

Annual Community Report

2023





Letter from the CEO H. BERNARD FRANKS

“Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; **working together is success.**”

Clayton County Water Authority (CCWA) is proud to be a pillar of the community playing a critical role in public health. We remain an award-winning utility even during times of distress.

CCWA continues to face unique challenges in our industry. The recent challenges we are facing are regulatory related. We have been proactive regarding the lead and copper program along with testing for PFAS. We are investing in the necessary technology for treatment and or replacement of our most critical infrastructure.

Along with providing quality water and quality services, we strive to support our small and minority-owned businesses through our Small Local Business Enterprise Program. We assist our customers in need with our “Care, Connect, and Conserve” Affordability Programs. With the aid of our Customer Information System (CIS) program, we are working diligently to provide more self-service opportunities for our customers.

Servant Leadership is the key to remaining selfless and giving until the mission is complete. We continue to develop our leaders to help them grow to their fullest potential. This internal contribution helps to establish and maintain succession planning to insure our future. We serve with professionalism while displaying the following pillars of our organization.

- to continue as industry leaders
- by utilizing innovation
- by focusing on our customers and community

Customer & Community Focused is one of our core values. This core value is at the heart of connecting with customers and building their trust. We are proud of our CCWA Ambassadors who participate in outreach and education opportunities throughout the year through facility tours, school events, signature events and community events. As you will see in this report, we celebrated a record breaking 2023 with 150 Ambassadors participating in more than 66 events reaching 36,159 people. Forty percent of these Ambassadors volunteered on their own time, usually on Saturdays. This is a new record with Ambassadors reaching almost 10,000 more than they did in 2022!

We are excited and hopeful as we enter 2024.



Mission

Providing quality water and quality services to our community



Vision

Utilizing Innovation to Provide Industry-Leading Service for Our Community



Core Values

Customer & Community Focused Excellence, Integrity, Great Placeto Work

Who We Are

The Clayton County Water Authority (CCWA) proudly provides water, sewer and stormwater services to a population of close to 300,000 residents throughout Clayton County and its six cities. Today's authority is built on a solid foundation that was started in 1955 and laid by staff and board members with a drive for finding innovative ways to push through barriers. This drive continues today as we excel even during these challenge times.

There are approximately 400 water professionals that work to carry out the day-to-day mission of providing quality water and quality services to our community. CCWA's Board of Directors is composed of seven members appointed by the Clayton County Board of Commissioners. Each board member serves on a part-time basis for a term of five years and may be reappointed for additional terms.

We have five raw water reservoirs and can produce up to 42 million gallons per day of potable water and treat up to 39.4 million gallons of wastewater every day. Despite having limited surface or ground water supplies available, we have developed a truly sustainable water supply through the utilization of constructed treatment wetlands for the recycling of treated wastewater. This innovative treatment process allows us to return more than 14 million gallons per day of reuse water. In 2021, we started adding flows back to the Flint River through our

new W.B Casey Water Resource Recovery Facility Polishing Plant, which helps improve the overall health of the river and helps our neighbors downstream.

Board members, management and staff are committed to being good fiscal stewards allowing CCWA to remain financially strong through 2023. CCWA charges rates and fees based on what is needed to cover the cost of the services it provides its customer base and for maintenance of its assets. Its two enterprise funds operate like a typical business without receiving any tax dollars.

The Water and Sewer Fund has an annual budget of \$126.4 million with net capital assets (infrastructure) valued at \$592.3 million to provide water and sewer services. Staff maintains approximately 1,500 miles of water distribution pipes and 1,400 miles of sewer conveyance pipes. As many miles of pipe reach the end of their life span, CCWA is focusing on replacing or rehabilitating this critical underground infrastructure. The Stormwater Fund has an annual budget of \$10.7 million with net capital assets (infrastructure) valued of \$63.4 million. Staff maintains 500 miles of stormwater pipe. CCWA has a bond rating of Aa2 from Moody's. The Authority has no outstanding revenue bonds as the remaining 2012 series matured on May 1, 2023.

