



# ANNUAL REPORT

EMERALD COAST  
UTILITIES AUTHORITY



# EMPLOYEES/LEADERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY

ECUA is committed to making a positive difference and improving the quality of life in our community. Our employees selflessly contribute their time, resources, and talents to several charitable efforts annually.

**Events and Organizations the ECUA employees support include:**

- OneBlood and American Red Cross Blood Drives
- American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk
- Boys and Girls Club of Escambia County
- Greater Pensacola Society for Human Resource Management Spirit of Giving Event
- Ascension/Sacred Heart Children's Foundation
- United Way
- Disabilities Summit Council
- Gulf Coast Diplomacy Council
- Youth LEAP (Leadership Pensacola)
- Walk to End Alzheimer's



## ECUA's Quench Buggy Generates Smiles Throughout the Community

### Walk to End Alzheimer's

Lace up your running shoes! This inspiring event calls on participants of all ages and abilities to join the fight against Alzheimer's. It is our privilege to encourage the participants and provide refreshing water as they support the fight!



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## Fred Levin Way Fest

Each year in downtown Pensacola, the Quench Buggy and our staff join 60-plus nonprofit organizations that distribute information on the services they offer to families in need.



## ECUA Employee Golf Tournament/Ascension/ Sacred Heart Children’s Foundation

Since 1999, ECUA Employees have contributed over \$209,000 to the Ascension/Sacred Heart Children’s Foundation, raised through our employee tournament. This year, our employees raised \$15,000 and we are deeply grateful to all the sponsors and the ECUA employees who support this annual event. We’re ready to tee up for next year!



# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It is our honor to have been providing utility services to the citizens of Escambia County for 42 years. Since June 18, 1981, the Emerald Coast Utilities Authority has been delivering exceptional quality water and wastewater utility services to customers throughout Escambia County. Services expanded when the ECUA added solid waste collection service in 1992, curbside recycling in 2009, and the Materials Recovery Facility went into operation in 2016.

## Regulatory Changes

Recent years have been big for regulatory changes.

For many years, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been studying a class of manufactured chemicals called Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) that have been used in industry and consumer products since the 1940s because of their useful properties. PFAS chemicals were used predominately in goods such as stain and water-resistant materials, firefighting foam, non-stick cookware, food packaging and many other products. However, their presence in all bodies of water world-wide has prompted closer scrutiny by the EPA. The EPA began issuing Health Advisories for PFAS products beginning in 2009, and in the ensuing years made revisions and updates to those advisories until in 2022 they finally issued a proposed regulatory limit for them in drinking water of 4 parts per trillion (ppt). Fortunately, the ECUA has been ahead of this issue and has been investing in Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) filtration equipment for many years, well in advance of these new regulations. While several of ECUA's wells currently have either no detection of PFAS chemicals or detection below the 4 ppt limits, 14 wells already have GAC filtration equipment in place and by the end of 2024, there will be 16 wells with GAC treatment.

The ECUA joined a large group of other public utility companies who sued the manufacturers of PFAS chemicals and will therefore benefit from settlement agreements reached in 2023 and early 2024. Fortunately for ECUA water customers, these settlement funds will cover a significant amount of the remaining capital investment needed to install the last of recommended filtration equipment. However, there will be an ongoing operational expense, beyond what is covered by settlement funds, for periodic replacement of filtration media going forward.

## Sanitation, Recycling, Yard Waste, Bulk Waste and Compost Services

The ECUA continues to be a leader in providing a full complement of solid waste services for a single, competitive rate. Neighboring public and private agencies charge residential customers a higher base rate for solid waste collection services and many also charge additional fees for services like bulk waste. Yet others only offer recycling as a separate, subscription-based service. The ECUA is pleased to continue to provide recycling services as a part of its basic service, which also includes yard waste collection and bulk waste collection, within specified guidelines.



## Ongoing Investment

An important part of ECUA's commitment to our customers is reinvestment in infrastructure and keeping up with growth. Escambia County continues to see tremendous growth in both residential and commercial development. In the western service area of Beulah, the ECUA is pursuing the installation of a new water well in 2023, and is currently in design for a new transmission main to increase supply and transmission of water in that area. Further south along Saufley Field/West Michigan Avenue, a larger water transmission main begins construction in 2024. Throughout Escambia County, over \$10M per year is spent renewing gravity wastewater collection mains to increase their strength and longevity, and to keep out groundwater, which would otherwise rob the system of its capacity to convey wastewater to one of ECUA's three reclamation facilities.

The ECUA is proud to be a public utility, owned by the public it serves and overseen by publicly elected Board members who live in our community and are sensitive to local issues of importance to our customers. This governance structure makes the ECUA more responsive and attentive to your needs.

Thank you for being an ECUA customer.



J. Bruce Woody, P.E.  
Executive Director

# ECUA BOARD

The five elected members of the ECUA Board are charged with formulating and adopting policies, procedures, rules and regulations, including the setting of consumer rates necessary for the ownership, management, operation, and maintenance of ECUA's utility systems.

Each Board member is elected from one of Escambia County's five electoral districts and serves a four-year term. Terms are staggered, with elections taking place at two-year intervals. Representatives of districts one, three, and five are elected in the same cycle while representatives from districts two and four are elected in the alternate election cycle.

The Board's business is conducted at monthly public meetings scheduled on a regular basis and held in the boardroom of the Emergency Operations Support Addition on the ECUA's Ellyson Industrial Park campus, located at 9255 Sturdevant Street, Pensacola. ECUA Board members may be contacted through the information listed on this page or by contacting Ms. Amanda Miller, Administrative Coordinator, at (850) 969-3302.



**MS. VICKI H. CAMPBELL**

District One • (850) 449-1196  
vicki.campbell@ecua.fl.gov  
Term expires 11/2024



**MS. LOIS BENSON • Chairman**

District Two • (850) 221-4404  
lois.benson@ecua.fl.gov  
Term expires 11/2026



**MR. LARRY WILLIAMS**

District Three • (850) 292-7139  
larry.williams@ecua.fl.gov  
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**MR. DALE PERKINS**

District Four • (850) 207-5826  
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Term expires 11/2026



**MR. KEVIN STEPHENS • Vice-Chairman**

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kevin.stephens@ecua.fl.gov  
Term expires 11/2024



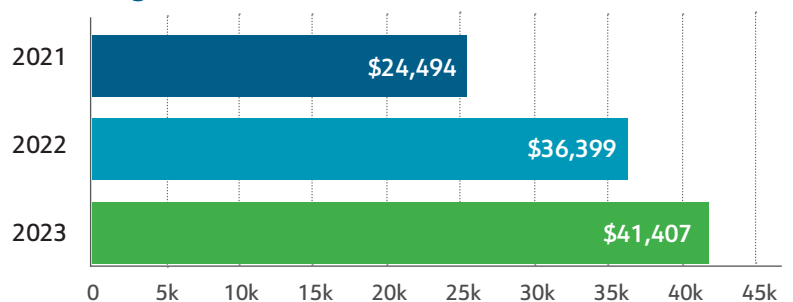
# FINANCE

## Certificate Of Achievement For Excellence In Financial Reporting

For the thirty-fifth year in a row, we received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for our Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the year ending on September 30, 2022. GFOA sets the standards for governmental financial reporting, and this award is likened to the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. This certificate recognizes conformance with the highest standards for preparation of state and local government financial reports. In order to receive this award, a government must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized ACFR, which must satisfy other generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements.

In addition to the audited financial statements, this report provides historical information on the ECUA for revenues, expenses, the numbers of customers, volume of water pumped, and various other data for the last ten years. It also provides a summary of major organization accomplishments for that year and identifies future goals and long-term financial planning.

## Purchasing VISA Card Rebates



## Purchasing Card Program

The purchasing card usage allows us to avoid certain costs associated with issuing purchase orders and processing checks for payment through the accounts payable process. Total purchases using the VISA card for the fiscal year equaled approximately \$3.5 million. The VISA card program provides a modest rebate to ECUA based on the total dollar volume purchased during the year. In fiscal 2023, ECUA received a rebate of \$41,407.

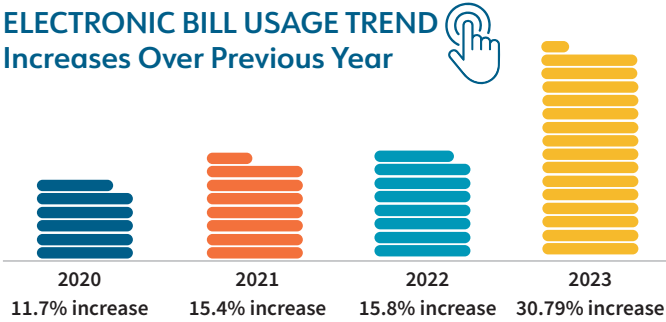
The Purchasing (VISA) Card Program completed its nineteenth full year of company-wide usage. There are currently 210 Visa Cards issued to ECUA employees. These cards allow employees to purchase items costing \$2,499 or less, and are a more cost-effective method of making small-dollar purchases.



Department Statistics

In fiscal year 2023, the Accounts Payable Division processed over 22,800 invoices for payment; the number of vendors paid electronically increased by 5%. The Purchasing & Stores Division prepared and processed 2,241 purchase orders, 12 contract extensions, 47 formal bids, and 26 construction bids. Payroll processed 116 new employees, 5 employees entered the DROP program, and 103 employees left ECUA's employment, with 8 of them retiring. The value of the inventory on hand at September 30 was \$1,542,679. The number of electronic payments received increased over last year by 5.2%. This allows us to receive payments in a timelier manner, with fewer paper-handling costs associated with the processing of paper checks.

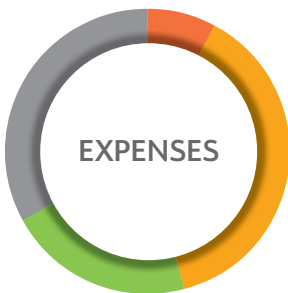
ELECTRONIC BILL USAGE TREND  
Increases Over Previous Year



The number of customers receiving electronic bills increased by 30.79% in 2023, thus saving on the cost of printing a paper bill and postage.



**Total Revenues:**  
\$173,246,758



**Total Expenses:**  
\$157,993,055



**Total Liabilities/Net Assets:**  
\$1,028,653,160



**Total Assets:**  
\$1,028,653,160



# ENGINEERING

## Utility Coordination Division

The ECUA Engineering Utility Coordination Division addresses ECUA-related utility concerns on infrastructure improvement projects initiated by other entities such as the FDOT, Escambia County, and City of Pensacola. These projects typically involve roadway resurfacing or widening, bridge replacement, stormwater system improvements, and placement of sidewalk or multi-use paths. This liaison with other entities allows ECUA to conduct relocations and effect needed system upgrades and replacements more efficiently by “piggy-backing” on the greater project.

ECUA-FDOT coordination projects completed in 2023 include: Barrancas, Pace, and Airport Resurfacing; Sorrento/Innerarity Point Intersection improvements; Sorrento Resurfacing and the Sorrento/Bauer Intersection Improvements; Lillian Hwy. Water Main Relocation; and 9th Ave. at Carpenters Creek Bridge Relocation. Likewise, notable projects completed in coordination with Escambia County include: Pine Valley Stormwater Improvements; Macky Bluffs FEMA Repairs; and Longleaf Drive. In all, ECUA coordinated more than 200 manhole and valve box adjustments, relocated approximately 6,000 linear feet of water main, in addition to miscellaneous sewer relocations.

## Internally Designed & Managed Projects

On projects viewed as straightforward and/or as having few potential impacts, ECUA staff will conduct the design tasks including field data collection, engineering design, plan production, and project management to maximize the amount of ratepayer dollars used for utility construction. Below are additional details regarding internally completed potable water and sanitary sewer projects.

### Potable Water

Construction was recently completed on the Doris Avenue, Powell Street, Rose Avenue and Figland Avenue Water Main Upgrades project. This project, located west of U.S. Hwy. 29 and north of Detroit Blvd., included approximately 6,000 feet of new water main and new services for approximately 110 customers. Two projects currently in design that will replace approximately two miles of small-diameter steel mains are the Corinne Jones Park (near West Government Street and South Clubbs Street) and Sanders Beach (near Sonia Street and South “I” Street).

### Sanitary Sewer

To address the replacement of approximately 200 feet of undersized and damaged sanitary sewer pipe, ECUA staff invited three local contractors to the site located on the south side of Massachusetts Avenue at Royal Hills Drive, to assess the conditions and prepare quotes. Construction began in January 2024 and was completed in April.

## Consultant Designed/ECUA Staff Managed Projects

For the completion of larger, more complex projects, ECUA utilizes consulting firms that provide both engineering and surveying expertise. ECUA staff manages the design efforts, plans development, and construction activities through the completion of the required work. Examples are listed below.

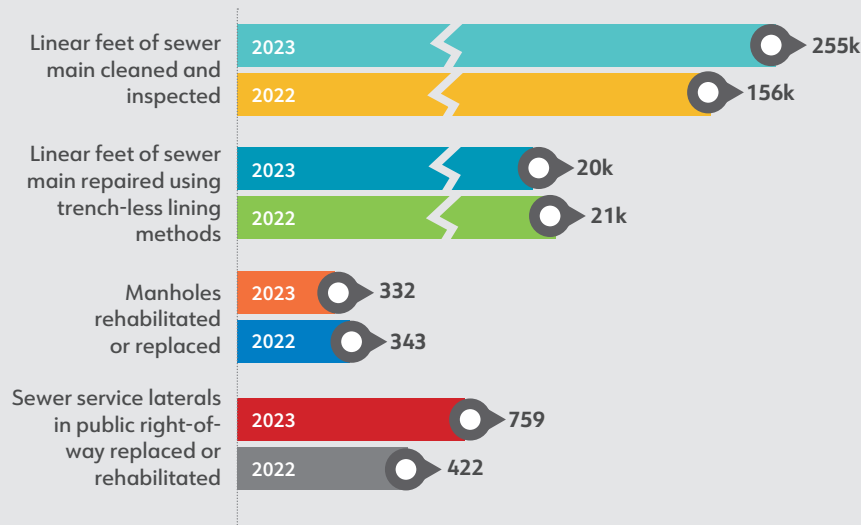
### Replacement of Antiquated/Transite Water Mains

A planned project to replace the Transite water main in the Scenic Hills golf course community was divided into two phases due to funding limitations. Phase One of the Scenic Hills Water project was completed in 2023. Phase Two, involving the installation of approximately 12,000 feet of new water main along Burning Tree Road and Meadowbrook Drive, was completed in November. Currently underway and replacing approximately 8,000 feet of antiquated mains is Phase One of the Osceola Country Club Water Main Replacement project. Located north of Fairfield Drive and west of Mobile Highway, this project began in October 2022 and is estimated to be complete in June 2024. To expeditiously replace approximately 1,500 feet of failing Transite water main along Lancer Drive (north of I-10 and west off of Untreiner Avenue), an emergency project was initiated. Construction was started in August 2022 and was completed at the end of 2023.



