

The little utility that could...win statewide recognition

PCWASA receives industry award for system excellence

Just because a utility is small doesn't mean it's not good. That is the sentiment of officials from the Peachtree City Water and Sewerage Authority (PCWASA), as the utility is operating a system currently that has been rated among the best in Georgia.

During its yearend Fall Conference in Athens, the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP) honored PCWASA with the industry's Collection System Silver Award, for achieving a score of 94.9 on its annual system evaluation and audit for 2015. Silver Awards recognize sewer systems in the state that have achieved a quantitative score between 90 and 94.9 on an intense peer review by industry judges of all aspects of wastewater collection and conveyance.



GAWP President Bill Ziebertz (far right) presents the Collection System Silver Award to (left to right) Chris Crittendon, PCWASA Division Manager of Collection and Conveyance, Keisha Lisbon Thorpe, PCWASA Division Manager of Technical Services, and Stephen Hogan, PCWASA General Manager.

With its score of 94.9, PCWASA was just one-tenth of a point away from the GAWP Gold Award. PCWASA was competing for

this statewide recognition against much larger municipal systems, including those utilities with both water and sewer operations.

"Our community and system may be smaller than those who received similar recognition by GAWP, but we are no less committed as a utility to providing excellent sewer services for our customers," says Stephen Hogan, PCWASA General Manager. "We are pleased to have this statewide recognition for operating above the industry standards and excelling in sewer collection and treatment as one of the best systems in Georgia," says Hogan.

The GAWP Collection System Awards are based on an overall grade disbursement that includes 15% for the quality of the utility's Management Program, 40% for the assessment of its Maintenance Program, 20% for the evaluation of Operations, and the remaining 25% for its handling of Capacity.

Manhole rehabilitation an investment in system upgrades

This spring, PCWASA crews are expected to complete work on the rehabilitation of more than 170 manholes throughout its system that were in poor or failing condition. This manhole rehabilitation project reflects the Authority's investment in assets to improve wastewater collection and conveyance services for its more than 10,000 customers.

The manholes most in need of repair were identified following a nearly two-year study conducted by RedZone Robotics to assess the condition and functionality of the entire PCWASA sewer system. The results of the RedZone YES (Your Entire System) program categorized PCWASA manholes according to four conditions – rating them as either good, adequate, poor, or critical.

In October of last year, the PCWASA Board of Directors, upon the recommendation of the utility's staff, awarded the contract for the manhole rehabilitation to Enviro Trenchless, LCC for their low bid of \$339,000. Work on the manhole repairs began last November and should be completed by this May.

By investing in the rehabilitation of these manholes that are in the poorest condition, the Authority will improve its wastewater collection and treatment efficiency through the reduction of inflow and infiltration of storm water into the sewer system.

Clean audit opinion reflects strong financial position of PCWASA

Highlighting the February meeting of the PCWASA Board of Directors was the presentation of the results from the annual audit of the Authority's finances by Mauldin & Jenkins, LLC, an independent certified accounting firm specializing in audits of municipal governments, agencies and authorities in Georgia.

David Irwin, CPA with Mauldin & Jenkins, reports that PCWASA received a clean audit opinion with no findings, noting the Authority's strong financial position is due to a number of factors.

First, Irwin revealed that the Authority's bond coverage ratio was 1.9 for 2015, an increase over the previous year. The 1.9 ratio is much stronger than the average ratios of 1.1 thru 1.5, as recommended by the ratings agencies Moody's and Standard & Poor's.

In addition, PCWASA has a strong net position, says Irwin, reflected in good cash flows that allow the utility to reinvest in its system. The Authority's "solid financial liquidity" as noted by

Irwin reflects the utility's available cash on hand and its ability to attain cash if needed for business purposes, providing current and long-term financial security for the organization. The Authority experienced an increase of \$1.6 million in net position from FY 2014 to FY 2015.

Finally, while Irwin noted that this year was no different than

past years when PCWASA received a clean opinion, it was different in that the auditors didn't need to make adjustments to the financial

statements, which is typical of an annual audit for a local government or public utility.

"This year's audit went very well, which has been the case for the last several years," says Irwin. "In addition, we had no adjustments to make (on the financial statements for FY 2015), which is a reflection of the hard work of the Authority's staff and their approach to being proactive rather than reactive" when it comes to financial reporting.



It's a Toilet,
Not a Trashcan!

Please do not flush non-dispersible items, such as:

- X Facial Tissue (such as Kleenex)
- X Cotton Swabs (such as Q-tips)
- X Wet Wipes (even "flushable")
- X Cat Litter (even "flushable")
- X Feminine Hygiene Products
- X Dental Floss



Internships provide opportunities for future water professionals

PCWASA welcomes Starr's Mill Senior as Work-Based Learning Intern

The future of civil engineering is bright, if the most recent intern to work at the Peachtree City Water and Sewerage Authority (PCWASA) is any indication.