Clayton County Water Authority Board of Directors for 2023



Dr. Cephus Jackson,
Chair



Marie Barber,
Vice Chair



P. Michael Thomas,
Secretary / Treasurer



Dr. John Chafin,
Board Member



Rodney Givens,
Board Member



Robin Malone,
Board Member



Emma Godbee,
Board Member

Clayton County Water Authority Executive Team



H. Bernard Franks,
Chief Executive
Officer



Teresa Worley,
Chief Administrative
Officer



Keisha Thorpe,
Chief Operations
Officer



More than \$70 million Invested in Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure

CCWA continues to focus on repairing and replacing infrastructure using 10-year Strategic Master Plans to set priorities for meeting the community's needs in a cost-effective way. CCWA's sanitary sewer system is a big area of focus since the infrastructure dates back 50-60 years. Smaller sewer pipes that serve neighborhoods and business districts feed into larger sewer outfalls which then carry the wastewater to CCWA's water reclamation facilities. The sewer outfalls range in size from 18 inches to 60 inches and are being replaced with advanced corrosion resistant materials. These projects are funded through CCWA's capital budget and Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) loans. The following are a few of the sewer outfalls being worked on.

Flint River Outfall

The Flint River Outfall is 10 miles long and runs from Roberts Road to Upper Riverdale Road to Georgia Highway 85. The outfall has been replaced with five phases of work. The last phase of work on the Outfall was completed in November 2023. The Flint River Outfall was replaced at a cost of \$37.02 million.

Flint River East Outfall

The Flint River East Outfall is 6.3 miles long and runs from north of Georgia Highway 138 to Valley Hill Road and across Upper Riverdale Road and ends at Lees Mill Road at Ashmore Drive. The outfall is being replaced in three phases of work. Phase 1 is 1.8 miles long and runs from Georgia Highway 138 to just north of Valley Hill Road and was completed in November 2021 at a cost of \$6.1 million. Phase 2 runs from just north of Valley Hill Road to Upper Riverdale Road and design work started in January 2024.

Jesters Creek Outfall

The Jesters Creek Outfall is 2.7 miles long and runs from Museum Circle to Haley Drive to Battle Creek Road and crosses Mt. Zion Road and ends near Interstate 75. The outfall is being replaced in five phases of work. Phase 4 ended at Nottingham Drive and was completed in January 2022. So far, 2.1 miles of the outfall has been replaced at a cost of \$5.62 million. Phase 5 is being planned and design should start in 2025.

Jesters Creek East Outfall

The Jesters Creek East Outfall is 3.7 miles long and runs from Georgia Highway 138 to Tara Boulevard to Battle Creek Road and crosses Mt. Zion Road and ends near Interstate 75. The outfall has been replaced with two phases of work. The last phase of work on the Outfall was completed in January 2024. The Jesters Creek East Outfall was replaced at a cost of \$17.17 million.



Rum Creek Outfall

The Rum Creek Outfall is 1.2 miles long and runs from Roberts Road and crosses Georgia Highway 54 to Tara Boulevard. The outfall is being replaced in three phases of work. Work through Phases 1 and 2 is 0.7 miles long and was completed in May 2021 at a cost of \$1.51 million.

Riverdale Outfall

The Riverdale Outfall is 1.2 miles long and runs from Valley Hill Rd past Easy Street to Brookview Drive. Work to replace the Outfall started in November 2023 and should be completed in September 2024.