## Annual Sewer Rehabilitation And Inspection Contracts

The Wastewater Infrastructure Division managed unit-price contracts for cleaning and TV inspection of existing sewer lines, various trench-less methods of repairs for identified major rehabilitation needs, manhole rehabilitation, and service lateral lining and excavated repair. The focus area is currently bordered by Bayou Chico on the west, Palafox Street on the east, Pensacola Bay on the south, and approximately Lee Street on the north.



## Wastewater Infrastructure

ECUA staff successfully completed the fourth year of the Corrective Action Plan (CAP), investing a total of \$39 million in sanitary sewer collection system infrastructure improvements over the past four years.

## Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) Amended Consent Order

The Amended Consent Order (ACO) was negotiated with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to establish a 10-year period to complete approximately \$100 million in wastewater infrastructure-related projects beginning October 1, 2019. The CAP provides details of the sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) reduction program through March of FY2029 and is focused on four areas: additional system storage, sewer basin rehabilitation and improvements, lift station repair and replacement, and force main replacement. The CAP was approved by FDEP in late December 2019. The number of SSOs continues to trend at an optimistically low level. ECUA had 50 recorded spills in FY2023, up from 44 in FY2022.

Permitting is underway for an influent emergency storage tank at the Bayou Marcus Water Reclamation Facility to assist in emergencies and maintenance activities at the sewer treatment facility.

## Lift Stations

In 2023 ECUA completed recovery projects for Lift Station #371 – Quail Ridge and LS 285 – Chimney Pines to repair damage caused by Hurricane Sally and improve resiliency. ECUA also completed The Detroit Boulevard Lift Station Replacement together with the Stefani Sewer Extension, which replaced aging, flood-prone infrastructure and improved capacity in the area while also expanding sewer service to the Detroit Manor Subdivision.



## Sewer Expansion Program

A joint project with Escambia County on West Lee Street, between North “T” Street and North Kirk Street, involving the construction of approximately 4,000 feet of sanitary sewer, and adding services for approximately 80 property owners, was completed in early 2024. Another joint project with Escambia County that will provide service to approximately 350 property owners, is referred to as Beach Haven NE Phase Two. This phase of the Beach Haven expansion, located in the vicinity of Gulf Beach Highway and Fairfield Drive, had construction start in September. Design activities have now begun on four expansion projects that are being partially funded with State (FDEP) grant dollars. The four projects, all located in the vicinity of the Brownsville Community and Bayou Chico, are to be constructed before the end of 2026, and provide service to roughly 500 property owners. Due to excessively high costs, rejection of the bids received for the Airway Drive/Stockdale Avenue Sewer Expansion project is being recommended to the ECUA Board.

# ENGINEERING

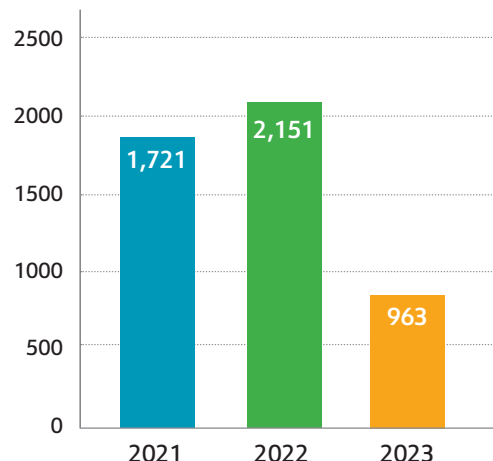
## Utility Development Division

The ECUA Engineering Utility Development Division (UDD) reviews and approves construction plans for System Extension and Single Service Connection Projects to ensure compliance with ECUA standards before projects are placed into service. These projects are typically developer-sponsored commercial and residential developments.

System Extension Projects are developments that include additions to the ECUA water and sewer infrastructure. In FY2023, ECUA UDD received 76 System Extensions for review and approved plans for 105 projects to be constructed and placed into service. Single Service Connection Projects are developments that do not include additions to the ECUA water and sewer infrastructure. In FY2023, ECUA UDD received 77 Single Service Connections for review and approved plans for 63 projects to be constructed and placed into service.

As part of the development review process, ECUA must confirm the availability of water and sewer for a potential project. In FY2023, ECUA UDD processed 963 inquiries for confirmation of water and sewer availability for commercial and residential development projects, private individuals seeking to build a new house, and individuals seeking to transition from septic to sewer service.

## Inquiries for Confirmation of Water and Sewer Availability



With private side lateral programs to identify and encourage repairs of the private laterals, the need for additional emergency storage tanks in downtown Pensacola and other parts of the county may be avoided.

## Private Side Lateral Program

The Private Side Lateral Program progressed this year in several locations that continue to have high levels of Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) despite rehabilitation of the ECUA sanitary sewer collection system within the right-of-way. Sewer basins with the most severe levels of I&I were identified as locations to continue the program.

A multi-departmental team is working to perform smoke testing, inspect sewer service laterals via Closed Caption Television (CCTV), and notify customers of any lateral deficiencies that need correction. Smoke testing does have limitations when encountering high groundwater and bellies in the sewer lines, which both prevent leak detections. The average results of CCTV inspection

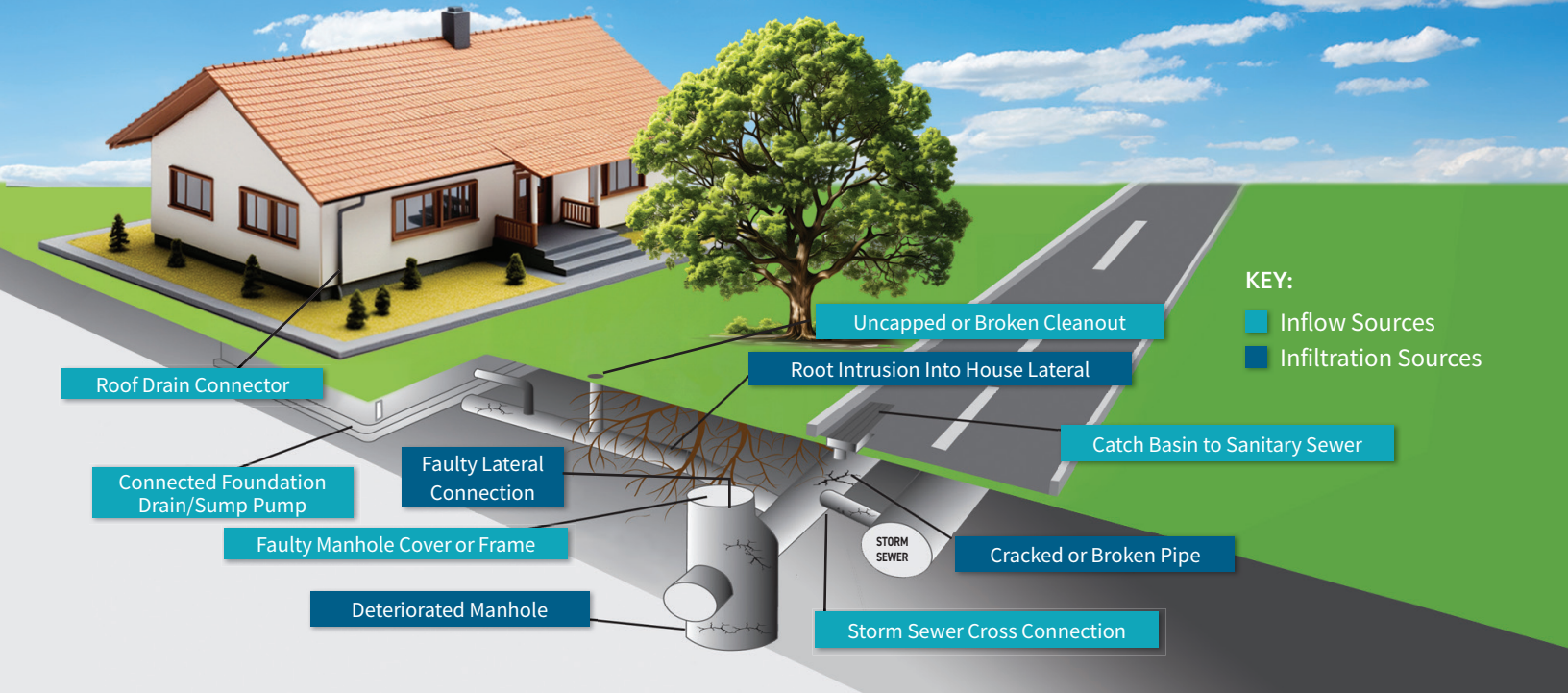
show two-thirds of all laterals contain defects that need to be repaired versus four percent of the laterals found to contain defects by smoke testing.

An additional 223 laterals were found to have defects and property owners were notified for a total of 715 laterals. Of those properties, 70 have made repairs for a total of 175 properties completing repairs. We anticipate more customers will make repairs leading to a positive impact on the operation of the collection system during storms.

ECUA continues discussions with the City of Pensacola and Escambia County to expand the Private Side Lateral Program to make a larger impact with inflow and infiltration reductions on private properties.



# INFLOW AND INFILTRATION (I&I)



## Why is it a problem?

ECUA has committed considerable resources to the elimination and reduction of sewer I&I through the last decade. This is an issue that affects, and is of great concern to wastewater utilities throughout North America. In 2012, ECUA embarked on a 16-year plan to address the situation. Protecting public health and the environment – and reducing wastewater treatment and transmission costs are direct benefits of a regional I&I control program.

## What is Inflow and Infiltration (I&I)

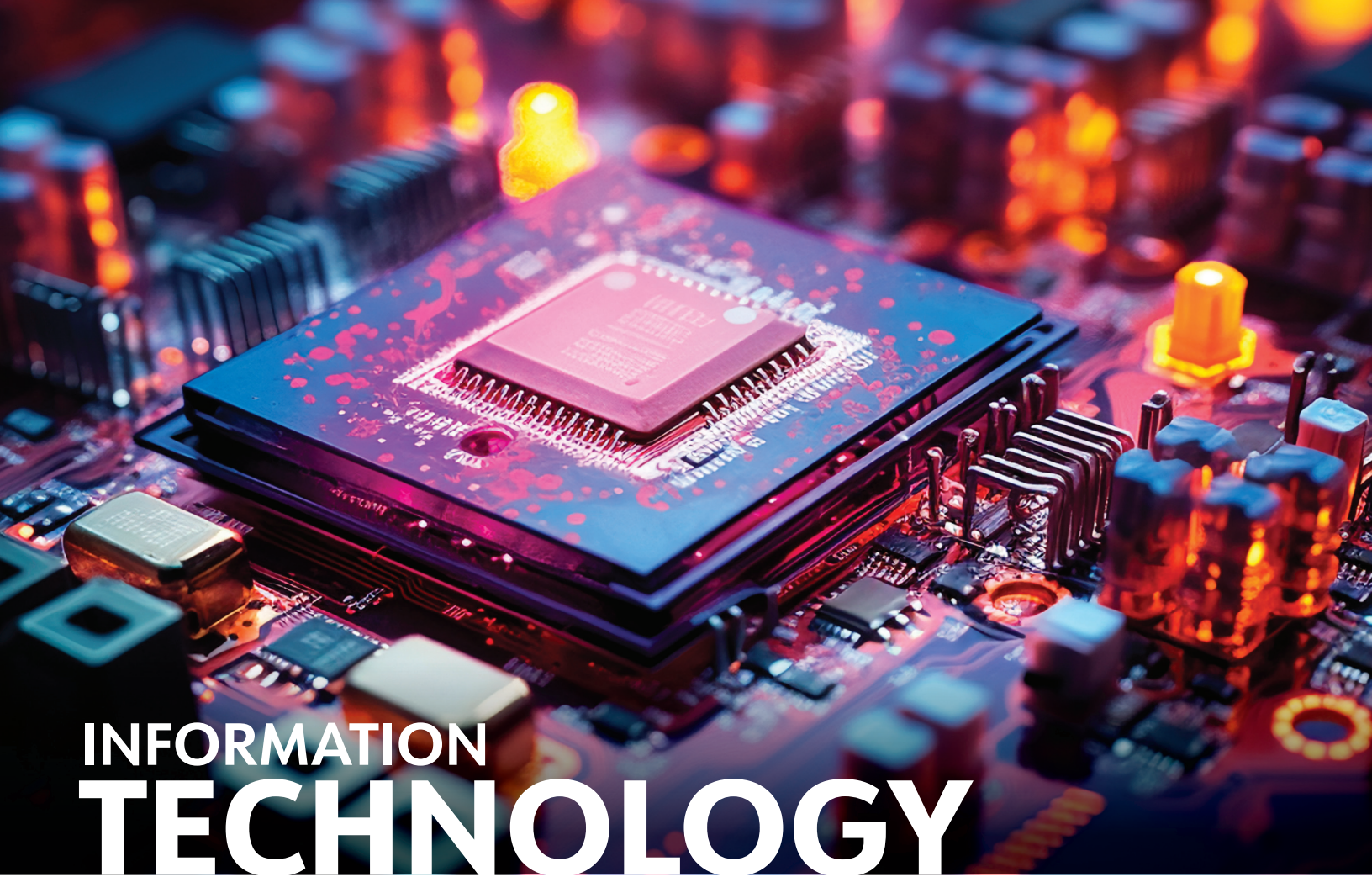
Excess water that flows into sewer pipes from stormwater and groundwater is called inflow and infiltration, or I&I. Stormwater rapidly flows into sewers (inflow) via roof drain downspouts, foundation drains, storm drain cross-connections, and through holes in manhole covers. Groundwater seeps into sewer pipes (infiltration) through holes, cracks, joint failures, and imperfect connections. Most I&I is caused by aging infrastructure that needs maintenance or replacement.

