



## St. Johns County Utility Department

# Annual Report 2023

### *Mission*

*To serve our customers by providing safe, reliable drinking water and environmentally responsible wastewater treatment at affordable rates while emphasizing customer service and protecting our environment.*

### *Vision*

*Great Water,  
Great Community.*



# World-Class Living

*The Place to Live, Work and Play*



Turning on the tap does more than fill a glass with safe, clean water. It also enables countless things that keep life moving. Clean water helps bathe your kids after a long day at school or in the yard, cook dinner, water your garden, and prevent your pets from being thirsty.

Water keeps your business operating and provides a cool refreshment after mowing the lawn. When you turn on your tap, it's not just water that comes out, it's a little reassurance that our lives are better because of that clean water that comes from that tap.

At the St. Johns County Utility Department (SJCUD), providing reliable and safe service is the focus. It is not enough to ensure the water at the tap is the best water possible. The mission is also to take the waste from the sinks, showers, and toilets and repurpose it to irrigate grass, shrubs, and trees that keep neighborhoods beautiful and protect the precious water source provided at the tap.

Staff works day and night to deliver clean and safe water, wastewater, and irrigation services to approximately **150,000** residents and businesses.

Last year, **5.8 Billion** gallons of water were delivered to SJCUD's customers.

“We are grateful to have the privilege of providing a touch of normalcy in the flow of life and to be something that our customers, families, and businesses can count on every day.”

*-Barry Stewart, Water Division Manager*



Reverse Osmosis Membranes at the CR 214 Water Treatment Plant

# Financial Stewardship

*Fiscally Sound and Financially Stable*

The SJCUD provides water, wastewater, and reclaimed water services for customer use every day. The goal is to provide these services at the highest quality with minimal interruptions. Customers interact with us primarily by paying their monthly bill, which is an automatic process for many customers. There are many rates to provide reasonable charges to customers, including single-family and multi-family residences or varying types of commercial or industrial customers. Each customer has a unique bill that consists of several factors. The process begins with how the rates are developed and structured to recover service costs and ends with how much water, sewer, or reclaimed services a customer uses for that billing period. Most bills have a base and volume charge to cover the fixed costs of operations and a variable component or a metered volume charge that recovers variable costs such as chemicals and power. Commercial or industrial customers also pay for specialized services, including higher volumes of water or treatment of unique wastewater byproducts. The SJCUD aims to have affordable rates compared to the region while maintaining a high level of service and capital reinvestment for long-term sustainability. As shown on the regional comparison, SJCUD is very competitive compared to other water and sewer service providers at typical monthly usage levels.

Typical 5,000 Gallon Bill

	Water	Wastewater	Total
<b>St. Johns County Combined</b>	<b>\$32.99</b>	<b>\$44.03</b>	<b>\$77.02</b>
<i>Other Utilities</i>			
New Smyrna Beach Utilities Commission	\$20.15	\$40.89	\$61.04
City of Atlantic Beach	\$19.28	\$41.84	\$61.12
Clay County Utility Authority	\$18.84	\$44.11	\$62.95
City of Green Cove Springs	\$18.40	\$47.97	\$66.37
Nassau County	\$13.86	\$54.29	\$68.15
City of Orange Park	\$28.09	\$42.12	\$70.21
JEA (3/4 inch meter)	\$25.40	\$47.70	\$73.10
Volusia County - West S.A.	\$26.35	\$47.69	\$74.04
City of Daytona Beach	\$29.75	\$44.42	\$74.17
City of Palatka	\$35.62	\$41.09	\$76.71
Volusia County - East S.A.	\$36.38	\$47.69	\$84.07
City of St. Augustine	\$36.63	\$49.56	\$86.19
City of Jacksonville Beach	\$35.05	\$51.86	\$86.91
City of Palm Coast	\$45.19	\$43.30	\$88.49
City of Edgewater	\$47.16	\$67.39	\$114.55
City of Flagler Beach	\$68.02	\$55.41	\$123.43
<b>Average of Other Utilities</b>	<b>\$31.51</b>	<b>\$47.96</b>	<b>\$79.47</b>

**IN 2023, WATER AND  
WASTEWATER RATES WERE  
REDUCED BY 3%  
FOR A MAJORITY OF CUSTOMERS**

# Utility Operations, Efficiency and Technology



Every year, SJCUD invests in innovative technologies to manage workflows and business processes to increase productivity and improve the efficiency of operations. SJCUD operations are faced with continued growth and the opportunities surrounding being a first-in-class Utility while serving the community.