Conley Creek Outfall

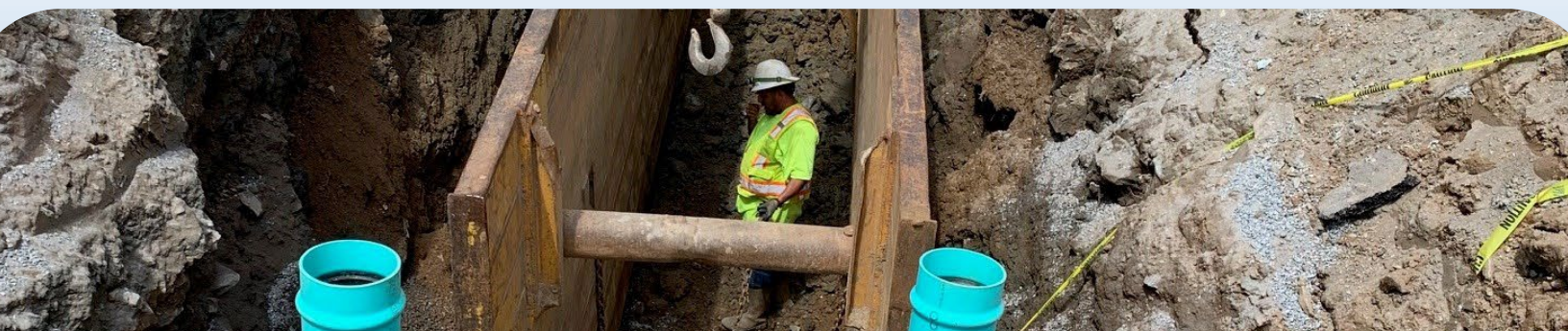
The Conley Creek Outfall is 2.4 miles long and runs from Dekalb County to Conley Drive and crosses Rock Cut Road and ends just north of Simpson Road. The outfall is being replaced in five phases. Work through Phases 1, 2 and 3 is 1.3 miles long and was completed in January 2024 at a cost of \$2.75 million.

Camp Creek Outfall

Camp Creek Outfall is 10 miles long and runs from Thomas Road near Georgia Highway 54 and crosses Georgia Highway 85 to Georgia Highway 138 to Castlegate Drive. The outfall is being replaced with five phases of work. The first phase of work will extend from Thomas Road to Georgia Highway 85 and design work started in January 2024.

Panther Creek Outfall

Panther Creek Outfall is 4.7 miles long and runs east of Georgia Highway 42 in Henry County to Charles Drive. The outfall is being replaced with three phases of work. The first phase of work will start near Georgia Highway 42 and the project is in the planning stages.





Huie Nature Preserve Foundation Secures Grants for Group Camping and Archery Facilities

The vision for the Huie Nature Preserve is to create a recreational and educational amenity unlike anything in the metro Atlanta region. This vision builds on Clayton County Water Authority's existing community assets, the Melvin L. Newman Wetlands Center, Shamrock/Blalock Reservoirs, and Shamrock Community Use Building.

Plans involve developing some of the 4,000 acres of land that CCWA previously used for spray irrigation. Phase One features 625 acres on the south side of Freeman Road in Jonesboro that will include:

- 1 A group camping zone
- 2 A competition level archery range with seven station archery trail
- 3 Two competition level disc golf courses
- 4 Outdoor classrooms and creative play area
- 5 Multi-use open space field
- 6 An extensive hiking trail network that connects each of the proposed facilities

The Huie Nature Preserve Foundation, Inc. secured several grants in 2023 for the group camping and archery facilities:

- 1 Awarded Georgia 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Grant – \$160,000 used to construct a small green infrastructure (GI) parking lot at CCWA's Natural Treatment System Administration Building that will become the entrance to the preserve.
- 2 Awarded Georgia Department of Natural Resources Archery Grant - **\$575,000**
- 3 Awarded Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Grant – \$3 million with matches including:
 - Clayton County - **\$35,000**
 - Clayton County Public Schools - **\$98,000**
- 4 Awarded Georgia 319(h) Grant - \$375,000 to remove invasive species and plant native species on three acres along the planned trail between archery and campground sites.

Construction for the group camping and archery facilities is slated to begin in late-2024.

Huie Nature Preserve Foundation Board of Directors

P. Michael Thomas Board Chair	Teresa Worley Board Member
Emma Godbee Vice Chair	Detrick Stanford Board Member
Marie Barber Board Member	Janetta Greenwood Board Member
H. Bernard Franks Board Member	Tameaka McKinney Board Member

The Huie Nature Preserve Foundation, Inc. is a 501c3 nonprofit separate from CCWA's water / sewer / stormwater utility. All public and private donations to help fund the projects are tax deductible. To learn how you can support this project, visit: <https://huienature.org>

Huie Nature Preserve Master Plan

Phase One





Newman Wetlands Center was awarded \$50,000 in grant funds from the Clayton County Tourism Authority to continue NWC's efforts to enhance guest experiences through art, access, and fun.