## 3 Reasons Why I&I is a Problem –

**Extra water in the sewer system is a problem because:**

- 1 I&I flows can contribute to sewer system backups into local homes and spills into streets and waterways, negatively impacting public health and the environment.
- 2 I&I takes up capacity in the sewer pipes and ends up at the water reclamation facilities where it must be treated, increasing treatment costs.
- 3 Over time, new and larger wastewater facilities are required to convey and treat larger volumes of flow caused by I&I, resulting in higher capital and operating expenditures.





# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

## IT Focus

IT's focus in FY2023 revolved around providing excellent support to end-users while maintaining robust cybersecurity measures and maintaining the organization's infrastructure to ensure availability and reliability of IT services. Staff stayed informed of the latest threats while keeping all servers and endpoint devices up to date. Our team was able to overcome a significant staffing shortage and find some great new additions to fill the vacant roles. Regularly-scheduled staff meetings and team building events were key to boosting employee morale, as was the incorporation of training and mentoring to ensure we maximize our staff members' potential.

**As a department, we managed our budget effectively while attempting to get the best possible value from our existing resources.**

## Infrastructure Management

Maintaining and optimizing ECUA's IT infrastructure is essential for smooth operations. This includes managing servers, network devices, and ensuring the reliability of services. A robust network management system designed to manage our network devices allows IT staff to quickly identify any outages or errors. Staff regularly audits and monitors all devices to ensure compliance and efficiency, with key thresholds in place for key performance metrics that trigger alerts via email if breached. The regular review of performance data helps to identify trends so staff can proactively address any issues while our infrastructure is designed to minimize the impact of hardware or software failures. Some of our key infrastructure accomplishments in FY2023 include the decommissioning of all 2012 Windows servers, installing a new CWRP Administration building network stack with a total of 7 switches that provide 48 ports of access each, and installing and implementing over 90 Terabytes of solid-state storage. Most importantly, we were also able to maintain our goal of 99.99% reliability and upgraded our 4 exchange servers to the latest versions, which allow us to have complete control of our email system on premises.





## Cyber Security

It was an exciting year for the IT department with regard to Cyber Security. After participating in Multi-State Information Sharing (MS-ISAC) with government agencies for the past two years, we were able to develop a working relationship with CISA (Cybersecurity Infrastructure Security Agency), which falls under the US Department of Homeland Security. As a result, ECUA was selected to participate in a federally-sponsored program called Protective DNS. This will enhance our Cyber Security by using a recursive DNS resolver system, which basically will filter out malicious internet traffic. We also launched four quarterly anti-phishing campaigns in an effort to educate our employees about the dangers of clicking on malicious links on the internet or in an email. We also had a complete cyber security audit conducted by Argo Cyber Systems. The audit allowed us to mitigate unknown vulnerabilities and validate that our cyber security system is performing efficiently and effectively.

### Cyber Security Tips

- Always install antivirus and malware software on your personal devices
- Keep all your apps, browsers, and operating systems up to date
- Change passwords regularly and do not use the same password for all of your accounts
- Use multi-factor authentication when possible, it can be a hassle but it dramatically improves your chances of not getting hacked
- Stay off unsecured public WiFi

## Application Support

One of our main goals this year was to bring our application support to the next level. The IT Department hired two outstanding application support analysts who have a broad range of automation, scripting, support, and programming skills. Working with other departments has helped us implement improvements in proprietary software and processes. Further, we have started preliminary work on a completely internally-developed web application that will allow our Sanitation drivers to use a scanner to capture pertinent inventory information of all our equipment assets such as cans and Dumpsters. We also have made improvements and upgrades to our customer information system application that include a modern HTML5-based browser interface, which enhances our Customer Service Representatives' ability to retrieve customer information. We will continue to work with other departments to identify processes that can be improved with automation and other technologies.

## Help Desk and Asset Management

We implemented a new goal this year for our help desk staff to resolve 80% of work orders by a requested completion date. Our intent is to establish a goal that is attainable for our staff, without sacrificing quality of service. We are already seeing positive effects of this implementation as our staff is more cognizant of providing good documentation in work orders. Additionally, our help desk staff does a great job of managing the inventory of all of our assets in an efficient manner and they contribute to our knowledge base regularly by providing excellent documentation to remediate issues that can be resolved quickly.

## Staffing and Training

We were able to find some outstanding new additions for the IT team in FY2023 and currently have 12 out of 13 positions filled. We have placed a great emphasis on training to maximize every employee's potential. Every team member is provided with a variation of live courses, training libraries, and mentoring by supervisors to lay out a roadmap for success. We have also placed an emphasis on cross-training this year. Cross-training reduces dependency on specific individuals and enhances team collaboration. Cross-training also gives employees insight and skills needed to be successful when promoted.



# HUMAN RESOURCES

Research supports that happier employees are more productive and engaged employees. The focus and efforts of the human resources staff continue to be the successful management of our employees' needs, so that the Authority can in turn, meet and exceed the needs of our external customers. In fiscal year 2023, human resources staff continued to foster and enhance employee engagement through sincere and timely interactions at every opportunity.

## The HR Staff:

- Organized and coordinated Employee Length of Service Recognition, honoring 79 employees who reached a 5-year employment milestone
- Screened and processed 2,720 on-line job applications
- Conducted 387 in-person and remote interviews and filled 167 positions.
- Guided 32 new hire on-boarding sessions to acclimate new employees to ECUA
- Conducted 40 Job Application Training/ Career Counseling sessions
- Participated in two mock interview sessions for 60 students in the Business Programs at George Stone Technical College
- Participated in three external in-person and one internal ECUA job fair
- Participated in 47 Radio Segments on WRNE Radio 106.9 – "ECUA Job Search Solutions"
- Completed 32 internal compensation analyses to assess pay rates and range penetration to ensure pay equity

We continued to dedicate a section of the For Your Benefit (FYB) newsletter to recognize employees through customer compliments and/or accolades from awards or accomplishments with ECUA. Year after year our recruiters and staff participate in mock interviews at local high schools as well as mentorship programs. They spend valuable time helping students set goals and reassure them of the importance of improving their employability skills and life skills. Our partnerships with the faculty members help to reinforce the training and guidance students receive from their teachers.

## Connecting With Employees

Staff connected and engaged with employees during scheduled face-to-face events and virtual sessions, and through an abundance of electronic and written communications using the following channels:

- 17 onsite Benefits Open Enrollment meetings at various locations, one Retiree Benefit meeting, and one virtual Benefits Enrollment meeting. There were 306 attendees
- Several Florida Retirement System webinars
- Multiple health and wellness/lunch and learn workshops/ webinars
- Know Your Numbers wellness events at four ECUA locations
- Numerous individual employee career counseling sessions and team meetings
- Twelve monthly publications of the FYB newsletter distributed to each employee, plus one Special Edition for Retirees
- The annual Employee Appreciation Event was held at the Ellyson Industrial Park and included family members as well as games, prizes, bounce houses, the police K-9 unit, the fire department, and Reno Reptiles





## Wellness Activities & Education

The “Rising Resilient Together to be Well” series was the campaign kickoff for the year, with mental health continuing to be a top priority. Our goal is always focused on providing employees with the tools and resources to make wise and healthy decisions when it comes to their overall physical and mental health and well-being. This year we partnered with NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness), CDAC Behavioral Healthcare, Inc., and the HR Florida State Council’s Wellbeing Director to provide mental health training and education to our employees. The HR staff attended the nationally recognized 8-hour Mental Health First Aid training and received a 3-year certification that equipped them to be able to respond and assist anyone experiencing a mental health or substance-use-related crisis. Both NAMI and HR Florida worked with HR staff to develop relevant presentations to advocate, educate, and empower employees to be aware of mental health and the stigmas surrounding it. If they are struggling or know others who are struggling, they are not alone. There are many supports, services, and treatment options to help.

The Florida Municipal Insurance Trust (FMIT) supports wellness activities among insured employees and spouses on ECUA’s medical plan. This

year the program provided additional support and assistance in the area of mental health through webinars, podcasts, on-site and telephonic health coaching, and educational pamphlets. A \$275 per member incentive reward is available to all eligible participants enrolled in the Hometown Health Program who earn at least 250 points by actively engaging in healthy choices activities.

## Healthy Choices Reimbursement Program

We are happy to report that ECUA employees continued to engage in activities ranging from gym memberships, weight management programs, 5k/10k walk/run events, cross-training, smoking cessation, dance instructions, and swim/golf lessons. In FY2023, 120 employees partook in the program and were reimbursed for their participation in Healthy Choices activities.

## Hometown Health Award

It is well known that employers play a vital role in creating a workplace that supports a healthy environment and a health-conscious culture. ECUA’s collaborative efforts are a prime example of a workplace culture where employees feel they are actively supported and have the resources necessary to help them lead healthier lives!

Eligible participants benefited from on-site biometric screenings and health risk assessments. Because of the shared commitment of our partner to wellness, ECUA can offer a robust Health and Wellness Program. The on-site health coaching program helps employees stay engaged and on track with their wellness goals. For the past few years, Naomi, our Health Designs Health Coach, has worked closely with employees to set goals, track their progress, and identify obstacles and/or challenges. This helps employees to get organized and find different ways to accomplish goals by setting realistic goals and creating small wins.

Naomi provides articles for our For Your Benefit Newsletter and has on several occasions presented wellness sessions. We also offered retirement and financial wellness seminars. Additional classes and resources were made available online through Hometown Health and the Florida Retirement System (FRS). The Florida Department of Health continues to offer the twelve-week Diabetes Prevention Program virtual course. A few employees have enrolled and completed the course.

The human resources staff continued its collaboration with the Florida League of Cities (FLC), United Healthcare, West Florida Healthcare, Florida Department of Health, The Standard, and offered 8 on-site/virtual educational seminars/webinars, and two wellness challenges, which directly benefited employees and family members throughout the year. There were over 128 people who attended these sessions.

Through active participation in qualified wellness activities, ECUA reimbursed \$23,015.76 to 120 employees this year.



# HUMAN RESOURCES



## The Health And Wellness Fair And Know Your Numbers (KYN) Event

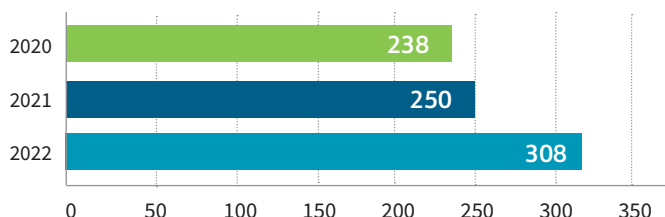
ECUA's wellness program and initiatives aim to raise awareness and get employees to always think about their health and understand the plethora of resources available to assist them in making healthy lifestyle choices. Creating a culture and fostering an environment for health-conscious behaviors by providing resources and ways to support and improve the overall well-being of employees is how we rise resilient to be well, together.

We have created a culture of wellness where employees look forward to attending and sharing progress and shortfalls. The events have become a checkpoint to help employees identify where they are and how they've been doing with their biometric numbers.

The event offers a variety of health education, awareness, health screening, health coaching, flu/pneumonia shot clinics, wellness fairs, and many other interactive health-centered activities aimed at helping employees engage in a health-conscious environment. We provided biometric screenings for 258 participants including 16 spouses, and 74 participants received flu and/or pneumonia shots.

The overall attendance at ECUA's annual KYN event in November 2022 totaled 308 participants. The events held at various ECUA locations are well received by employees and our participation numbers increased by 23.2%.

## The overall attendance at ECUA's annual KYN event in 2022 totaled 308 participants.



## Chemical Reporting

The E-Plan system is the nation's largest database for chemical and hazardous material reporting, as regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Risk Management staff completed all requirements for the Tier II Chemical reporting, including disclosure of hazardous chemicals and fuel stored or located at ECUA facilities. In emergencies, accurate data in the E-Plan system can make the difference between life and death for first responders and victims.

## HR Staff's Professional Development

The HR staff's professional certification and educational development continued with PHR, SPHR, SHRM-CP, and SHRM-SCP certified members:

- Six staff members maintained local and national SHRM chapter memberships
- Three staff members attended the HR Florida Conference in Orlando, Florida
- One HR staff member serves as President on the Board of Directors for the Greater Pensacola SHRM association for HR Professionals and also serves on the HR Florida State Council
- Two HR staff members serve on the Board for the Greater Pensacola SHRM Association for HR Professionals as Committee Chairpersons for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Health and Wellness for Greater Pensacola SHRM Association for HR Professionals Board of Directors
- One HR staff member serves on the Advisory Board for the Business Programs at George Stone Technical College
- Two HR staff members serve on the Education Committee for the Equity Project Alliance (EPA)
- One HR staff Member presented "The Emotional Intelligent Leader" topic at the GPSHRM HR Leadership Conference

## Commercial Insurance

In FY2023, staff reviewed and maintained insurance policies for Property, Automobile Liability and Physical Damage, Workers' Compensation, Cyber Liability, Crime Coverage, Flood Insurance, Pollution Liability, Public Entity Liability, and Road Restoration Bond.

