

# A Report to the Community 2018

# Board Members





Executive Management Team



**Teresa Worley** ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER -SUPPORT SERVICES Keisha Thorpe ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER -OPERATIONS

# WHO WE ARE

The Clayton County Water Authority (CCWA) was created by an Act of the Georgia General Assembly in 1955 to provide water and sewer services. Back then, we had only 460 customers and employed a staff of eight employees. We've grown to provide water, sewer, and stormwater services to more than 285,000 residents throughout Clayton County and its six cities through approximately 82,000 customer accounts. The Authority has five raw water reservoirs and can produced up to 42 million gallons per day of potable water and treat up to 38.4 million gallons of wastewater and stormwater infrastructure throughout the county and its cities.

Despite having limited surface or ground water supplies available, the Water Authority has developed a truly sustainable water supply through the utilization of treatment wetlands for the recycling of treated wastewater. During the second worst drought on record in 2007 when many utilities in north Georgia were in danger of running out of water, we were able to proclaim that "it's raining every day in Clayton County" because of the recycling of over 10 million gallons per day of reuse water.

The Clayton County Water Authority is governed by a Water Authority Board of Directors composed of seven members. Each board member serves on a part-time basis for a term of five years and may be reappointed for additional terms. Members of the Board are appointed by the Clayton County Board of Commissioners. In addition to the Board of Directors, there are approximately 380 employees, managers, supervisors, and staff from six primary departments, who carryout out the day-to-day mission of the Water Authority. This mission is to provide quality water and quality services to our community.

Mission, Vision and Core Values

# MissionVisionCore ValuesProviding Quality Water<br/>and Quality Services to Our<br/>CommunityUtilizing Innovation to Provide<br/>Industry-Leading Service for our<br/>Community• Customer & Community<br/>Focused • Excellence • Integrity •<br/>• Great Place to Work •

# LETTER FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER, H. BERNARD FRANKS

2018 was a year of changes and challenges. The retirement of General Manager P. Michael Thomas led to our Board of Directors selecting me to lead this award-winning authority. It is an honor and a privilege to have been chosen. Clayton County has always been my home, and the Clayton County Water Authority has also been my home for more than 20 years.

My first move as General Manager was to promote Teresa Worley to the position of Assistant General Manager — Support Services. She served as our Customer Accounts Director for nearly eight years and brings 25 years of progressive and diverse experience in management, customer service, and project management.

The next big change took place a few months later when our Assistant General Manager—Operations Jim Poff retired. This led to us hiring Keisha Thorpe. She brings more than 17 years of experience in water and wastewater treatment with hands on experience in distribution, collections, project management, asset management, technical support, construction and maintenance.

Operationally, we saw growth of our customer base, continued focus on infrastructure improvements, customer service enhancements and growth of our Small Local Business Program. We continue to be financially sound while maintaining some of the lowest rates in the metro area. Our staff earned several industry awards for outstanding performance. One designation we are particularly proud of is being named to the Georgia Water Coalition's Clean Water 13 Report for our efforts to return water to the Flint River. Read more about the project that earned us this designation on page 10.

Change brings challenges. I am proud of how our CCWA family weathered the changes in 2018. Sometimes we need to step back and focus our attention on getting back to the basics of what makes us an innovative, industry-leading utility. We can't do that without also being community focused. We may be Clayton County's one stop shop for water, sewer and stormwater services, but we never want to take that for granted. If you had the option of choosing CCWA as your service provider, we would want you to choose us.

We are proud to provide quality water and quality services to our community and thank you for your support. Together we make a difference!



H. Bernhard Franks, CCWA General Manager

### **Connect with Us**

WEBSITE WWW.ccwa.us

### **f** FACEBOOK:

/ClaytonCountyWater /NewmanWetlandsCenter /ccwaslbe

Clayton County Water Authority

### INSTAGRAM:

@Newman Wetlands Center @CCWA\_SLBE\_Biz

# AWARDS

### Georgia Association of Water Professionals Champion of Diversity Award | 2018

### Georgia Association of Water Professionals Water Production Plant Platinum Awards for 100 percent compliance | 2017

J.W. Smith Water Production Plant (9 years) Terry R. Hicks Water Production Plant (17 years) W.J. Hooper Water Production Plant (20 years)

### Georgia Association of Water Professionals Water Reclamation Facility Platinum Awards for 100 percent compliance | 2017