Funds from 2022 – 2023 Grant:

With funding from the Clayton County Tourism Authority, Newman Wetlands Center enhanced how we connect with community members in multiple ways. We purchased a large full-color road sign that invites guests to “Come explore with us.” Since installation, numerous visitors have commented that the new sign caught their attention and brought them here after years of driving by without stopping. We also built and installed a new welcome kiosk featuring a brand-new map, interpretive panels, and more. The signage is long-lasting, high quality, and beautiful. The biggest portion of grant funds were used to create Marsh Memoirs, a multi-media hiking experience that integrated audio stories into the free Newman Wetlands Center app. Guests can choose between six stories, all written and performed by Georgia artists and loosely based on NWC’s cultural and natural histories. Stories range from the adventure of a water drop through the water cycle at NWC, a guided tour led by Water, and a historical fiction piece based on Camp J. K. Orr. These stories can ONLY be heard here at NWC.

Funds from 2023 – 2024 Grant:

The 2023 Wetlands and Watershed Festival was our most successful festival in a decade. With grant funds from the Clayton County Tourism Authority, we expanded our festival to include free family portraits, a Story Walk with seven storytellers along Boardwalk Trail, ASL interpreters, and more. We successfully reached 380 community members and provided an incredible learning experience centered on water and conservation to each of them.

Awards Earned in 2023



GAWP Education Program of Excellence Award



GAWP Best Operated Water Plant of the Year Award – Surface Water 15 to 24.99 MGD – Hooper Water Filtration Plant



GAWP Biosolids/Residuals Program of Excellence Award – Small Operating System – less than 5 Dry Ton – Northeast Water Reclamation Facility



Georgia Public Risk Managers Association (GA PRIMA) Program of the Year Award



GAWP Jack C. Dozier Emerging Leader Award – Sr. Communications Specialist Raven Reese



Atlanta Business Chronicle 2023 Healthiest Employers



Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award (16 Years) with Special Recognition for Long Range Financial Plans

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Awards Earned in 2023



GAWP Laboratory Quality Assurance Gold Award
– Municipal Wastewater Lab Serving Greater than 20 Million Gallons Per Day (MGD) – W.B. Casey Water Resource Recovery Lab (4 Years)



GAWP Collection System Excellence
Platinum Award (9 Years)



Georgia Local Government
Personnel Association (GLGPA)
Professional Achievement Award
– Chief Human Resources Officer
Anquilla Henderson



GAWP Consumer Confidence Report
Award (Annual Water Quality Report) –
Large Surface Water Systems



GAWP Distribution System Excellence
Platinum Award (5 Years)



Georgia Society for Human Resources 2023
HR Trailblazer Award - Chief Human
Resources Officer Anquilla Henderson



Finalist
**Green Cross
for Safety**
an nsc award

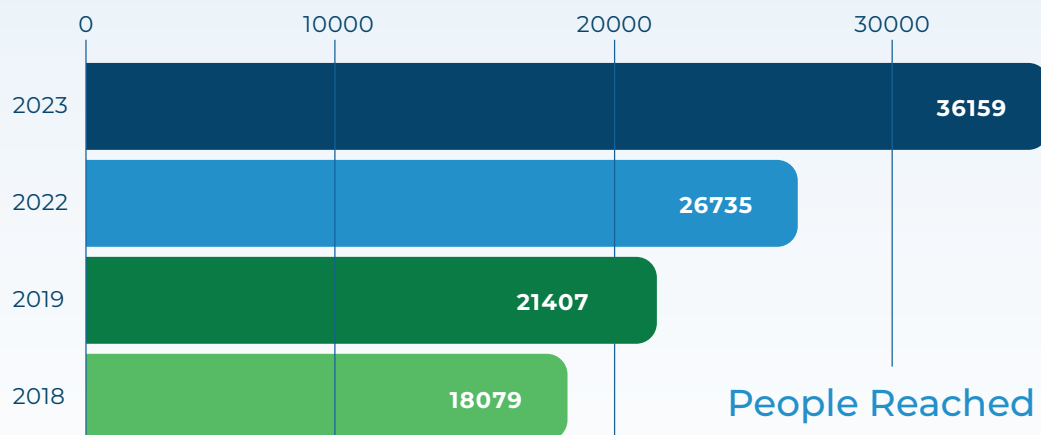
Note: GAWP – Georgia Association of Water Professionals