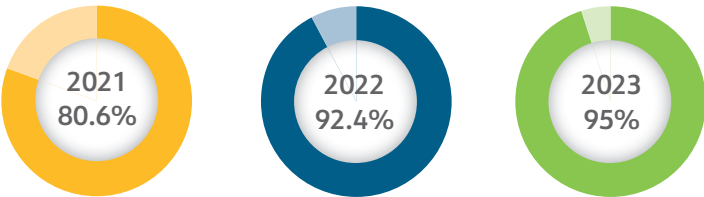
Varied Programs Meet Diverse Interests

ECUA’s Tuition Reimbursement Program encourages employees to enhance their educational development. Five employees pursued undergraduate/graduate degrees, and/or professional certifications through the program this fiscal year. There were 3,011 course registrations and 2,861 courses completed through the Learning Center, ECUA’s on-line learning module for professional development.

HR Staff Actively:

- Trained 116 new hires on Respectful Workplace and Diversity and Harassment Prevention
- Facilitated 12 Leadership training modules (1 leadership topic per quarter), 3-hour sessions
- Compiled data from 46 stay interviews and 34 exit interviews in summary format to assess culture and employee experience
- Processed 224 probationary performance reviews
- Conducted performance review training through NeoGov and reviewed/finalized 541 annual performance evaluations and provided feedback to managers and supervisors
- Stay Interview questions were developed to be used at varying intervals of the ECUA employment life cycle and set to be implemented during FY2023
- Quarterly metrics were enhanced to include the estimated cost of turnover by department and by turnover source
- Processed 45 career progressions

Percentage of completed courses registered through the learning center



Public Health and Safety

During FY2023, 12 of our employees were certified by the American Heart Association after successfully completing the cognitive and skills evaluations in accordance with the curriculum of the Heart-Saver First Aid, CPR, and AED program.

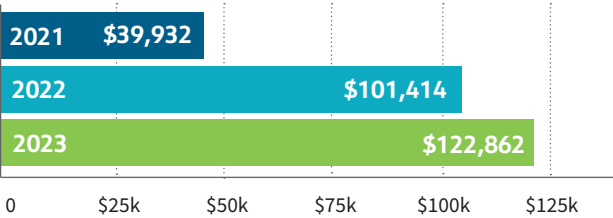
Sanitation Equipment operators participated in a new Coaching the Refuse Driver training program, which provided the knowledge and safe driving techniques that, when applied, can prevent collisions, injuries, and traffic violations.

Loss Recovery

Risk Management staff pursued subrogation recovery for ECUA property losses caused by others. Through subrogation efforts, ECUA recovered \$122,862 to offset property damage losses caused by others.

During FY2023, the Risk Management staff conducted 4,402 hours of safety and health training for our employees.

Amounts Recovered Offsetting Property Damage



Workplace Safety, Training And Security

Training provided to employees covered numerous safety and health subject areas such as Confined Space Entry, Fall Protection and Prevention, Fire Extinguishers, Lockout/Tag Out, and Ladder Safety, just to name a few.

We are pleased that formal professional development and continuing education classes resulted in 385 employees receiving certifications or certificates of completion:

- 19 FRWA Water Distribution Certification Level 1, 2, 3 (32-hour)
- 12 American Heart Association Heartsaver First Aid, CPR, and AED (5-hour)
- 22 Autocar Truck ACX Xpeditor training for Fleet Mechanics (2.5-hour)
- 24 Intermediate Maintenance of Traffic (IMOT) refresher (8-hour)
- 29 Confined Space Entry for Entrant and Attendant OSHA 1910.146 (8-hour)
- 5 Cross Connection and Backflow (16-hour)
- 18 Defensive Driving Training (2-hour)
- 67 Forklift (2-hour)
- 10 Hazmat Tanker- Fuel
- 27 OSHA 10 (10-hour)

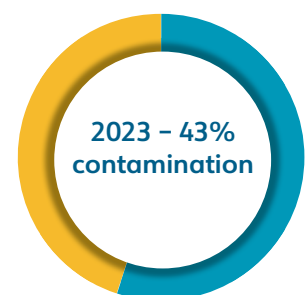


# SANITATION

## Administration Division – ECUA MRF

In FY 2023, the ECUA Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) proudly served a diverse region, processing recyclables from ECUA, Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa Counties, as well as the Cities of Pensacola and Fort Walton Beach, FL. Expanding our reach, we also managed recyclables from Mobile, Atmore, Foley, and Fairhope, along with three private haulers in Mississippi and multiple commercial sites across Florida and Alabama. This year, the MRF processed a commendable 22,429 tons of recyclables, a slight 2% decrease from the 22,919 tons in FY 2022.

## Trash Contamination in Recycling



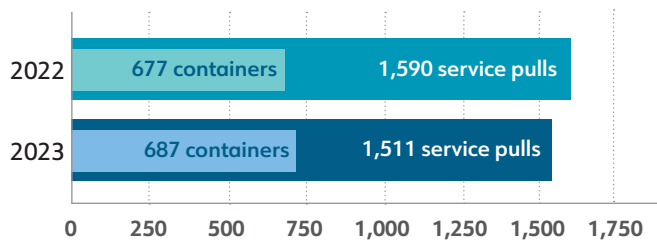
Notably, trash contamination in the recycling stream reduced to 43% from 45%, a step forward in enhancing the quality and marketability of recycled materials.



Commercial Division

Our roll-off services demonstrated robust activity with 1,511 service pulls and 687 container deliveries throughout FY 2023, closely aligning with the previous year’s performance of 1,590 service pulls and 677 containers. Commercial dumpster operations saw a marked increase, collecting 17,200 tons of garbage from Pensacola Beach and the Mainland of Escambia County, up by 80 tons from FY 2022, attributed to new account acquisitions.

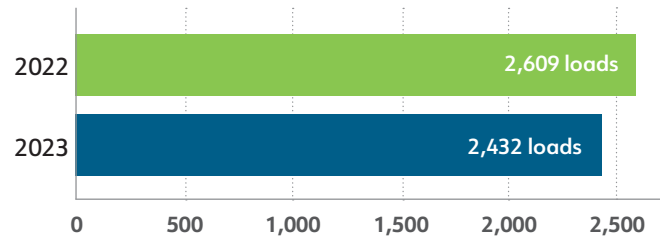
Commercial Division Deliveries



Bio-Solids Composting Facility

Marking its eighth year, the ECUA Bio-solids Compost Facility (BCF) achieved significant milestones in FY 2023. The facility processed 16,072 tons of yard waste delivered in 2,432 loads from ECUA and Escambia County collection vehicles. The BCF sold 9,331 tons of premium compost and supplied 9,497 tons of mulch and topsoil to the Escambia County Perdido Landfill for essential landfill cover and slope stabilization.

Yard Waste Processed



Above: MRF Manager, Shawn Sapp, gives a tour to a group of employees from The Recycling Partnership, a non-governmental organization mobilizing solutions across the value chain to reduce waste and environmental impact.

Recycling Division

In FY 2023, a significant 67% of ECUA Sanitation customers in Escambia County engaged in the residential curbside recycling program, contributing 6,563 tons of recyclables to the MRF. Although this represents a decrease of 3,050 tons from FY 2022, the diversion of this waste stream saved ECUA \$295,335 in residential disposal costs. Our dedicated MRF and public information staff members continue to educate customers on proper recycling practices through extensive media and outreach efforts. Additionally, we maintain strict contamination control, removing recycling cans from repeat offenders for one year. Our Recycle Star program, initiated in FY 2019, continues to celebrate and reward exemplary recyclers.



Residential Division

FY 2023 saw ECUA’s residential customers generate an average of 1.57 tons of waste each, culminating in the collection of 113,821 tons of residential solid waste and 10,213 tons of bulk waste. The total number of sanitation customers grew by 1,112 during the fiscal year, reflecting our expanding service and commitment to the community.



### Contact Center

The contact center continues to process customer interactions through multiple networks, such as voice, email, fax, and in-person. The department collectively managed over 460,000 customer contacts.

### Incentive Program

The incentive program continues to be a success. The program's requirements promote employees to be professional, and render quality and friendly service. Each quarter, employees are assessed on their performance in the areas of phone etiquette, quality, number of calls processed, and accuracy of adjustments. We have seen a continued and consistent number of customer service specialists improve in these areas and as a result, they are rewarded for their commitment to professional, friendly, and quality service.

In addition, the frequent feedback the CSSs receive from their supervisor encourages them to strive for excellence.

**Customer Service** – Customers who completed the Customer Service Survey continue to rate our customer services with high scores. In 2023, twice as many customers surveyed over 2022, rated our service with a satisfaction score of 4.93, with 5 being the highest rating score available.

### National Customer Service Week

ECUA marked National Customer Service Week October 2 - 6 with internal and external customers by including all departments at the Ellyson Field Office in the daily festivities. Different department directors, managers, and supervisors celebrated by serving meals throughout the week, which included breakfast, tacos and burritos, pizza, baked and fried chicken dinners as well as cake and ice cream.

Top Performer Awards were presented to the Customer Service Specialists (CSSs) who earned the Customer Service Incentives for each quarter of FY2023. To earn an incentive, the CSS must have a qualifying score for call quality, the required number of calls processed, and accuracy in their paperwork and adjustments. This year's top performers include Wykesha Carter, Delois St. Cyr, and Susie Black. Yolanda Blackmon was recognized for her professional and committed service to our walk-in customers. We salute these outstanding individuals and thank them, as well as all of our Customer Service employees, who work tirelessly every day to provide professional service to all of ECUA's internal and external customers.

Lewis Daniels and Charles Washington, Water Service Techs, received the award for the highest number of completed cut-non-pay work orders, allowing ECUA to collect outstanding balances on more than 12,578 delinquent accounts.

## Inter-Departmental Cooperation

The ECUA Private Sewer Lateral Program (PSLP) is one of many ongoing efforts to protect our community's health and environment. Private sewer laterals that are not ECUA code-compliant due to leaks can be a major cause of sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) and neighborhood backups, and can cause damage to the ECUA sewer system and private property. As such, the purpose of the program is to raise property owners' awareness regarding existing private sewer lateral defects of which they may be unaware, so that they may be repaired. Our Customer Service staff serves as the liaison for our Private Sewer Lateral Program, communicating via letter(s) with customers whose private laterals have been identified to have defects or are damaged in some way, to assist them with remedying their issue.

## Holiday Cheer

Customer Service held its annual ugly sweater and cubical decoration contest for the holidays. Ciscely McMeans was the first place winner for both contest categories. Mary Stanberry came in second place for the best decorated cubical and Tatana Stanberry received the second place prize for the ugliest sweater. Each employee received a monetary prize. Our employees exchanged gifts and celebrated with a holiday luncheon.

## Mentoring/Cross Training Program

Customer service employees continue to gain knowledge and confidence through rotating to other areas annually or bi-annually within the Customer Service Department. In this way, employees learn all facets of the department and effective cross-training ensures proper coverage in all areas during staffing shortages. It also creates a pool of employees who have expert knowledge in all customer service processes and procedures and promotes candidates for leadership positions.

## Regional Services/Meter Reading

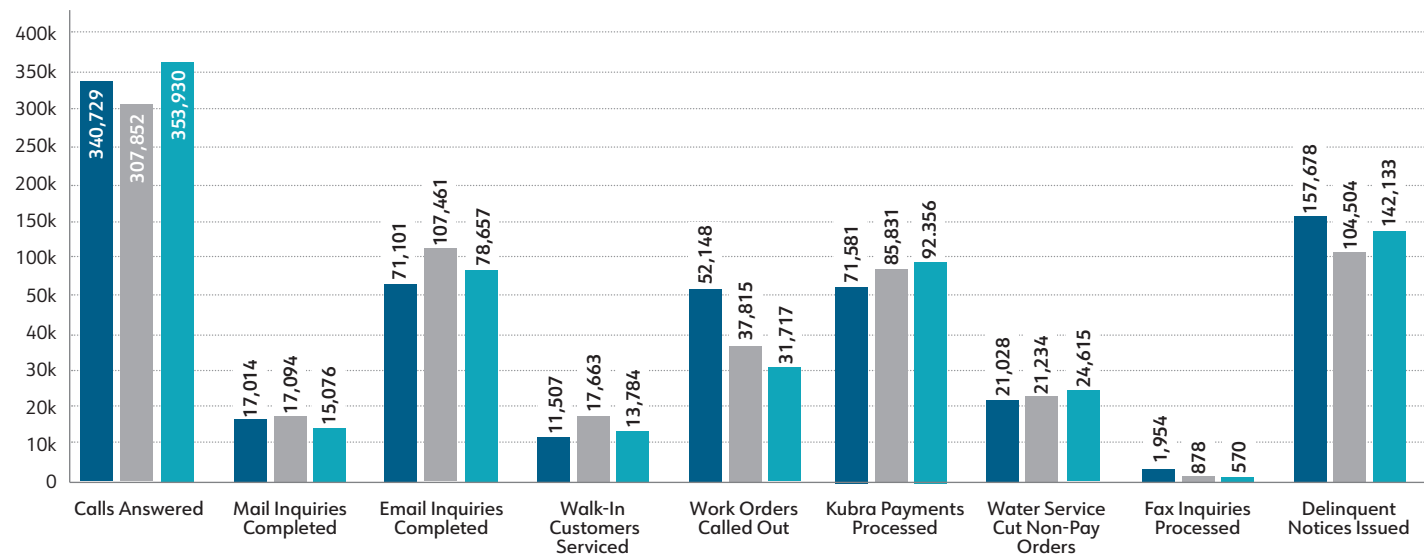
Our Water Service technicians assisted the Meter Reading/Billing Division by verifying re-reads and processing the consumption data on inactive accounts. Our technicians assisted the Regions Department wherever needed, especially with the 'Turn-Back-On' functions during a period of staff shortages.