SJCUD consistently invests in mobile technology, equipment, and planning software to proactively respond and provide predictive solutions to manage economic and operational challenges. SJCUD also invested in public dashboards to communicate with customers more efficiently.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- To work more efficiently, SJCUD has **over 200** mobile devices active in the field.
- In 2023, SJCUD invested **over \$45M** into the Utility to keep pace with aging infrastructure and infrastructure capacity.



# Economic Development and Infrastructure

*Thriving and Emerging Economic Opportunities,  
While Prioritizing Today and Planning for Tomorrow*

## RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS



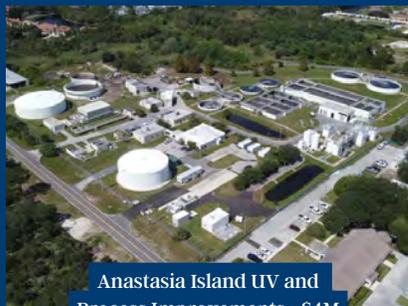
SR16 Filter Installations - \$1M



SR16 Headworks and RAS/WAS Improvements - \$2M



SR16 Generator Installations - \$1M



Anastasia Island UV and Process Improvements - \$4M



Hastings Water Reclamation Facility - \$6M

A significant responsibility of SJCID is to ensure the proper maintenance of all the infrastructure required to deliver safe and clean drinking water, reclaimed water, and provide an alternate source to irrigate the open green space and landscaping that everyone enjoys.

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is the tool that staff uses to develop the necessary projects for the next fifty years. The CIP helps provide those services and includes equipment replacement projects, projects that will provide additional capacity for new customers, projects that enhance technology to lower costs, and projects that exceed the requirements of emerging environmental regulations.

## FUTURE PROJECTS



SR 207 Water Reclamation Facility - \$185M

Construction has begun on a new regional Water Reclamation Facility for the SR 207 corridor. Project is estimated to be completed in 2026.

# Upcoming Key Planning Initiatives

**"SJCUD IS BEGINNING THE PROCESS OF RENEWING THE CONSUMPTIVE USE PERMIT WITH THE ST. JOHNS RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT TO ALLOCATE THE PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS."**

## **WHERE IS SJCUD HEADED WITH OUR WATER?**

St. Johns County Utility's continued goal is securing the water supply. This year, SJCUD is beginning the process of renewing the consumptive use permit with the St. Johns River Water Management District to allocate the public water supply for the next 20 years. Water conservation and the expanded use of reclaimed water will be two critical strategies utilized to minimize the fresh groundwater demand. Even with these measures taken, meeting the increased potable water demands of the future will require the Utility to expand its paradigm. SJCUD can no longer rely solely on the fresh groundwater supply for future planning horizons without causing unacceptable impacts to the regional water supply. The Utility is exploring progressive opportunities for water supply and water treatment by-product disposal, integrating regional reclaimed water storage options, and developing regional reclaimed water distribution grids. SJCUD is also partnering with other Utilities and the Water Management Districts on regional water resource protection projects that will help to maintain the allocation of potable water supply.

With water supply as the priority, SJCUD is also balancing the challenge of master planning for the fast-growing population, significant increases in the cost of construction and materials, and the impacts of new legislation. Recent legislative action has applied new wastewater effluent rules that intend to eliminate non-beneficial surface water discharge by 2032. This influences the increased use of reclaimed water necessary to offset potable water supply projections, however, it is a significant planning effort to establish and complete the capital improvement projects required to comply with this impending regulation. Additionally, there are new septic tank rules that require long-range planning to be completed this year and upcoming legislation that could impact how biosolids treatment is handled.