2023 Public Education & Community Outreach Recap

Clayton County Water Authority is committed to being customer and community focused. Our CCWA Ambassadors are dedicated to engaging with our community through outreach and public education. In 2023, our Ambassadors were able to reach approximately 36,159 members of our community in total. This is almost 10,000 more people than we reached in 2022 and DOUBLE the amount we reached in 2018. For more information on our Community Outreach Initiatives, visit our website at www.ccwa.us/communityoutreach or email our Communications & Community Relations Team at CCWA_CommunityRelations@ccwa.us.

ANNUAL REACH COMPARISON

Note: CCWA temporarily halted all community outreach in 2020 & 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Community Partnerships

Clayton County Public Schools Science Fair

CCWA recognizes Clayton County Public Schools Students for outstanding water-related science fair projects. All three students were recognized by the CCWA Board of Directors during its Board Meeting on May 4, 2023.

Aaliyah Josue and Makayla Pena, 4th grade students from McGarrah Elementary School, were recognized for their project entitled, "Why is Water Filtration Important?" where they learned about a major process in water treatment.

Kyleigh Conley, a 10th grade student from Elite Scholars Academy was recognized for her project entitled, "The Effects of Water Locations on Dissolved Oxygen Levels" in which she tested bodies of water in a constructed wetland and a nature preserve.

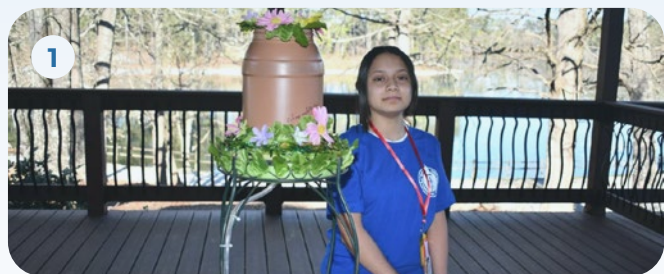


Model Water Tower Competition

"From Today's Youth Come Tomorrow's Leaders – Let's Lead Some To The Water Profession."

The fifth annual competition was held at our Shamrock Community Use Building. On March 15, 2023 CCWA hosted 28 sixth graders from ten CCPS middle schools including Rex Mill Middle School, Babb Middle School, Mundy's Mill Middle School, M.D. Roberts Middle School, Pointe South Middle School, Kendrick Middle School, Adamson Middle School, Elite Scholars Academy, Eddie White Academy and Jonesboro Middle School.

Students were taken through several testing stations (materials, dimensions, hydraulics) and subject judging. Based on the scores provided by the judges and data from each testing station, we determined the top three. Several superlative awards were also given. CCWA is proud of the efforts made by all of the competition's participants.



The winners of the 2023 Competition were:

1 **1st Place** – Fatima Castillo, Babb Middle School

2 **2nd Place** – Corey Andrew, Elite Scholars Academy

3 **3rd Place** – Valentina Carrizo and Layla Miles, Adamson Middle School

4 **Best Engineering Design Award** – Natalie Torres and Victoria Zelaya, Jonesboro Middle School

5 **Structural Excellence Award** – Joslyn McKee and Destiny Woods, Eddie White Academy

6 **Outstanding Presentation/Judge's Choice Award** – Madison Bowling and Valeria Arroyo, Kendrick Middle School

Tap on the Go Team & Community Events

Tap on the Go Team

Our Tap on the Go team was created to build our community's trust. They participate 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/TOTG



Signature Events

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/collectionday



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/.



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/.