## Continuing Education/Training

Training continues to be an essential aspect of the customer service operation, keeping staff and employees up to date with the current trends in the customer service industry. We rely on internal and external NEOGOV and Fred Pryor Seminars for professional remote training. Some of the courses offered to our staff include the following: Cutting Edge Communication; mobile training such as Creative Positive Impression, Handling Anyone Difficult, Responding Thoughtfully, Surviving Team Conflicts, Using Goals to Grow, Be Confident and Assertive, Contribute to the Team and Commit to the Process by Inky Johnson.

**The past year saw a significant increase in our calls, inquiries, and Kubra EZ-Pay payments. The increase in walk-in customers and email inquiries accounts for approximately 42,000 fewer calls answered.**

## Customer Service Annual Totals







### Public Information Office (PIO)

The Public Information Division provides general administrative support to the Executive Director and the other executive ECUA staff concerning internal and external organizational communications, as well as coordination with various governmental and community organizations. We were pleased to fill our Education Programs Specialist position, vacant for half of the fiscal year after the predecessor's retirement, and worked to maintain our community involvement throughout FY 2023 with public appearances and presentations, although fewer than in FY22.

Our social media and digital communications coordinator accepted a position affording a significant career advancement in July, and the position remained unfilled for the balance of the fiscal year.

### Public Outreach Programs

ECUA's important environmental programs have a pronounced impact on our community. We were excited to resume a more robust schedule for our public outreach efforts. Our newly hired Education Programs Specialist brought much energy and fresh ideas to our event schedule, which included 63 community and school events. Our PIO staff continued to share the Newcomer's Welcome Kit, distributed to approximately



670 new home buyers and scheduled the Quench Buggy's participation at 37 area events.

Public Information staff created a calendar for 2024, which continues to be an annually-anticipated public education tool intended for distribution to employees and customers at area events. The calendar features beautiful local photography that highlights an ECUA program or service each month and provides educational material supporting our Recycling and FOG programs.

Ground Breaking – Elvin McCorvey Memorial Well

On May 4, ECUA held a Groundbreaking and Naming Ceremony for the future Elvin McCorvey Memorial Well. Our PIO staff coordinated the well-attended event, welcoming an estimated 70 people representing the family of former Board member, Mr. McCorvey, and members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, neighbors of the proposed well. Our executive director, Mr. J. Bruce Woody spoke about the history of the existing facility (built in 1935) and ECUA’s current investment to construct a new well, treatment facilities, and a 3-million-gallon ground storage tank. ECUA District 3 Board member Mr. Larry Williams spoke eloquently of Mr. McCorvey’s dedication to his community and years of service to help students, teachers, constituents, and anyone in need over his lifetime. A formal ribbon-cutting will be scheduled upon completion of all the work.

ECUA In Print, In Video, And Online

The core of our mission is to disseminate information to our customers in a timely and targeted manner. The PIO staff produces a variety of printed materials each fiscal year including a monthly newsletter that accompanies our customers’ bills; collateral materials such as refrigerator magnets and other give-away items that promote awareness of our recycling, “disposable” wipes, and FOG programs; and numerous informational fliers related to sanitation and recycling services, backflow prevention and FOG.

Working with advertising agencies, staff guides the creation of our annual calendar and corporate publications such as the Authority’s Annual Report and Annual Water Quality Report. This essential document, also known as the Consumer Confidence Report, is published and posted to the ECUA website annually in May. Advertising for broadcast, print, and a limited scope of online publications is also developed with an outside agency. With the addition of a dedicated social media coordinator in FY22, most advertising on social media platforms is now created and placed by our staff.

In FY23, we decided to discontinue our ‘micro website’ LivegreenECUA.com, and concentrate efforts on our main website, expanding the pages dedicated to our environmental initiatives such as our recycling programs, composting, and water conservation pages. We added a page highlighting our Private Sewer Lateral Program and the proper disposal of surplus medications and expanded the information on the PFOA/PFAS/PFOS, also known as the Forever Chemicals, in the Our Water Supply section.

The division produced two educational videos in FY23; one on recycling, and one on the bulk waste program, in addition to launching a ‘Day in The Life’ series highlighting various aspects of the ECUA’s operations. The videos produced this year focused on recycling FAQs and a typical day in the life of a sanitation equipment operator as well as a water reclamation operator at ECUA’s largest plant, the Central Water Reclamation Facility.

With consistent promotion on social media, our newsletter, and at in-person events, downloads and usage of the Recycle Coach application increased this year. We gained 578 new users and saw 300,700 total interactions on the app with 3,107 material searches in FY2023. Active users of the app can receive sanitation pickup reminders, schedule bulk pick-up requests, search for materials with the ‘What Goes Where’ feature, and make inquiries or report issues related to their services.



ECUA in the Media

Every year, we strive to maximize our investment in television and radio advertising by focusing on specific targeted areas of our business. This year’s media outreach campaigns were aimed at raising awareness and educating our customers on several key issues: a change in process for Bulk Waste collection that took effect on July 1, the prevention and reduction of contamination in our recycling stream, the hazards of disposing of flammables in recycling and garbage containers, as well as the never-ending and critical need for utility system and capital improvements. In FY22, we began to include recruitment messaging in our advertising efforts to assist our HR department’s staffing goals. We were pleased to continue including this messaging in FY23.

Press Releases Issued







# WATER PRODUCTION

## Engineering Analysis Davis Well Treatment Analysis

The Davis Well was taken out of service several years ago to evaluate the effectiveness of different treatment methods for the removal of iron and manganese. Following the completion of numerous studies, we are coordinating with several treatment companies to test the efficacy of their systems for removing these contaminants from the Davis Highway Well water.

## Hagler Well Treatment Analysis

The Hagler Well was taken out of service several years ago due to contaminants in the well water and ECUA initiated a study to evaluate the effectiveness of different treatment methods for the removal of the contaminants in the well water. The conclusion and recommendation from the consultant performing the study point to Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) as the preferred method for

## PAS-Water Facility Optimization

ECUA entered into a Planning Assistance to States (PAS) cost-sharing agreement with the US Army Corp of Engineers (USCOE) for a review of ECUA's water facilities and their scheduled use, to optimize their operation. Phase I was completed and staff has enacted several of the recommendations made. ECUA has entered into an agreement with the USCOE for Water Facility Optimization Phase II which is ongoing.

contaminant removal. We received the final report in March 2023.

## Emergency Response Plan (ERP)

The ERP was updated in FY23 to include more information on sanitation and sanitary sewer.

## Water Facility GAC Optimization Study

Water Production (WP) Staff and an engineering consultant have analyzed ways to optimize GAC treatment of the raw water at wells. Options analyzed included lead-lag vs. parallel operation of the vessels, the removal of competing

constituents, and other cost-saving possibilities. Phase I was completed and a summary was provided in July 2021. Phase II was initiated to perform additional testing for items that were identified after Phase I.

## Water Storage Tank Inspections

A consultant performed annual inspections (OSHA and Safety work) of all tanks. There were no deficiencies identified that needed to be addressed at this time. A comprehensive 5-year inspection of the Perdido Key Tank resulted in maintenance and repair recommendations.



## Design Phase

### Beulah Well

The most recent water system master plan, additional modeling results, as well as low-pressure complaints during high-demand periods have highlighted the need for an additional water supply to the Beulah area. A potential well site for this supply is at the west end of Devine Farm Road, adjacent to the Interstate. ECUA has purchased property from International Paper and is finalizing the purchase of additional property from a private landowner. A test hole has been performed and the results analyzed. A consultant will be preparing specifications for a test well.

### Devine Farms Road/Frank Reeder Road Water Transmission Main

A water transmission main will be constructed from the Beulah Road/Frank Reeder Road intersection eastward along Frank Reeder Road and Devine Farms Road to the 297A/97 intersection. This transmission main will allow ECUA to move water east and west as needed. A new well under consideration, referred to as Beulah Well, will pump through this transmission main if enough quantity (flow) is available and the water quality is acceptable.

### Lime Slurry Project

Based on the recommendation of the pH Adjustment Evaluation report, we are moving forward with utilizing delivered lime slurry in lieu of bagged hydrated lime, which is currently being mixed at each well site.

## Construction & Major Maintenance Complete

### GAC Filter Media Changeout and Spent GAC Disposal at McAllister, Spanish Trail, and Watson Well

GAC media were removed and sent to an Arid Subtitle C Landfill. New GAC media were placed in the filters and the wells were placed back into service.



## Construction Phase

### West Well and Tank

A new well is being drilled at the West tank site property. A consultant has prepared plans and specifications for the new well, a Water Treatment Facility, a GAC System, and a 3MG ground storage tank with a pump station to replace the existing elevated tank and associated site work. Contracts have been awarded for a new well and the construction of a new 3MG Tank, and the existing 0.5 MG tank has been demolished. The contract for the remaining work began in early 2024 and we expect the facility to be online in 2025.

### Lillian Well Cleaning

The specific capacity has been declining at the Lillian Well, which has led to lower production. After cleaning with standard methods yielded marginal improvement, a specialty consultant reviewed water sampling test results and video logs from the well to provide a recommendation on how to resolve

this issue. However, the flow quantity did not improve. A new pump and discharge piping that is smaller than the original size were installed back into the well column. The well now pumps approximately a thousand gallons per minute.

### Muldoon & Avondale Wells GAC Vessels

Six GAC filter vessels were purchased and placed on structural foundations. A contract was awarded for the installation of the GAC vessel piping. This work is ongoing with completion expected in 2024.

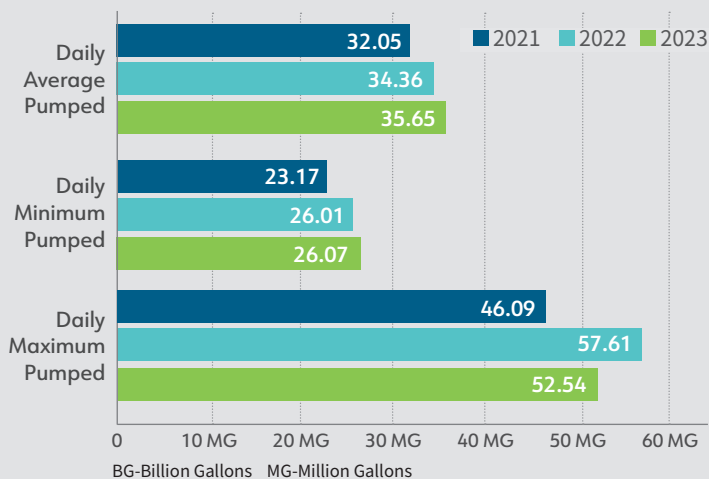
### F & Scott

The existing GAC media were removed from vessels and the vessels were inspected. The inspection report indicated that the existing vessels were not worth rehabilitating. Four new vessels were purchased and placed at the F & Scott well site in FY23. The pipe for the new vessels will be in place in FY24.

# WATER PRODUCTION



## 13.02 BG of Water Were Pumped And Treated In 2023



## Water Operations Division

The Water Production Department employs 19 licensed operators, nine of which have the highest license issued by the State of Florida, to oversee operations at 48 locations, 24 hours per day; seven days per week. Four employees are still working toward obtaining their licenses.

Water Operators pursued Continuing Education Unit (CEU) regulatory academic requirements by attending regional training sessions sponsored by the Florida Section of American Water Works Association (FSAWWA), Florida Rural Water Association (FRWA), and Florida Water and Pollution Control Operators Association (FWPCOA) to maintain licensure.

## Regulatory Activities

ECUA is categorized as a large community water system and as such, is regulated by multiple entities including the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Northwest Florida Water Management District, the Florida Department of Health, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency. These regulatory agencies require frequent monitoring and reporting of various operational and water quality data throughout the year. In addition to the annual monitoring requirements, 2023 proved to be a substantial year for compliance monitoring, which encompassed monitoring per the Lead and Copper Rule, the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule, and the monitoring requirements for primary and secondary contaminants at all active water treatment facilities.

## Our Licensed Water Operators:

- Took 339 FDEP potable water compliance samples and visited/serviced well and pumping station sites 20,632 times
- Added 3,770,650 lbs. of bagged hydrated lime for pH adjustment
- Fed 95,644 lbs. (613 - 150 lb. chlorine cylinders) of chlorine gas for disinfection
- Fed 359,646 lbs. of hydrofluorosilicic acid (Fluoride) for dental health
- Fed 14,353 gallons of orthophosphate for corrosion control (lead and copper)

The Water Production Department reviewed sample results for over 150 different analytes at over 25 different locations. Over 347 data sets and 3,887 bacteriological results were processed, and over 170 compliance reports were submitted to regulatory agencies.

Cross Connection Control (CCC)

Staff processed 11,162 test reports into an upgraded database, verified the initial compliance of 101 certification forms and verified the compliance of 277 five-year recertification forms related to private residential auxiliary water supply (private wells), and submitted the seventh required annual report of backflow data to the FDEP. The division conducted 899 surveys of existing commercial developments and reviews of 64 new commercial developments, to ensure the correct type of BPA, if required, is properly installed. Staff collaborated with local Fire Departments, the City of Pensacola, and Escambia County Building Inspection Departments to ensure that all commercial accounts had installed and tested their BPAs prior to receiving a Certificate of Occupancy.

Additionally, CCC collaborated with the Finance, Customer Service, and Regional Services Departments to identify, research, and resolve possible backflow occurrences, consumption readings, and billing issues. Two CCC personnel attended a Tester Re-Certification class, and one CCC staff member attended a Backflow Prevention Assembly Repair and Maintenance Course and a CCC Survey Course.

In 2023, CCC sent 18,379 notifications to commercial and residential customers to test, install, or repair Backflow Prevention Assemblies (BPAs). Of these, 7,116 were for Residential Cross Connection Control requirements. We tested 477 BPAs at ECUA facilities and 211 hydrant meter BPAs, leading to the repair of 132 units.

