



Customer Pipeline

Emerald Coast Utilities Authority

Don't Let the Cold Freeze You Out

Every winter, many homeowners face the inconvenience and expense that come with frozen water pipes. Here are a few simple measures you can take to ready your home's plumbing for winter.



1. DISCONNECT AND DRAIN OUTDOOR HOSES: Detach all hoses from faucets and allow them to drain. This guards against the water in the hose or pipe from freezing and bursting the faucet or pipe to which it is connected.

2. INSULATE PIPES OR FAUCETS IN UNHEATED AREAS: Pipes located in any unheated area of your house are subject to freezing. Take the time to wrap these pipes with insulation materials made especially for this purpose *before* freezing temperatures arrive. Doing this early in the season protects against having to scramble at the last minute, and it's a lot easier to work in an unheated area when temperatures are mild!

3. FIND THE MASTER SHUT-OFF VALVE: The master shut-off valve controls the water flow to your home's plumbing and is usually located near the entry point of your home's water line, near the water heater or the washer and dryer hook-ups. Knowing where this valve is located will be important if a pipe bursts anywhere in your home as it will allow you to cut off the flow of water. You can mark this valve with bright paint or by hanging a tag marker on it. Make sure all family members know where it is, and how to turn it off.

4. RUN A TRICKLE OF WATER: When forecasts call for sustained and / or severe freezing temperatures, run a thin trickle of water from the faucet furthest from the water line coming to your house. Usually this is in a room at the back of the house or outside, in the yard. Allowing the water to circulate through your home's plumbing helps to keep it from freezing. Some consider this a waste of water but the cost of the water used is slight compared to that of repairing broken pipes and resulting water damage.



Mark Your Calendars!

ECUA offices will be closed on **Monday, January 16**, in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.



Sanitation Pick-up Schedule for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

There are **no changes** to the collection schedules for all Residential and Commercial customers. All garbage, yard trash, recycling and commercial dumpster collections will be made on their regularly scheduled days.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday!

Dates to Remember...

ECUA offices will be closed during 2012 for the following holidays on these days:

New Year's Day	Monday, January 2
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Monday, January 16
Presidents' Day	Monday, February 20
Memorial Day	Monday, May 28
Independence Day	Wednesday, July 4
Labor Day	Monday, September 3
Thanksgiving	November 22 and 23
Christmas Eve	Monday, December 24
Christmas Day	Tuesday, December 25

Thirty Years of Environmental Leadership: Bayou Marcus Wetlands Boardwalk Nature Trail

As ECUA marks its thirtieth year, we are celebrating the environmental initiatives we have achieved to date, and those we look forward to implementing in the future. This month, we're focusing on the Bayou Marcus Wetlands Boardwalk Nature Trail.

Since 1998, the Emerald Coast Utilities Authority's Bayou Marcus Water Reclamation facility (BMWRF) has proudly won 3 Gold and 9 Silver Peak Performance Awards from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. This award program recognizes public wastewater treatment facilities for their outstanding compliance records on an annual basis. Another source of pride at the BMWRF: its Boardwalk, which spans coastal wetlands near Perdido Bay and is part of the Great Florida Birding Trail, a 2,000-mile self-guided highway trail connecting nearly 500 birding sites throughout Florida.



The Trail is a program of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, supported in part by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Wildlife Foundation of Florida. For a list of individual Birding Trail sites including counties, nearest cities, web links and contact phone numbers, go to www.floridabirdingtrail.com.

As one of the Boardwalk's biggest fans, ECUA District 1 Board Member, Ms. Elizabeth Campbell says, "I consider the Boardwalk to be one of the Emerald Coast's 'hidden gems'. It's a rare win-win situation that uses nature's own filtration system, preserves our wetlands and provides public access for recreation without disturbing the natural habitat. I've taken people, ranging from my Girl Scout troop to visitors from across the globe, to the Boardwalk at the Bayou Marcus WRF, and I always hear the same comment, 'but it doesn't smell!' I only hope that more local residents take the opportunity to enjoy ECUA's 'green practice gem.'"

The Boardwalk is built above the Bayou Marcus Wetlands, offering visitors an opportunity to walk through an authentic Northwest Florida wetland ecosystem, which provides spectacular views and an opportunity to see wildlife that's indigenous to the area. The abundance of fresh, clean reclaimed water from the Bayou Marcus WRF (averaging approximately, 6.2 million gallons per day), keeps the large and diverse bird population, as well as, White-Tailed deer, Osceola turkeys, Gray foxes, raccoons, rabbits, beavers, bobcats, turtles, otters, snakes, and even alligators on and around the site.

We maintain a Boardwalk communications line, which provides updated information. Come see us, but it's always best to call the information line first at (850) 458-1658.

Next month: Water Resource Management: Protecting and Preserving our Sole Source of Drinking Water

Have You Walked the Nature Trail?

The Boardwalk Nature Trail is open year-round for the public to enjoy, but for safety's sake, public access is only possible during daylight hours. **It's about 300 yards from the Fayal Drive parking lot to the Boardwalk ramp, then a mile and a half to the end. It does not loop back to the beginning, so it's recommended that visitors only go as far as they are willing to walk back.** The different seasons require a few basic safety rules:

- Children should always be accompanied by an adult guardian.
- During the warm months, bring cool fluids to drink. The temperature in the Wetlands is higher than elsewhere, and the humidity is always near 100%!
- Wear light-colored, loose fitting clothes, and comfortable walking shoes.
- The wooden deck heats up as the day goes on, so early morning or late afternoon excursions are advised. You may also want to wear a hat to provide protection from the sun.
- During the cooler months, warm clothes and a windbreaker jacket will help make the walk comfortable.
- And don't forget the bug spray during the warmer months!