Northeast Water Reclamation Facility (9 years) W.B. Casey Water Resource Recovery Facility (13 years) Shoal Creek Water Reclamation Facility (21 years)

### Georgia Association of Water Professionals Laboratory Quality Assurance at a Municipal Wastewater Laboratory Award Serving Greater than 20 Million Gallons Per Day

W.B. Casey Water Resource Recovery Facility Wastewater Lab

Georgia Association of Water Professionals Collection System | Platinum Award

Georgia Association of Water Professionals Distribution System | Gold Award **Georgia Association of Water Professionals Wastewater Plant of the Year for the Advanced Treatment 6 – 9.9 Million Gallons per Day** Northeast Water Reclamation Facility

Water Environment Federation George W. Burke Safety Award Northeast Water Reclamation Facility

Georgia Association of Water Professionals Certificate of Achievement for Water Plant Operation Surface Water 15 Million Gallons per Day to 49.99 MGD

W.J. Hooper Water Production Plant

Georgia Association of Water Professionals Top Stormwater Operator Marcus McLester

Georgia Association of Water Professionals Golden Hydrant Society Distribution & Conveyance Manager Jeff Jones

### Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award

Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting



# OUR FOCUS ON OUR CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITY

### Fix a Leak Week

CCWA celebrates National Fix a Leak Week in March to remind customers the importance of finding and fixing leaks. Leaks waste water and can make your monthly water bill spike. The most common culprit is your toilet or dripping faucet. Even a small toilet leak can waste thousands of gallons of water. Visit ccwa.us/tips-on-leaks/ to learn useful tips on finding and fixing leaks.

### Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day

CCWA hosts Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day in April to give Clayton County residents the chance to drop off a wide variety of items we often have stored somewhere around the house that have a detrimental effect on our environment. Items include: household paints, pesticides & herbicides, automotive and household batteries, motor oil, transmission fluid, antifreeze, fluorescent bulbs, fire extinguishers, over-the-counter and prescription medications. For more information, visit ccwa.us/household-hazardous-waste-collection-day/.

PREVIOUS EVENT COLLECTIONS						
Items (pounds)	April 2014	April 2015	April 2016	April 2017	April 2018	
Latex Paint	34,400	27,300	20,400	30,800	29,600	
Oil Paint	5,000	3,400	29,900	25,000	27,400	
Motor Oil/Anti-Freeze/NonHaz	8,100	9,200	7,600	8,800	13,000	
Lights and Mercury	500	1,000	2,900	2,600	2,500	
Grease and Pharmaceuticals	100	300	1,500	800	1,500	
Car & Home Batteries	200	600	1,000	1,100	2,100	
Waste Generated(pounds)	57,000	52,800	92,500	100,500	112,300	
Vehicles Serviced (each)	212	424	503	470	470	

### National Drinking Water Week

CCWA celebrates National Drinking Water Week in May. An Open House is held at the Terry R. Hicks Water Production Plant to give customers a chance to take a behind the tap tour to learn how we produce reliable, safe drinking water. Along with tours, staff shares information on the value of tap water, Newman Wetlands Center, public recreation areas, and the importance of finding and fixing leaks. This event is great for scout groups, environmental clubs, students, families and anyone else who is interested in learning more about what goes on behind the tap. Learn more at ccwa.us/drinking-water-week/.



### Wetlands and Watershed Festival

CCWA hosts its Wetlands and Watershed Festival at the Newman Wetlands Center in October to give visitors a chance to enjoy nature while learning about our environment in a fun way. The festival features a wealth of activities for all ages to enjoy, including environmental exhibits and activities, guided trail hikes, live animal exhibits, children's nature crafts, wetlands scavenger hunt...and more. Many watershed and environmental groups from Georgia and the southeast also participate in the festival. Learn more at ccwa.us/wetlands-watershed-festival/.

### **Rivers Alive**

CCWA hosts an annual Rivers Alive Stream Cleanup in October so community volunteers can help clean trash and debris from a local waterway. This event is part of the statewide Rivers Alive volunteer cleanup event that targets all waterways in the state of Georgia, including streams, rivers, lakes, beaches, and wetlands. The statewide efforts are sponsored by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division's Georgia Adopt-A-Stream Program and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Keep Georgia Beautiful Program. Learn more at ccwa.us/rivers-alive/.