This school year, PCWASA welcomed Starr's Mill Senior John Adams to its workforce as a high school intern eager to learn about building infrastructure to support quality growth and quality of life in the community.

Adams comes to PCWASA through the utility's partnership with Starr's Mill High School and the extremely effective Georgia Work-Based Learning Program. His love for civil engineering started at home and grew through STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) curricula he took at Starr's Mill.

"About three years ago, I began working with my dad to help him fix up houses and that sparked my interest in civil engineering," says the younger Adams, who has been accepted to Mississippi State University, where he will begin his college studies in civil engineering this fall.

John's father Glenn is President and Owner of Property Magic, LLC, which analyzes distressed properties for investment and rehabilitation.



Starr's Mill Senior John Adams is working at PCWASA as an intern this school year thanks to the Authority's partnership with his school and its Georgia Work-Based Learning Program.

While interning at PCWASA during the first semester this school year, John rotated every two weeks to different areas of the utility, including administration, system operations, construction and maintenance in the field, wastewater treatment at the plants, and more. This semester, he is working with one of the Authority's consulting engineering firms, gathering even more specific insights in civil engineering as it applies to the water/sewer industry.

The staff at Integrated Science & Engineering, Inc. in Newnan, especially Senior Project Manager Cary R. Dial, has joined PCWASA in taking John out into the field to provide him with salient work experience. The aspiring civil engineer from Starr's Mill has assisted the Authority and its consulting engineers by inspecting sewer pipes in the Wynnmeade community, reviewing the pipe lining process for sewer line rehabilitation, calculating distances for service lines to tap into the PCWASA system, and much more.

"I really like it, because I'm learning what would otherwise take three or four years of school to learn," says Adams, when describing his time at PCWASA and

Integrated Science & Engineering. "It's fun because I'm not just sitting at a desk; I'm out in the field working with really knowledgeable and nice people."

The Science of Sewer Treatment

The wastewater treatment processes of PCWASA have been designed to treat domestic, commercial and industrial discharges from Peachtree City residents, businesses and industries, which are connected to the Authority's collection and conveyance system. Here's a quick overview of how PCWASA treats your wastewater.

First, the wastewater flow from PCWASA customers passes through the system's splitter box prior to treatment in one of the utility's two wastewater treatment facilities, with a combined treatment capacity of 6 million gallons per day (MGD).

The splitter box provides the Authority with the flexibility to designate the amount of flow to be treated in each wastewater treatment facility. Such flexibility benefits PCWASA customers, especially during periods of peak demand or occasions when a treatment facility must be taken off line for maintenance.

Once wastewater enters a PCWASA treatment facility, it is screened to remove non-biodegradable materials, such as plastic, paper, etc. The waste stream then flows to a grit collection mechanism to further remove non-biodegradable substances, such as sand or rocks, which could be harmful to equipment. From there, the wastewater enters the activated sludge treatment process.



Treated wastewater released into Line Creek.

During this phase of treatment, pollutants in the wastewater are brought into contact with a population of activated organisms ready to consume the pollutants in the waste stream. This part of the treatment scheme requires some sort of aeration and mixing to keep the organisms alive.

After enough contact time has elapsed, the mixing subsides and the solids (organisms) and cleaned (waste) water are separated by gravity. The water then flows through a filtering mechanism and onto disinfection, prior to being returned to local waterways or reused for beneficial irrigation.

PCWASA and Georgia 811 committed to safety

As a utility member of the non-profit Georgia 811, PCWASA is joining in the recognition of April as Safe Digging Month in Georgia.

In addition to overseeing the safety of its employees and contractors in the field, the Authority is an advocate for safety among Peachtree City residents who may be pursuing a project around the house that warrants locating underground utilities. For that reason, call (811) before you dig!

Georgia 811 is a non-profit organization dedicated to preventing damage to Georgia's underground utilities while promoting public safety. The organization functions as a communication system.

It connects companies and utilities like PCWASA with professional excavators and homeowners who are planning mechanized digging activities, such as excavation, tunneling, grading, boring and demolition.

Georgia 811 encourages homeowners planning even a small, non-mechanized digging project to call before you dig, so you can ensure your personal safety and the safety of those around you. These projects can include installing a fence, deck, swing set, basketball goal, sprinkler system or mail box, or when planting trees or landscaping.

The notification system provided by Georgia 811 provides utilities such as PCWASA with an opportunity to locate and identify any underground infrastructure that may be in your area where digging is planned.

So please remember: call (811) before you dig!



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

Fight F.O.G.

Please Don't Put
Fats, Oil & Grease
DOWN YOUR DRAIN.



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