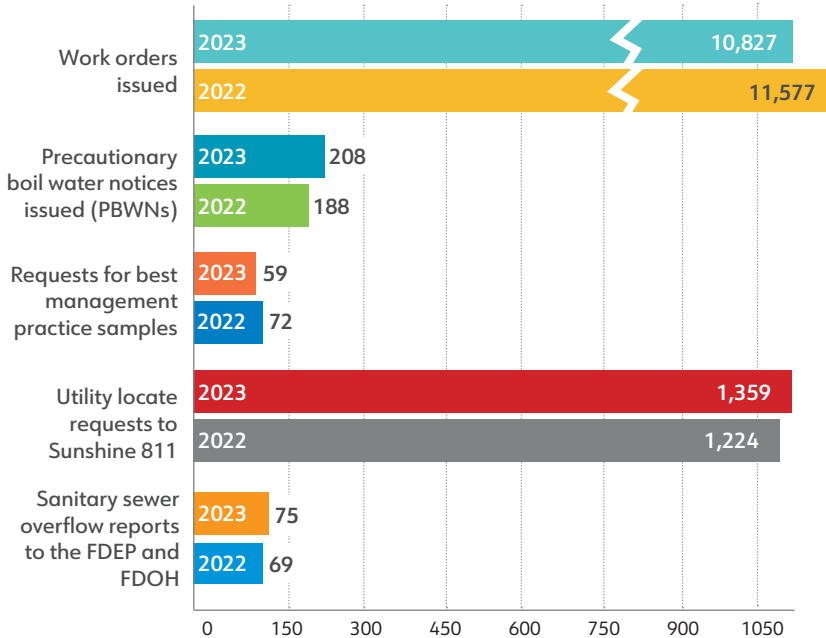
Central Well Field

The Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWMD) has approved the construction of five production wells located within the Central Wellfield. Two of the five wells have been drilled but treatment and pumping facilities have not yet been constructed. The current NFWMD Water Use Permit requires in Special Condition 14 that we have proof of property control for monitoring wells and monitoring stations. A consultant was utilized to relocate one monitoring station to meet this requirement.

SCADA Operations

The SCADA (Supervisory Control & Data Acquisition) Operations Center responded to 38,276 incoming and outgoing phone calls, issued 10,827 work orders, called in 1,359 utility locate requests to Sunshine 811, issued 208 precautionary boil water notices, requested samples for 59 best management practices, responded to and submitted 75 sanitary sewer overflow reports to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and Florida Department of Health (FDOH). SCADA Operations continued efforts to streamline and improve documentation concerning the following: unplanned and scheduled water outages; issuance of boil water notices; best management practices; and sanitary sewer overflows. SCADA coordinates with the Instrumentation/Electrical Division to complete several lift station and water well upgrades.

SCADA and Well Maintenance continued utilizing a specific capacity (performance) testing process at water wells, enabling personnel to identify and prioritize water well maintenance and repairs.





# MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION

## Facilities Maintenance Division

During Fiscal Year 2023, a total of 1,913 work orders were completed with 399 of those being cyclical preventive maintenance-type work orders. A large percentage (61% or 1,162 work orders) of our maintenance and repair efforts and material expenditures are for the many large facilities located in the Ellyson Industrial Park complex. This division is also responsible for and frequently responds to other locations such as the Materials Recycling Facility, the Godwin Sanitation complex, outlying Regional Services facilities, Water Reclamation facilities and the numerous Lift Station and Water Well structures.

The controlled inspections, quality assurance reviews and the custodial special projects continued throughout this past year. Controlled inspections were performed for those facilities under the Division's responsibility with a group of buildings being inspected

The purpose of inspection is to be proactive and identify interior and exterior building conditions, repairs, cleanliness, safety and health discrepancies, indoor air quality issues and to communicate and understand occupant concerns.

every month. Inspections also included accessing and walking the facilities' roofs and touring the exterior grounds. 102 work orders were generated as a result of these monthly inspections.

At the beginning of each month, quality assurance reviews are conducted on work orders completed and closed out by Maintenance personnel. The Lead Maintenance Technician randomly selects 10 completed work

orders and reviews them for accuracy and completeness. This ensures work orders are closed out with the required information and attachments for an accurate recall of the technicians' work effort.

Custodial special projects were scheduled each month for the stripping/waxing of vinyl composition tile (VCT), machine scrubbing of ceramic tile and luxury vinyl tile (LVT) flooring and the shampooing of area carpeting in our high traffic, heavily frequented facilities. Special projects were completed in the following buildings/areas: Ellyson Fleet Maintenance Garage, Customer Service, Engineering, Water Quality Lab, Human Resources, Risk Management, Training Rooms, Finance, Lift Station/Generator Maintenance Building, EOSA Executive area, CWRP 2nd Floor M&C areas, Board Room, IT areas and SOMB Finance areas.

The database continues to expand with 544 new part records created, for a total of 15,056-part records. The department generated 756 purchase requisitions and completed 18,094 work orders during the fiscal year.

## Information Systems/Warehouse Division

The Hexagon (formerly Infor) EAM (Enterprise Asset Management) system manages all work orders, purchasing requisitions, parts, and assets for the Maintenance & Construction Department.

In FY23, we streamlined the number of User Groups within Hexagon EAM, simplifying system administration. Also, we initiated the tracking of assets to provide valuable information relative to equipment location and costs; initiated the building of structure within each operational unit to enable cost roll-up; implemented the use of maintenance patterns where multi-level maintenance is required to prevent the overlap that regular preventive maintenance work orders create; and, started using multi-equipment work orders defined at the lowest level to split and capture accurate costs.

## Some of the significant accomplishments during the fiscal year include:

### **Customer Service LED Lighting Retrofit**

Facilities completed a lighting retrofit project in the Customer Service side of the main building. Project included removing higher watt fluorescent tubes from the 1st and 2nd floors of the building and replacing them lower watt LED tubes. The return on investment was immediate and will greatly reduce operating costs and maintenance activities as well as extend the life of the fixtures/tubes in the building.

### **Godwin Sanitation Truck Access Lane Project**

Capital project was awarded in the amount of \$337,586.60. This project was deemed substantially complete 40 days ahead of schedule and is open for vehicular traffic.

### **Customer Service Lobby Security Guard Workstation Replacement**

Capital project was awarded in the amount of \$4,972.69. This project entailed disassembling and disposing of the existing work station and assembling the new one.

### **Regional Services Conference Room Reconfiguration**

Capital project was awarded in the amount of \$22,440.

### **Ellyson Fleet Maintenance Garage Roof Coating**

Capital project was awarded in the amount of \$65,205.00. The roof coating system, American

Weatherstar Met-A-Gard is a high-tensile acrylic roof coating that was 25% of the cost of replacing the metal roof and comes with a 12-year labor and material warranty.

### **Ellyson Way Finder Signage**

Capital project awarded in the amount of \$8,560.00 for eight (8) new directional signs with aluminum posts installed around the Ellyson complex.

### **Water Well Roof Replacements**

Purchase orders were issued for the installation of commercial grade metal standing seam roofs at West Pensacola Well, the Lillian Well and the Villa Well. This was the eighth water well building that Facilities has managed and overseen the installation of these standing metal seam roofs.

### **Ellyson Hangar Upgrades**

Facilities personnel purchased corrugated sheet panels and installed them over the main level window and door openings. A purchase order for \$23,370.00 was issued for lead paint abatement and painting of both hangar doors.

### **CWRF & Godwin Fuel Tank Installation**

This \$172,300 capital project was awarded to install the concrete slabs and associated piping for two owner-furnished 12,000-gallon fuel storage tanks. Both tanks are operational and the project is deemed substantially complete.

## **Lift Stations (LS) Division**

The division completed a total of 8,696 work orders related to preventive maintenance, capital improvement projects, and standard repairs this fiscal year. The progression program for our Lift Station employees continues to pay dividends as two of our new Lift Station Mechanic I employees have earned a Class C Wastewater Collection Certification this year, and we have had six of our Lift Station Mechanic I employees pass the Class A Wastewater Collection Certification.

After previous years of hurricane and flooding rain events, the Hurricane Preparedness package plan we implemented last year is still in place and working out well, guaranteeing access to the equipment we need (such as by-pass pumps and generators) during these weather events to help minimize sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) throughout the service area.

The prevention of SSOs, costly major mechanical problems and clogged force mains continue to be a priority, along with the regular use of two vacuum trucks to remove fats, oils, grease, and rags from all of our lift stations. We have removed a total of 168,954 gallons of such material this past year. The vacuum trucks also assisted various divisions and contractors with small and large shutdowns, which were instrumental in preventing possible SSOs.

Our Lift Station crews operated and maintained 378 lift stations and worked with ECUA Engineering and multiple contractors with the abandonment of three lift stations from our system: the old LS 50 (Detroit Blvd); LS 90 (Pensacola Outlet Mall; and LS 387 (McGhee). We also added three new developer stations to our collection system: LS 411 (Turtle Creek); LS 412 (The Sanctuary); and LS 416 (Pecan Valley).

In addition, our in-house crews have upgraded LS 3 (Cervantes), LS 191 (Kings Wood), LS 339 (Carrington Lakes), and LS 370 (Links of Carrington) with higher horsepower pumps to help minimize SSOs throughout our sewer collection system. We have also upgraded LS 160 (Canal Bridge) from a single pump station to a duplex station. The crews have re-piped several of our older, existing stations due to age-related pipe deterioration.

# MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION

## Odor Control Division

Odor Control's crew serviced and maintained 42 odor control media scrubbers and blowers at all lift stations and our three water reclamation facilities; serviced and replaced the media and cleaned the scrubbers at ECUA's three Regional Pump Stations twice this year to keep all odor complaints to a minimum; installed two Hi-Vent odor control units at LS 10 (Lincoln Park) and LS 408 (Deer Run II); installed two Mixers at LS 381 (Bauer Road) and LS 102 (Avondale); serviced and replaced the media on all of the Calgon vents on the CWRf transmission main; and collected monthly hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) readings. Odor Control's two-man crew completed 1,047 preventive maintenance and emergency work orders, and dealt with numerous customer odor complaints.

## Generator Maintenance Division

Our Generator crew completed 760 preventive maintenance and emergency work orders. These included: the servicing and maintenance of 40 portable and 68 permanent generator units in the ECUA system; the load testing and verification of automatic transfer switches (ATSs) as part of a weekly testing program; and the management of fuel tank inspections and tank compliance with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).

Additionally, the staff and crews continued with a generator fuel testing system that entails polishing and cleaning of the fuel to prevent algae and condensation from building up in the fuel tanks due to long-term storage. The clean fuel has reduced the amount of clogging on injectors and increased the life span of the fuel filters on the equipment. Crews also cleaned and painted seven fuel tanks located at various water wells and lift stations throughout our system.

We also purchased a natural gas generator to place at the smaller re-pump stations in large neighborhoods during long term and emergency power outages to help prevent sewer backups. We purchased and installed a new permanent 500KW generator at LS 379 (Target). The existing generator was then placed at LS 9 (Montclair) to upgrade the aging 350KW permanent generator at that location.

## Instrument/Electrical Division (I/E)

The division completed 2056 work orders related to preventive maintenance, capital improvements, and standard repairs this fiscal year. We provided training to the entire Maintenance and Construction Department on Arc Flash dangers/prevention and proper Lock-out/Tag-out procedures.

I/E crews began implementing the new VT SCADA system at the Central Water Reclamation Facility (CWRf) and several lift station sites. VT SCADA uses cellphone and internet technology as a backup to our current RF serial communication SCADA system. The server and software are installed and operational at the CWRf and the cellular radios are installed and operating at twelve lift station sites in parallel with the current RF SCADA.

At the CWRf, I/E Plants crews completed the electrical installation of the new, upgraded Kobelco air compressor for the Bio-Solids Dryer # 2. They also replaced all of the high bay metal halide light fixtures with new energy-efficient L.E.D. fixtures in the Bio-Solids building. I/E Plants crews coordinated and assisted the contractor with the scheduled maintenance of all of the low voltage breakers and transformers at CWRf and the three regional lift stations.

At the Pipeline Road Regional lift station, I/E crews completed the electrical and instrumentation installation of the potable water skid to provide clean seal water to the station's four 500 HP lift pumps. At the Pensacola Beach Wastewater Treatment plant, I/E Plants crews converted the Ultrasonic level controls for the Filter Feed well to Hydrostatic level control, providing more accurate and stable level readings for pump control.

I/E Lift Stations crews replaced the entire control panel at LS 372 (Warrington), with a new control panel with updated parts and an Allen Bradley PLC, thus eliminating the discontinued Modicon and Siemens PLCs. They also upgraded the wet well level controls from floats to a hydrostatic pressure transmitter for more accuracy and dependability. I/E Lift Stations crews oversaw and assisted the contractors with the replacement of the backup power generator and electrical modifications at LS 379 (Target). This upgrade was from a 300 KW to a 500 KW generator allowing all of the pumps to be available to run during a high flow and power failure emergency, such as a hurricane.

I/E Water Wells crews upgraded the pump controls at the Humphreys well from a soft starter to a VFD, allowing for more precise well operation and efficiency. At the Carriage Hills water plant, crews upgraded the pumps' discontinued and outdated VFD controls to Ethernet.

I/E installed SCADA panels to monitor the Emergency Power Generators at the Sanitation Administration, Ellyson Administration, and Ellyson Lab locations.





## Plant Maintenance

The division coordinates all preventive and predictive mechanical maintenance at ECUA's three Wastewater Reclamation Facilities, three Regional Pumping Stations, the Materials Recycling Facility, and the Composting Facility. The Plant Maintenance division completed over 3,340 work orders in FY2023, while also executing, providing support, and direction to contractors on capital improvement projects as well as other ECUA Departments.

## Central Water Reclamation Facility (CWRP)

Plant Maintenance performed a complete refurbishment of the Live Bottom Hopper and all conveying equipment that supports the Paddle Dryer. Plant Maintenance performed weld repairs to the steam vessel of Paddle Dryer due to the fatigue of heat expansion during daily operations.