2013 2014 171 volunteers 1 ton collected

230 volunteers 1.2 tons collected 2015
2015
2.93 tons collected
2016
271 volunteers
2.5 tons collected

2017 Cance incler 2018 114 vc 1,260

Canceled due to inclement weather 114 volunteers 1,260 lbs. collected

### Affordability

CCWA offers Affordability Programs to help customers who find themselves facing a financial hardship. Our Hardship Assistance Program and Senior Citizen Discount Programs are funded from cell tower revenue and our alliance partnership with Gas South. Our Hardship Assistance Program provides qualified customers up to \$200 in assistance during a 12 month period. Our Senior Citizen Discount Program provides qualified seniors 65 and older with up to a \$5 discount on their monthly bill (\$2.50 off water and \$2.50 off sewer). Both programs are administered by Clayton County Community Services Authority. Learn more at ccwa.us/affordability-programs/.

### Tap on the Go

As water professionals, we want our customer to trust that their tap water is safe. Our Tap on the Go team participates in community events so we can educate customers about their tap water and what goes on behind the scenes to produce reliable, safe drinking water. If you see our big blue water tank, stop by and say hello! Learn more at ccwa.us/tap-on-the-go/.



# CCWA PILOTS UNIDIRECTIONAL FLUSHING PROGRAM TO PROVIDE BETTER QUALITY WATER

Unidirectional Flushing is a standard industry maintenance practice used to scour, clean, and improve the capacity of our water distribution system. Unidirectional refers to the fact that during the cleaning, water is only flowing in one direction. This type of maintenance helps us continue to provide our high-quality drinking water to our customers.

In fall 2018, CCWA piloted a UDF Program cleaning 500,000 linear feet in Morrow and Rex between I-75 and I-675. This area was selected based on the history of water quality related complaints. The pilot was a team effort involving coordinating activities by six groups across CCWA, as well as assistance from Jacobs Engineering.

CCWA's water distribution system is set up in a grid-like pattern which allows water to be fed from several directions at the same time. When performing unidirectional flushing, CCWA distribution crews open and close predetermined valves to isolate a specific section of water main. They then open a specific fire hydrant to draw water through and flush the now-isolated section of water main. The speed of the water flowing through the isolated section of main is greatly increased, producing a scouring effect.

The scouring effect removes any potential sediment buildup and cleans the water main.

Flushing crews flushed the pipes for a minimum time based on a hydraulic model, but also extended the flushing time if needed, until the water leaving the hydrant was clear. Staff collected water quality samples from each hydrant before and after each flushing event took place.

The pilot program was a success. Our crew was able to give pipes a high-power cleaning without a major disruption to customers. This improves the quality of the water delivered to our customers. CCWA plans to continue more UDF in the northeast portion of the county in 2019.



# BENEFITS OF UDF FOR WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS\*

Bringing better quality water into the system through flushing provides many operational and quality benefits for customers, such as:

- Maintaining integrity of pipe interior
- Sediment removal
- Consistent water quality from treatment plant to tap (taste, color, odor)

\*American Water Works Association Research Foundation

# TACKLING WATER ISSUES AT THE SOURCE

Since CCWA relies on surface water as its source for drinking water, water quality within those sources on occasions may experience issues such as taste and odor. CCWA is investing in a variety of ways to prevent and even predict potential taste and odor issues that may develop in our drinking water reservoirs.

We have been looking at ways to improve our reservoir management system, and continue to make process changes to proactively address any taste and odor issues. These efforts include:

- Conducting water quality testing to better understand existing conditions of our water supply
- Evaluating the treatment technology at our Hooper and Hicks Water Production Plants (WPPs)
- Continued year-round water sampling at the Hooper Reservoir
- Plant employees are responsible for assessing the taste and odor of the water daily. If a problem is detected, we reach out to our Taste and Odor Panel to pinpoint issues

Our "Super Sniffers" test the drinking water being produced daily. This testing helps determine if a taste and odor issue is an isolated incident or something more widespread, and initializes the plan CCWA will follow to address it.

Making changes at the source in an effort to prevent algae blooms is another way CCWA is meeting the challenge of preventing taste and odor issues. New oxygenation and aeration systems will be installed at the reservoirs in early 2019. The systems include a porous flexible pipeline that runs along the bottom of the reservoir to the deepest point. The pipe has thousands of pinholes so pure oxygen or air can be bubbled out of the pipe and into the water. If you take a visit the reservoir, you may even see some of the bubbles on the surface.

This extra boost of air or oxygen helps maintain the reservoir's ecosystem by preventing the release of nutrients into the water. The system is designed to "starve" out the specific type of algae that causes taste and odor issues. By managing and preventing these challenges at the source, the result for customers is great tasting, high quality water produced as part of our award-winning service.