Wetlands & Watershed Festival

CCWA hosts its Wetlands and Watershed Festival at the Newman Wetlands Center in November 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 newmanwetlandscenter.com/wetlandsfest





The culmination of **CCWA's Small Local Business Enterprise Program** in 2023 marked the certification of 112 SLBE Firms, with a total expenditure of **\$13,829,905** distributed among 35 SLBE Firms. This financial commitment represents 31% of CCWA's SLBE Certified Firms. The culminating event, the highly anticipated SLBE Annual Mixer in November, served as a platform for celebrating SLBE Firms. It provided an opportunity for networking with CCWA's Leadership, Engineering Consultants, and Prime Contractors.

A notable highlight was the graduation of Lakeshore Engineering from its previous status as a CCWA SLBE Certified Firm to the esteemed position of a Prime Contractor. Furthermore, CCWA acknowledged Hazen & Sawyer for their commendable use of SLBE Firms during their 5-year Master Service Agreement. In collaboration with Jacobs, the second MSA On-Demand Engineering Consultant, Hazen & Sawyer subcontracted 15% of their earnings from CCWA Task Orders to CCWA SLBE Certified Firms.

The success of CCWA's SLBE Program is attributed to the collective efforts of Business Development Workshop Speakers, active participation of SLBE Certified Firms in

solicitations and workshops, and the vibrant atmosphere of the Annual Mixer. The program thrives when our Certified SLBE Firms achieve success, and we take pride in the economic opportunities realized by 31% of our certified SLBEs, as well as the invaluable networking and business development experienced by all certified CCWA SLBE Firms.

Looking ahead to 2024, CCWA aims to continue facilitating opportunities for business development, solicitation prospects, and networking for local small businesses. We remain committed to fostering the growth and success of our SLBE community.

For inquiries or to become a part of CCWA's SLBE experience, kindly reach out to us at ccwa_slbe_program@ccwa.us. We look forward to connecting with you and exploring potential collaborations within our SLBE community. Thank you for your interest in CCWA's Small Local Business Enterprise Program.



CCWA Seeks to Enhance Customer Experience by Opening New Self Service Kiosk

In April of 2023, CCWA had the grand opening of its first self-service payment kiosk. Features for the kiosks include:

- 24/7 availability for customers that need to pay outside of business hours
- English and Spanish language availability (Vietnamese coming soon)
- Cash, Check & Credit payment option with no service fees

We look forward to further improvements to our customer experience in 2024.



Affordability Programs Provide More than \$68,000 in Assistance to Customers

Clayton County Water Authority funds its Affordability Programs (Hardship Assistance and Low-Income Discount) from cell tower revenue and its alliance partnership with Gas South. Both programs are administered by the Clayton County Community Services Authority.

Hardship Assistance was created in late 2006 and has expanded as funding sources grew over the years. CCWA's

Low-Income Discount Program allows all customers under 150% of the federal poverty level guidelines to receive monthly discount up to \$5.00 on their water and sewer bill (\$2.50 off water and \$2.50 off sewer).

In 2023, CCWA's Affordability Programs were able to provide more than \$68,000 in assistance to 747 customers.

Program	Number of Customers Assisted	Assistance Provided to Customers
Hardship Assistance	207	\$33,133
Low-Income Discount	495	\$28,727
Salvation Army Assistance	45	\$7,113
Totals	747	\$68,973

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) Provides Close to \$602,000 in Assistance

In addition to CCWA's existing Affordability Programs, CCWA and Clayton County Community Services Authority, Inc. partnered to bring the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) to Clayton County residents. LIHWAP is a federal program that helps low-income households pay for drinking water and wastewater for their homes. Funding is provided through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

LIHWAP assists low-income households with their water bills and any associated fees. Water assistance is provided through this program once per calendar year. Assistance is based on the client's gross income and household size. Priority target groups include those whose bills are past due, age 60 or over, and/or persons with a disability, and/or at least with one child under 5 (five) years of age in the home. This program was funded through August 2023. The program provided a total of \$601,034 in assistance to 1,371 CCWA customers in 2023.

Learn more about CCWA's Affordability Programs at:
<https://www.ccwa.us/affordability-programs/>