Plant Maintenance installed the final 75HP compressor to complete the compressed air upgrade system in the Bio-Solids building. Plant Maintenance replaced a failed 150HP Surface Aerator multi-stage gear reducer on the BNR and refurbished the existing gearbox for spare as future use.

## Bayou Marcus WRF

Plant Maintenance assisted in the oversight and installation of the Permanent 24" Grit Removal By-Pass line.

## Composting

Plant Maintenance performed repairs to the eradicating portion of the Morbark 1300 Grinder. The division also performed metal fabrication to rebuild the destroyed safety guards and frame work.

## Regional Lift Stations

Plant Maintenance removed, rebuilt and installed two 600HP pumps at Pipeline Lift Station as well as two 312 HP pumps at Moreno St. Lift Station. Several tons of grit/debris were removed from the wet wells of both Government St. and Moreno St. Lift Stations.

## Materials Recycling Facility (MRF)

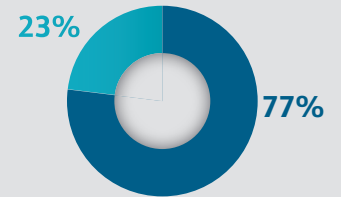
Plant Maintenance performed a complete overhaul of the Metering Bin drum. The Plant Maintenance team fabricated the extremely worn and missing wear plates protecting the structure of the infeed hopper.

Plant Maintenance team repaired Compactor 02 by rebuilding the hydraulic ram, upgrading the hydraulic pump, hydraulic fan motor and cooler.

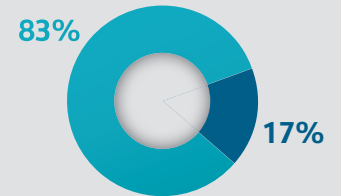
Plant Maintenance team installed a new hydraulic pressure unit system, which operates the News Sorter and Polishing Screen decks. The original unit was obsolete. The team compiled the necessary information to formulate the requirements for the hydraulic demands of the screening equipment.

Plant Maintenance executed new chute modifications to several of the robot sorting systems. These upgrades eliminate cross contamination and product jams, resulting in a desirable final product. Plant Maintenance installed the new gripper shaft upgrades for all nine sorting robots. This upgrade consisted of new steel gripper shaft with cup holder, redesigned cup, and a new three-part vacuum hose system.

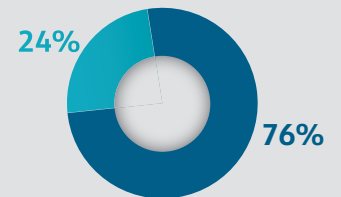
## WORK ORDERS Preventive Maintenance vs. Non-Preventive Maintenance



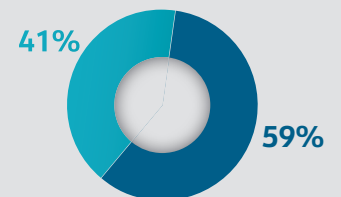
Facilities Maintenance



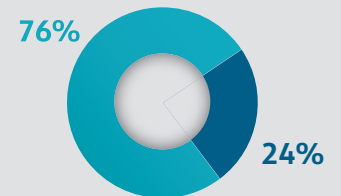
Plant Maintenance



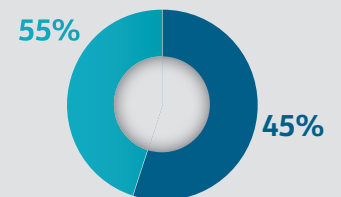
I/E



Lift Station



Generator Maintenance



Odor Control

■ % of Preventive Work Orders  
■ % of Non-Preventive Work Orders

# WATER RECLAMATION

The Water Reclamation Department employs 45 licensed operators, 22 of which have the highest license issued by the State of Florida, to oversee operations at three locations, 24 hours per day and seven days per week. Eight Water Reclamation operators advanced to the next level of FDEP-issued Operator's licenses after passing required coursework, on-the-job training, and a rigorous exam.

## Bayou Marcus Water Reclamation Facility (BMWRF) Pollutant Removal

PARAMETER	REMOVAL EFFICIENCY	LBS. REMOVED	ANNUAL AVERAGE	DEP PERMIT LIMIT
Carbonaceous Biochemical Oxygen Demand (CBOD)	99.82%	3,456,802	1.2 mg/L	5.0 mg/L
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	99.87%	4,339,974	1.1 mg/L	5.0 mg/L
Total Nitrogen (TN)	99.26%	828,410	1.2 mg/L	3.0 mg/L
Total Phosphorus (TP)	98.98%	100,401	0.20 mg/L	1.0 mg/L
Ammonia (NH3)	99.98%	578,250	0.02 mg/L	1.6 mg/L

The Bayou Marcus WRF had a total flow of 2.134 BG in FY 2023 and earned a Silver Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) for the 2022 calendar year, maintaining compliance with all but one of its 3,584 compliance metrics. As a community partner, the Bayou Marcus WRF also treated more than 11.6 million gallons of leachate from Escambia County's Perdido Landfill.

In FY 2023, Bayou Marcus WRF Operations staff pulled 2,297 samples and performed data analysis on more than 8,000 results for submitting reports to regulatory bodies and process control.

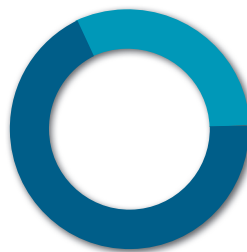
Bayou Marcus WRF also plays a vital role in supporting environmental health. In the 1990's, the Bayou Marcus Wetlands were illegally drained and harvested. Since ECUA acquired the property, the Bayou Marcus WRF has been rehydrating those wetlands, this year with an average distribution of 4.15 MGD to the wetlands north of Bayou Marcus Creek and 1.70 MGD to the wetlands to the south.

## Reuse of Reclaimed Water



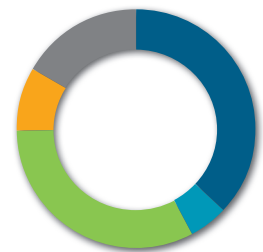
38.61 MG\*\* of reclaimed water from the Pensacola Beach WRF were reused

■ SRIA Flow..... 18.27 MG  
■ On-site Reuse ..... 20.34 MG



2.134 BG\* of reclaimed water from the Bayou Marcus WRF were reused

■ Northern Wetlands..... 1.515 BG  
■ Southern Wetlands..... 0.619 BG



5.219 BG\* of reclaimed water from the CWRW were reused

■ Gulf Power ..... 1.937 BG  
■ On-Site Reuse ..... 0.273 BG  
■ International Paper ..... 1.695 BG  
■ Sprayfields ..... 0.457 BG  
■ Wetlands Enhancement.. 0.858 BG

\*Billion Gallons \*\*Million Gallons

## Central Water Reclamation Facility (CWRF) Pollutant Removal

PARAMETER	REMOVAL EFFICIENCY	LBS. REMOVED	ANNUAL AVERAGE	DEP PERMIT LIMIT
Carbonaceous Biochemical Oxygen Demand (CBOD)	99.4%	9,811,299	1.3 mg/L	5.0 mg/L
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	99.5%	9,796,935	1.0 mg/L	5.0 mg/L
Total Nitrogen (TN)	98.9%	1,928,657	0.4 mg/L	3.0 mg/L
Total Phosphorus (TP)	98.2%	218,938	0.09 mg/L	0.4 mg/L

The Central WRF had a total flow of 5.219 BG in FY 2023 and earned a Silver Award through NACWA for Calendar Year 2022, maintaining compliance with 5,012 of 5,015 compliance points.

Looking towards the future growth of Escambia County, Central WRF facility staff completed the required studies and submitted a permit application to the FDEP for an additional 10.2 MGD of discharge capacity. The proposed reuse system will include an approximately 55.5-acre wetland complex whereby water is percolated, recharging the local surficial aquifer system. In addition, significant habitat for wetland species will be created. This discharge remains under evaluation by the FDEP at this time.

## Pensacola Beach Water Reclamation Facility (PBWRF) Pollutant Removal

PARAMETER	REMOVAL EFFICIENCY	LBS. REMOVED	ANNUAL AVERAGE	DEP PERMIT LIMIT
Carbonaceous Biochemical Oxygen Demand (CBOD)	98.52%	428,957	2.2 mg/L	5.0 mg/L
Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	98.96%	213,180	0.78 mg/L	5.0 mg/L
Total Nitrogen (TN)	96.62%	96,237	1.17 mg/L	3.0 mg/L
Total Phosphorus (TP)	97.85%	12,208	0.12 mg/L	1.0 mg/L

The Pensacola Beach WRF had a total flow of 303.982 MG in FY 2023 and earned a Silver Award through NACWA for Calendar Year 2022, maintaining compliance with 4,251 of 4,253 compliance points.

In FY2023, the Pensacola Beach WRF began sharing Santa Rosa Sound sampling data on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) Watershed Information Network (WIN) database. This database provides quick data access to environmental professionals from a multitude of different sources to assess the environmental health of surface water ecosystems.

## Industrial Pretreatment Program (IPP)

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, the ECUA IPP continued to work with local industries by maintaining active industrial discharge permits and monitoring wastewater discharges through sampling efforts, analytical report reviews, and routine inspections. Each permitted facility must comply with local, State, and Federal regulations, and Significant Industrial Users are required to be inspected on an annual basis. The IPP conducted a total of 11 inspections during FY23, noting 15 user violations, three of those being of Significant Non-Compliance. The inspections and subsequent discussions with a few industries have led to some process improvements and improved communications with business leaders.

During FY 2022, the ECUA IPP collected 788 wastewater samples from industry, analyzing 3,220 data points, providing the basis to recover over \$1.35 million in treatment costs for more than 220 million gallons of industrial wastewater discharged to the Central Water Reclamation Facility (CWRF) and over \$61,000 in treatment cost for more than 11 million gallons of industrial wastewater discharged to the Bayou Marcus Water Reclamation Facility (BMWRF).

The ECUA IPP, in conjunction with public information staff, successfully launched a new page on the ECUA website specifically for Pretreatment. The webpage allows our customers to easily access information and forms related to Pretreatment, including 'Dental Discharger' information, pharmaceutical hazardous waste regulations, the sewer use ordinance (Chapter 26 of the ECUA code), applications, and more. The webpage can be found at [ecua.fl.gov/pretreatment-program](http://ecua.fl.gov/pretreatment-program).



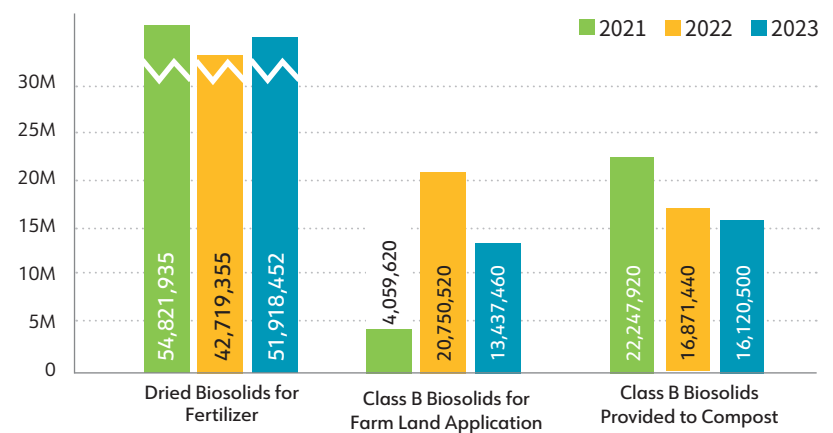
# WATER RECLAMATION

## Biosolids Handling

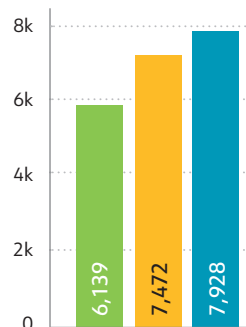
The ECUA Biosolids Facility located at the CWRW processes sludge from all three of our water reclamation facilities. In FY 2023, the facility processed approximately 241 million gallons of sludge from our three facilities, creating approximately 16.1 million dry pounds of biosolids for beneficial reuse as fertilizer and compost.

CWRW biosolids drivers made 722 trips to the Pensacola Beach WRF, hauling 487,732 wet pounds in 4,690,500 gallons, and 1,730 trips to the Bayou Marcus WRF, hauling 3,457,048 wet pounds in 11,234,500 gallons. This was all done with no vehicular accidents recorded. Operations staff in biosolids handling also collected and analyzed more than 18,000 samples for permit compliance and operational purposes, meeting all 504 of its compliance metrics.

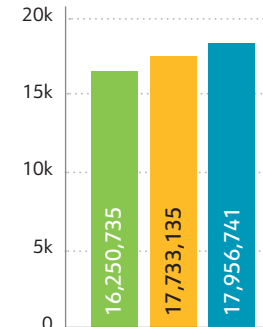
## Biosolids Produced In Wet Pounds



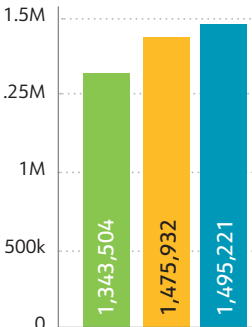
## Septage Received Septage Loads



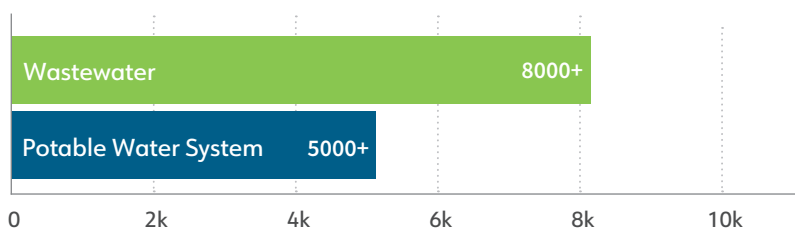
## Septage Volume In Gallons



## Septage Revenue In Dollars



## Water Samples Collected and Analyzed in 2023



## Water Quality Laboratory

The Water Quality Laboratory division is comprised of eight Laboratory Analysts, a Laboratory Supervisor, and a Water Quality Field Supervisor who facilitate the collection and analysis of samples in support of the Water Reclamation, Water Production, Wastewater Infrastructure, Regional Services, and Customer Service Departments. This year, the laboratory analyzed more than 8,000 wastewater samples, more than 5,000 samples for the potable water system, and 788 samples in support of ECUA's Industrial Pretreatment Program, analyzing more than 95% of those samples in-house. Additional sampling requirements this FY included EPA's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR), which occurs on a five-year cycle.