# W.B. CASEY WRRF POLISHING PLANT TO RESTORE FLOWS TO THE FLINT RIVER



A new improvement project under construction at the W.B Casey Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) will help restore water flows to the Flint River for the first time in more than 40 years starting in 2020 and it's already getting a lot of attention. In 2018, the Georgia Water Coalition featured CCWA as a Clean Water Hero on its state wide Clean 13 list. While the \$15 million system won't be operational until 2020, the project has the potential to solve challenges facing Clayton County, the Flint River, and downstream communities that rely on it.

CCWA is building a new discharge outfall from the W.B Casey WRRF to the Flint River and a "polishing" plant. The polishing plant will remove additional phosphorous to meet more stringent state environmental requirements for direct discharge into a river. Phosphorous is a natural element found in plants and animals. It's also a common ingredient in fertilizer. Excess nutrients, such as phosphorous, can lead to an algae bloom. This can impact water quality by reducing oxygen levels in rivers and streams and overwhelm aquatic life.

Reduced water flows also disrupt the balance of the Flint's ecosystem making it difficult for fish and other creatures to survive. By returning up to 6.6 million gallons per day (MGD) to the river, the Casey WRRF project will improve the Flint's overall health for Clayton County and numerous south metro communities.

The benefits go beyond nutrient removal and increased Flint River flows. The W.B. Casey WRRF improvements also help CCWA get ahead of expected growth in the area by increasing the total treatment capacity at the WRRF. The discharge to the Flint will support sustainable growth and help reduce the interbasin transfer to the Ocmulgee River basin.

CCWA recognized the need for expanded treatment capacity and looked at various options on how to manage the need based on growth. The Flint and its creeks also feed into the reservoirs that serve as CCWA's water supply. Finding a sustainable balance is a key reason CCWA partnered with American Rivers, Flint Riverkeeper, and other utilities in 2013 when the Upper Flint River Working Group was first convened.

The improvements at the W.B. Casey WRRF position Clayton County for future growth, maintain its role as a good upstream neighbor, restore Flint River flows, and continue to showcase CCWA's leadership by putting action behind its mission statement of providing quality water and quality services to the community.



## NEW CUSTOMER INFORMATION SYSTEM ON THE WAY

CCWA started an 18-month implementation of a new \$4.4 million customer information system in the fall of 2018. This is the system we use for everything involving customers including customer service, billing, service requests, cash receipts and meter tracking. CCWA's current system has had significant performance issues and is difficult to integrate with other applications.

The new system, Cayenta, will provide an improved customer experience including:

- starting and stopping service online
- payment reminders
- group billing for customers with multiple accounts

Along with enhancements to the customer experience, staff will also see improvements like having the ability to route and auto-dispatch service orders and a better workflow. This will help our staff work more efficiently, which in turns means a better response for customers.

# CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY PROVIDES FEEDBACK

Customer and Community Focused is one of CCWA's Core Values. CCWA began conducting customer satisfaction surveys in 2014 to better understand customer needs and perceptions. Surveys are conducted every two years. CCWA contracted with Research America in 2018 to conduct the most recent survey to gather feedback regarding residential customers' overall satisfaction with CCWA as well as their perceptions around water quality, billing, communications and various programs offered by CCWA.

Research America surveyed over 400 CCWA customers by phone in September and October of 2018. This number provides the statistical percentage needed to give +/-4.8% margin of error or 95% confidence level.

The survey showed that 88% of CCWA customers gave a satisfactory rating with regards to overall customer satisfaction. This is a significant increase with the overall satisfaction score of 83% in the 2016 survey. Results are used to show staff areas that need review to determine if changes are needed.



### 2018 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

By charging customers rates and fees sufficient to cover the cost of the services provided, CCWA operates its two enterprise funds like a typical business without the support of tax dollars.

The Water and Sewer Fund has an annual budget of \$101.8 million and utilizes \$498 million of infrastructure to provide water and sewer services to more than 82,800 customers. The Stormwater Fund has an annual budget of \$9.9 million and maintains \$47 million of stormwater infrastructure for over 81,500 customers.

In addition, the revenue bonds that have been issued by the CCWA have been assigned an "AA+" (double A plus) bond rating by the major rating agencies. Bonds rated "AA+" are high quality and further support the Authority's sound financial position as a public water utility. CCWA is able to keep its rates among the lowest in the metro area (see chart).