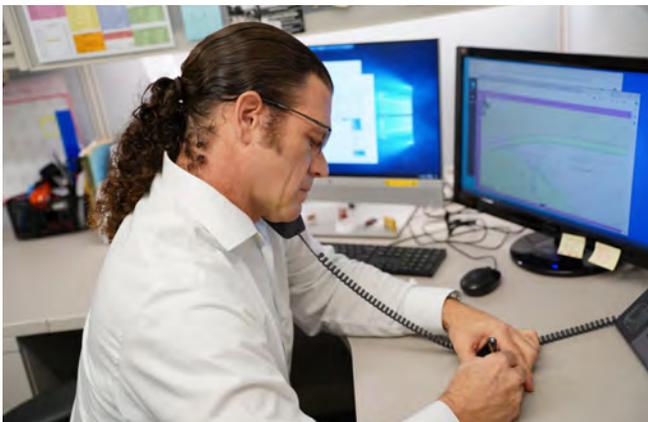
SJCUD is planning into the future to help thread together the common solutions for optimized use resources, both financially and environmentally.

# Customer Service

*Putting People First*

Customer service is the most visible and tangible measure of success. No business can truly be successful without a total commitment to serving its customers at a high level. SJCUD has a modern contact center phone system that has raised service levels, promoted customer satisfaction, and reduced costs. SJCUD consistently provides services for customers through sophisticated technology such as the Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) system that provides hourly readings of water usage. This advanced system helps SJCUD and customers detect possible leaks or excessive irrigation. SJCUD has a web-based customer portal to view water usage statistics, compare usage against temperature and rainfall, and receive custom usage alerts via email and text.

The portal is also a valuable tool to help residents and businesses conserve and ensure a better water future. The Utility is proud to provide customers with the tools required to promote reducing water use, improving the reliability and sustainability of the water system, and minimizing cost. Customer satisfaction is a mark of distinction that makes the SJCUD a leading Utility provider.



*THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO CREATE, REVIEW AND MONITOR YOUR ACCOUNT*

## **How to get in touch with your Utility**

Monday – Friday

Hours and Phone Number

7:30 am to 4:30 pm; 904-209-2700,  
Option 4 or Toll-Free at 877-837-2311

## **How to pay your bill**

**Electronic Payments**

[www.sjcf.us/Utilities/Billpay.aspx](http://www.sjcf.us/Utilities/Billpay.aspx)

**Payment by Phone**

844-SJCUTIL or 844-752-8845

**Pay by Text or Electronic Statements**

Customers may access this once  
registered on Invoice Cloud.

## **How to Lower Your Bill**

Irrigate according to SJRWMD guidelines

[www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions](http://www.sjrwmd.com/wateringrestrictions)

## **Efficient Household Fixtures**

[www.epa.gov/watersense](http://www.epa.gov/watersense)

**Monitor, Watch Daily Limits, and  
control your bill**

[www.sjcf.us/Utilities/WaterUse.aspx](http://www.sjcf.us/Utilities/WaterUse.aspx)



SJCUD's approach continues to be that of One Water. Everyone shares this One Water as it moves through the various paths of the cycle: groundwater, surface water, drinking water, treated wastewater and reclaimed water.

The SJCUD sustainably and cost-effectively addresses regional water supply-and-demand issues, reflects community values, and adapts to changing conditions. It is an honor and privilege to provide customers with clean, safe drinking water, reclaimed water, and properly treated wastewater.

St. Johns County has developed initiatives like the conservation rate structure, where customers pay a lower rate with the less water they use. Additionally, there is a County irrigation ordinance consistent with the St. Johns River Water Management District's model irrigation ordinance. Customers can help conserve the One Water by following conservation tips published via the St. Johns County social media.

SJCUD continues to provide long-term planning and solutions to stay ahead of the complex challenges to manage water resources, provide timely water, wastewater, and reclaimed water capacity to residents and maintain affordable rates for the valuable water resources everyone shares. SJCUD has a dedicated team of working professionals who are committed to serve the people of the community every day.

## THE STATISTICS

10

Licensed Engineers

15

Licensed Water Treatment Operators

19

Licensed Distribution System Operators

34

Licensed Wastewater Treatment Operators

**ALL WORKING FOR YOU**

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