In addition to normal sampling and analysis, laboratory staff are responsible for in-home visits responding customers' sanitary sewer overflows. Laboratory staff were able to resolve 129 customer complaints and respond, investigate, sample, report, and resolve 33 sanitary sewer overflows in ECUA's collection system.

The laboratory also successfully completed four proficiency testing evaluations, which look at comparative sample analyses to maintain its National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) and Department of Health Certifications.

# REGIONAL SERVICES

Regional Services received nearly 30,000 utility locate requests, of which over 10,900 required marking in anticipation of future construction proximal to ECUA's infrastructure.

## Regional Services East, West and South

The Regional Services (RS) Department consists of three regions (East, West, and South), which are collectively responsible for the maintenance of the entire water distribution system, wastewater collection system, and wastewater force main system, along with all of the appurtenances that belong to these systems. The three regions are supported by the wastewater maintenance division, valve maintenance division, fire hydrant maintenance division, meter maintenance division, and pavement repair/debris removal division. Approximately 143,000 work orders were completed throughout the entire department during Fiscal Year 2023, averaging nearly 12,000 work orders per month. When fully staffed, the RS department employs 115 employees, which equates to nearly 105 work orders completed per employee every month.

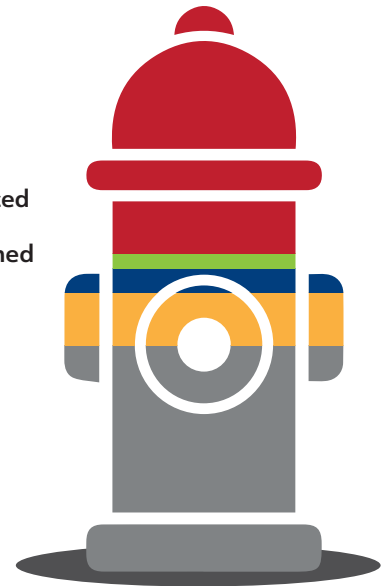
There are over 104,000 water meters in the ECUA water distribution system, and just over 77,000 of the 143,000 completed work orders were related to the maintenance or service of water meters. All three regions continued the effort to repair or replace components of water meters with automatic meter reading (AMR) technology. A transition to AMR meters began more than ten years ago and the demands to repair or replace components, predominantly the register or the communication mechanism, have increased dramatically as the end of the warranty period on these devices approaches.

ECUA oversees more than 7,750 fire hydrants

- 22 out dated-hydrants were replaced
- 61 hydrants had flow tests performed
- 259 hydrants were repaired
- 2,400 hydrants were tested to evaluate flow performance

## Fire Hydrant Division (FH)

ECUA's water distribution system contains more than 7,750 fire hydrants that require maintenance and testing. In FY 2023, the division repaired 259 hydrants, performed preventive maintenance on nearly 2,400 hydrants and tested them to evaluate flow performance, installed 1 new hydrant, replaced 22 outdated two-port hydrants or damaged hydrants with newer three-port hydrants, and performed 61 flow tests. The flush crew is a part of this division and performs a vital role in the maintenance of water quality in the distribution system. Over the year, the division flushed nearly 224 dead-end water mains and performed 298 flushes in response to concerns about discolored water. The division completed one unidirectional flushing operation – a method used to achieve a more aggressive flush through increased water velocity in the pipe. The crew also installed 12 new automatic flushing devices on hydrants or other flush points, which are designed to automatically perform scheduled flushes with the use of a timer. This helps maintain water quality with only minimal maintenance by employees and reduces the demand on employee time and equipment. The group now maintains 268 automatic flush devices. The hydrant crew also performed 26 valve insertions, which is a method used to install a valve without having to shut down the water or sewer main, thereby limiting disruptions to customers' service and promoting efficient use of employee time.



# REGIONAL SERVICES



## Meter Maintenance Division (MM)

The Meter Maintenance Division was created in FY 2022. The purpose of the MM is to have a division that is solely focused on water meter maintenance. In the past, meter maintenance was one of the many responsibilities of the East, South, and West Regions. The undivided attention of this single division on this one critical area will improve customer service and the collection of revenue by minimizing mistakes in the installation of meters, ensuring that meters are set up properly in our customer database, prompt repair or replacement of defective meters, and consistency in the testing of meters for accuracy. The singular focus of the MM will lead to a depth of knowledge and level of attention to detail that is difficult to achieve without this specialization. MM is responsible for the installation, testing, inspection, and maintenance of all large meters (2-inch to 10-inch) and testing and maintenance of the small meters (less than 2-inch).

## Valve Maintenance Division (VM)

The Valve Maintenance (VM) division maintains approximately 500 air-release valves (ARVs) and nearly 22,000 valves in the water distribution system. Depending on the valve's condition, all the ARVs in the system were inspected and maintained every 30, 60, 90, 120, or 180 days, including 69 ARVs on the critical CWRP central transmission main. These valves were inspected and maintained at least quarterly. VM performed preventive maintenance on 1,500 above-ground ARVs and 76 underground ARVs.

VM exercised 4,083 water valves and 136 sewer valves this past fiscal year, meeting and exceeding the FDEP's mandate regarding the exercising of valves. The division repaired 50 broken water valves and replaced or brought 206 valve boxes up to grade for enhanced accessibility. Overall, VM staff provided frequent support to the three regions as well as various other departments and divisions of ECUA including Engineering, Lift Stations, Plant Maintenance, and ECUA contractors by operating and maintaining valves critical to maintenance or capital improvement projects. VM staff completed and/or assisted with the replacement of 43 water valves throughout the system. The VM has removed 4 problematic duck-bill style sewer check valves and replaced them with swing check weighted arm with air cushion.

## Wastewater Maintenance Division (WM)

The Wastewater Maintenance Division coordinated with the Wastewater Infrastructure Division to reduce the number of sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) that occur. Using six vacuum trucks, WM cleaned more than 957,000 feet of pipe this year in the gravity sewer collection system and removed grease and other obstructions to restore the proper function of the system. WM also used closed-circuit television (CCTV) to inspect over 330,500 feet of sewer pipe. These inspections yielded valuable information and identified 125 substantial pipe deficiencies that are now repaired.

The division responded to 895 calls from customers to investigate problems in the collection system and completed approximately 330 work orders issued by other divisions and departments.

## Fats, Oils, and Grease Division

The Fats, Oils, and Grease (FOG) Division manages a program to enforce compliance with ECUA's FOG disposal requirements. The program involves the inspection of 961 food service establishments (FSEs) to reduce the discharge of FOG into the collection system. The FOG division performed 2,574 total inspections of FSEs and also continued to manage discharge permit applications from FSEs per Chapter 6 of the ECUA Code.

## ECUA's Residential Cooking Oil Disposal Program

This program has a total number of 14 FOG drop-off stations located throughout the County. These drop-off stations provide customers with an appropriate means of disposal for used cooking oil. Approximately 15,700 gallons of used cooking oil were collected at these sites over the year.



## Emergency Projects Completed In FY 2023

### Fort Pickens Road Force Main Replacement

Regional Services was required to hire emergency contractors to replace approximately 6,800 linear feet of 6-inch and 8-inch force mains due to numerous failures of the antiquated thin-walled PVC main along Fort Pickens Road on Pensacola Beach. Regional Services solicited the force main pipe and appurtenances from the three local vendors. Due to tourist and utility congestion, ECUA determined that a horizontal directional drill (HDD) would be the best option for the installation. This extensive emergency replacement was completed in approximately 11 weeks. The total construction cost for the emergency force main replacement was approximately \$870,000.00.

### Winding Lane 16-Inch Force Main Replacement

Due to two major sanitary sewer overflows within Skinner Mill Creek, which flows directly into Escambia Bay from a failing 16-inch cast iron sanitary sewer force main, Regional Services was issued approval to solicit three local contractors. The project consisted of the installation of approximately 1,700 linear feet of 16-inch PVC force main from Old LS #13 along Winding Lane to Old Spanish Trail Road. It also consisted of the installation of approximately 1,100 linear feet of 6-inch PVC water main along Winding Lane to replace the antiquated Transite water main and provide a location to install the new force main. The Notice to Proceed was issued in May 2023 and the final acceptance was issued in September. The total construction cost for the emergency force main replacement was approximately \$1,340,000.00.

### Sharon Lane Water Main Replacement

Due to an antiquated four-inch Transite water main failing three times, in three different locations within one week in June 2023, Regional Services received approval to replace the water main along Sharon Lane, from Pine Forest Road to Detroit Boulevard on an emergency basis. We coordinated with the Purchasing department to fast-track the solicitation of seven local contractors. The project consisted of the installation of 3,000 linear feet of six-inch PVC water mains, 1,300 linear feet of four-inch PVC water mains, and the abandonment of the existing Transite water mains. The Notice to Proceed was issued on August 28, 2023, and the final acceptance was issued on November 20, 2023, ahead of schedule. The total construction cost for the emergency water main replacement was approximately \$478,000.

### Airport Boulevard Road Restoration 12-Inch Water Main Failure

This emergency project consisted of removing asphalt and a road base that was compromised due to a 12-inch water main failure in August 2023 on Airport Boulevard, just west of the I-110 Bridge. The existing asphalt and road base had to be removed to a depth of 22 inches within an approximate 75-foot x 110-foot area. An extensive traffic control and detour plan was developed to allow for the temporary intersection closure in a very busy interchange and the contractor accomplished the roadway repairs by working for 21 straight hours. The total construction cost for the emergency road restoration project was approximately \$266,000.00.



### Kingsfield Road Emergency Air Release Valve (ARV) Removal

There was an air release valve (ARV) on the 20-inch force main on Kingsfield Road on the east side of Chemstrand Road, just upstream of the connection to the CWRF 48-inch transmission force main. We discovered that the gas and water expelled from the ARV had badly corroded the exterior of the 20-inch ductile iron force main pipe. Due to the critical nature of this force main and the potential consequences of its failure, the ARV was removed and the corroded section of pipe was replaced using ECUA's emergency contracts. ECUA crews performed the sewer by-pass operation to remove the sewer flow from the work location as the ARV and damaged pipe were removed and the pipe was replaced. The total construction cost for the emergency force main work was approximately \$46,000.

# EXECUTIVE STAFF



**Don Palmer, PE**  
Deputy Executive Director of  
Engineering & Environmental  
Services



**Gerry Piscopo, BSME**  
Deputy Executive Director of  
Maintenance & Construction



**Tommy Fitzpatrick, MPA**  
Deputy Executive Director  
Shared Services



**Gabe Brown, BSOL**  
Director of  
Customer Services



**Hamid Rézaie, BSOL**  
Director of Information  
Technology



**Tom Dawson, Jr., PE**  
Director of  
Water Production



**Stacy Hayden, PE**  
Director of Engineering



**Brian Reid, PE**  
Director of  
Regional Services



**Kimberly E. Scruggs, MPA, SPHR**  
Director of Human Resources &  
Administrative Services



**Randy Sears, MS, MSA**  
Director of  
Water Reclamation



**Justin Smith, CPA**  
Director of Finance



**Nathalie Bowers, DFM, CBC**  
Public Information Officer



**Sigrid Rehrig, BS, MBA**  
Education Programs Specialist

# EXEMPLARY EMPLOYEES

## **Brandy Bowers** Laboratory Supervisor Supervisor Of The Year 2023

This award was presented to Brandy Bowers in recognition of her dedication and service to the Emerald Coast Utilities Authority. Brandy's role as the laboratory supervisor places her in direct contact with two of the three primary missions of ECUA – water and wastewater. Brandy works with her team and with internal ECUA customers to review and report sample results through various compliance agencies and also works with other ECUA departments to ensure that the Authority's external customer base is cared for.

Brandy has a "how can I help?" attitude, even when questioned about a project or situation that may not fall

within her area of responsibility. When presented with issues that fall outside the laboratory, Brandy does her best to contact the correct department and get those situations resolved in a timely manner. ECUA managers know they are welcome to contact her, even if she is not physically at work.

Maintaining such a high morale and camaraderie among her group, Brandy and her team often go on weekend outings, not because they have to, but because they want to.

From a technical perspective, Brandy travels to conferences annually to ensure that the laboratory is maintaining compliance with the most up-to-date requirements, as is



demonstrated by continuously passing proficiency tests and audits. The work Brandy and her team perform impacts not only ECUA's customers, but also the environment.

We are proud to honor Brandy as our 2023 Supervisor of the Year.



## **Heather Stone** Water Production Regulatory Compliance Coordinator Employee of the Year 2023

This award was presented to Heather Stone in recognition of her dedication and service to the Emerald Coast Utilities Authority. Heather has the task of ensuring that all federal and state environmental compliance and regulatory requirements are met and performed in a timely manner. Heather has an incredible work ethic, demonstrates a "driven-to-excellence" attitude, and does not hesitate to take the time to explain rules and regulations to anyone who needs assistance interpreting the regulations.

The compliance tasks that need to be performed in water production have been made seamless, thanks to Heather. Everyone's job has become a little easier because there is comfort in knowing that a true professional is taking care of these responsibilities.

Heather has a positive attitude and demonstrates a team-player mindset each day, works well with all of her co-workers, and is consistently a pleasure to be around.

We are proud to honor Heather as our 2023 Employee of the Year.





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