



Customer Pipeline

Emerald Coast Utilities Authority

November 15: Sewer Averaging Begins

If you are an ECUA mainland residential wastewater customer, your annual sewer charges are based on the average number of gallons of water used in your household during the period known as “sewer averaging.” Sewer averaging, or Winter Quarter Averaging as it is called in some communities, is usually conducted during the winter months when residential water consumption is at its lowest. **The ECUA’s sewer averaging period will begin with each residential customer’s first meter reading on or after November 15 (including ECUA sewer customers whose water service is from another water provider). The length of your sewer averaging period is 90 days.**

LEAKS WASTE WATER AND WILL END UP AFFECTING YOUR MONTHLY WATER AND SEWER CHARGES.

Since your actual water consumption during this period will determine your sewer charge for the next twelve months, it is important to check all indoor and outdoor plumbing fixtures for leaks. Leaks waste water and will end up affecting your monthly water and sewer charges. Most leaks are easy to identify but sometimes, it takes a little creativity to track them down.

You can confirm a suspected leak in your toilet’s plumbing by putting several drops of food coloring in your toilet tank. Wait 15 minutes, and if the colored water shows up in the bowl, there is a leak in the tank. Check the toilet’s stopper ball for wear by flushing the toilet and rubbing the bottom of the stopper with your finger. If the rubber rubs off or crumbles, it is time to replace the stopper. Finally, **you need to oil, adjust or replace the flush handle if you have to jiggle it to stop the water from running after you flush.** The “stuck” handle may be causing the stopper to stay open, allowing water to flow into the bowl. Check out more ways to save on your water and sewer bill on the reverse side of this newsletter!



ECUA Residential Grease Recycling Program

The aim of ECUA’s Residential Grease Disposal Program is to help our customers capture and dispose of their cooking grease in an environmentally safe and effective way.

Here’s how it works: First, return the used oil to its original container, if possible, or pick up a grease container that you can use to store and dispose of household cooking grease at one of the ECUA Grease Recycling Disposal Stations (see locations on the ECUA website). Return your filled container to any of the designated drop-off locations, exchange it for an empty container, and you are ready to repeat the process. Once the cooking oil and grease is collected, it’s then recycled as biodiesel fuel. It’s that simple!

To make it even easier for you, we’ve also included used cooking grease on the list of items ECUA accepts in its Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Program. Read more about this convenient service on the ECUA website at www.ecua.fl.gov.



Mark Your Calendars!

ECUA business offices will be closed Thursday and Friday, November 28 and 29, in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.

Sanitation Pick-up Schedule for the Thanksgiving Week

Residential Customers Garbage, Yard Trash & Recycling Services

Thursday collection will be on Friday, Nov. 29

Friday collection will be on Saturday, Nov. 30

Commercial Customers Dumpster Services

Thursday collection will be on Wednesday, Nov. 27 (the day BEFORE the holiday.)

Friday and Saturday collections will not change.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday!

Please Don't Throw in the Towel...

Sanitary sewer overflows (SSO) and backups can cause health hazards, damage home interiors, and threaten the environment. Common causes of sewer overflows include loss of power at pump stations and treatment facilities through lightning strikes, excessive rain over a short time-frame, accumulated cooking grease, and pipes that become blocked by items flushed down the toilet. Lately, ECUA has seen an increase in rags, paper towels and flushable wipes accumulating at lift stations, water reclamation facilities, and throughout the collection system, as a growing cause of SSOs.



Grease-choked sewer interior

Why is This a Problem?

Any solid matter that you put down the toilet or drain has the potential to cause a blockage in the public sewer *or your own private drain and household plumbing*. This can lead to:

- Sewage overflowing in your or your neighbor's home; into yards and streets
- An expensive and unpleasant cleanup
- Potential contact with disease-causing organisms
- An increase in operation and maintenance costs for local sewer departments, which can cause higher sewer bills for customers
- Increased pollution due to sewage spills caused by the blockage

In the bathroom, use the trash can, not the toilet, for disposal of certain items.

Here's what you should not flush:

- Band-aids and bandage wrappers
- Cleaning wipes; facial wipes
- Condoms, Cotton balls, swabs and pads
- Dental floss and teeth whitening strips
- Disposable diapers, nursing pads, and baby wipes
- Flammable or explosive substances
- Hair, kitty litter, needles and sharp objects
- Expired and unused prescription or over-the-counter medications
- Mini and maxi-pads, tampons and applicators
- Motor oil, transmission fluids, anti-freeze, solvents, paints, turpentine, nail polish, polish remover or other toxic chemicals
- Paper towels and rags

Helping to prevent clogged drains, sewer overflows and backups is easy and important to us all.



Reduce Water Usage: Save, Save, Save

Here are some other ideas to keep in mind for reducing water usage during the sewer averaging period and throughout the year:

- Water the lawn and garden only when necessary. In order to moderate some of the extreme peaks in usage, and to maintain a balanced system pressure and reduce the amount of wear on our pumping equipment, ECUA recommends that our customers irrigate between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m., which is our optimum off-peak time.
- Make sure that outside spigots are not forgotten in the "on" position.
- Cut down on the frequency of at-home car washing, or use a commercial car wash.
- Make sure you have a full load before running the washer or dishwasher.
- Don't let the water run while you brush your teeth or shave.

Hopefully, following some of these simple steps will help you save money and conserve water too! For other conservation tips, check out the "Live Green" tab on the ECUA website.