeping the utility operating in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible. In this environment of short supplies, new regulations, and increased demand, we will always have your best interest in mind.

Thank you for allowing me to serve our community by being a part of the South Walton Utility organization.

Mike Richardson, President

2023 FDEP Medium Water Treatment Plant of the Year



FRWA Wastewater Plant of the Year

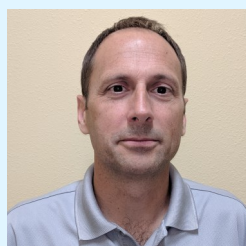


Keep your landscaping cut back 3 ft min away from fire hydrants to allow fire dept access during a fire

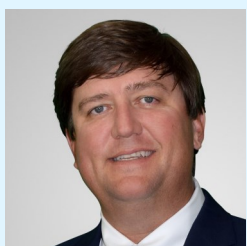
Meet your SWUCI Board of Directors:



Vice President
Dave Brown



Secretary
Steve Dixon



Treasurer
Dewayne Youngblood



Director
Dustin Terry



Director
Mike Abt



Director
David Smith



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.

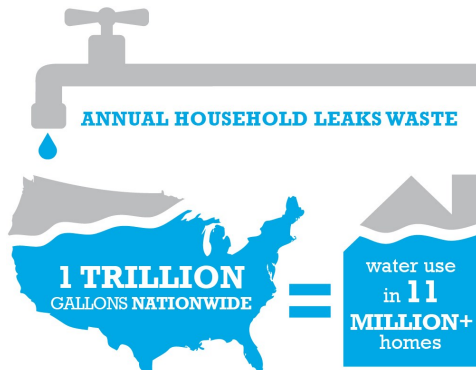
E-Billing & Electronic Funds Transfer

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

Please make sure we have your
current phone # and email
address on file.

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.