### **Average Area Water and Sewer Rates**



# TOILET REBATE PROGRAMS HELP SAVE WATER AND MONEY

Clayton County Water Authority offers toilet rebate programs for residential customers and multi-family properties who qualify. For more details on these programs, visit us at <u>ccwa.us</u>.

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS	MULTI-FAMILY CUSTOMERS		
<ul> <li>Residential customers who own or rent a single-family residential home that was built in 1993 or earlier and have older, water-wasting toilets (3.5-eight gallons per flush) are eligible for the program.</li> <li>The customer's account must be in good standing.</li> <li>The rebate is only valid for toilets purchased after September 28, 2007.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Apartments, townhome communities and condominiums built before 1994 and are master metered are eligible for the program.</li> <li>Properties must install a minimum of 30 toilets.</li> <li>Eligible customers receive account credits of \$50 for high-efficiency toilets (HET) or \$75 credits for ultra-high energy efficient toilets (UHET).</li> </ul>		

# SMALL LOCAL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM

As part of our commitment to the business community, CCWA actively seeks to do business with firms that are certified as small local businesses in Clayton County and the surrounding 10 counties which include Cherokee, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Rockdale, and Spalding through its Small Local Business Program (SLBE).

During calendar year 2018, CCWA's SLBE Program saw an explosion of growth throughout the program beginning with adding 166 small businesses to its list of certified SLBEs increasing that list to a total of 288 certified firms. CCWA also spent more than \$11.8 million with 37 of the 288 certified firms.



CCWA's SLBE program hosts regular informational workshops and business development workshops on a variety of topics of interest to small businesses. Attendance and participation at the workshops were up 30% during calendar year 2018. Additionally, CCWA also hosts a bi-annual Small Business Expo and an annual Social Business Mixer in November. By far, 2018 was a prosperous year for the SLBE Program; however, there is more to accomplish. CCWA continues to seek out innovative ways to enhance its SLBE Program and welcomes you to become a part of our continued growth.

To learn more about CCWA procurement opportunities and our Small Local Business Enterprise program, visit ccwa.us/smalllocal-business-program/.





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# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – CCWA AMBASSADORS – 2018 HIGHLIGHTS

CCWA employees are passionately involved in our community. As CCWA Ambassadors, they participate in outreach activities through CCWA signature events, plant tours, school events and community events. Ambassadors come from all departments and levels of staff within CCWA. Most that you see at events are volunteering their time.

During 2018, 146 Ambassadors participated in 54 events reaching more than 18,079 members of our community! The next time you see our team at an event, we hope you will stop by and say hello.

# CCWA'S COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

One of CCWA's strongest community partnerships is with the Clayton County Public School System. The partnership includes:

- Participating in Career Day events at local schools
- Providing judges for the Clayton County Regional Science and Engineering Fair
- Recognizing outstanding water-related science fair projects through our Water Environment Research Awards
- Providing Science teachers hands-on tours of water and wastewater treatment facilities during the summer break
- Introducing students to what goes on behind the tap through tours of water and wastewater facilities
- Introducing students to the importance of protecting wetlands and watershed through tours of our Newman Wetlands Center

# INAUGURAL MODEL WATER TOWER COMPETITION

CCWA hosted its first Model Water Tower Competition at Rex Mill Middle School in November 2018. The Georgia Association of Water Professionals and the Georgia Section of the American Water Works Association started the competition several years ago. The purpose is to provide information to young students on water resource engineering, infrastructure, water treatment and conservation in hope that some will become future water professionals. The mission statement for the competition is: "From Today's Youth Come Tomorrow's Leaders – Let's Lead Some To The Water Profession."

More than 80 students formed 22 teams to design and build water towers. The day of the competition, teams took their towers through several test stations (materials, dimensions, hydraulics) and an interview panel. Scoring then determined the top three teams.

### 1st Place - Water Kids 2nd Place - Team Oreo 3rd Place - Mighty Morphin Flower Arrangers

CCWA's team of Ambassadors provided students the chance to interact with water professionals in several different fields of work within the water industry. Ambassadors had a great time interacting with the students and seeing their creative designs. Following the competition, students and their families were invited to the Clayton County Water Authority Board of Directors December Board Meeting for recognition. Each team explained the concept behind their tower and what they learned from the experience. Both CCWA and CCPS are excited about this new competition and look forward to the 2019 entries.





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