

PAYMENT DROP BOXES TO BE DISCONTINUED

SJWD Water District currently offers four remote drop boxes for customer payments. Very few customers are using the drop boxes, making this form of payment collection the most costly and least efficient payment method. As a result, the drop boxes will be discontinued as of July 1, 2005. We realize the customers who use the drop boxes will be inconvenienced by this action, but we hope they will find one of our many other payment options just as convenient.

- **Bank or Credit Card Draft:** Your payment can automatically be deducted from your checking account or charged to your credit card each month. Please see the back of your bill for more information.
- **On-Line:** Use your credit or debit card to make a secure payment through our web site at www.sjwd.com, which is available twenty-four hours a day.
- **Drop Box:** Located at SJWD Water District (next to drive-thru window) at 307 Spartanburg Highway, Wellford, SC. This drop box will remain open, available twenty-four hours a day.
- **By mail:** a pre-addressed payment envelope is provided with your monthly bill.
- **By Phone:** Call us with your credit or debit card information at 864-439-4423, during normal business hours.
- **In Person:** Please visit our administration office at 307 Spartanburg Highway (Hwy 29), Wellford, SC. Our lobby and drive-thru are open Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm.

The drop box locations being discontinued are: Bradley's Redi-Mart on Highway 357, Reidville Fire Department on Highway 296, Publix Supermarket on Highway 290, and the Inman Mills Fire Department in Inman.

EXTENDED PAYMENT DATE

You asked, and we listened! We've extended the number of days you have to pay your bill from 15 to 20 days. And your due date will consistently be the same date each month to allow you to budget your payment better. To make bill payment even easier we offer many payment options to fit your busy lifestyle, including on-line credit card payments, and automatic bank or credit card draft. Please see the back of your monthly bill for more information and options, or contact our Customer Service Department.

SJWD POSTER CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Ethan Owens, Grade 5, of *Berry Shoals Intermediate School* – Winner 5-6 Grade Level

Aleyah Chandler, Grade 4, of *Beech Springs Intermediate School* – Winner 3-4 Grade Level

SJWD Water District held the first annual poster contest for students in 3rd through 6th grade in October. The poster contest was sponsored by the South Carolina Rural Water Association and challenged students to create a "character" that represented where our drinking water comes from. We had over 40 entries from three area schools. SJWD selected two winners (\$25.00 prize), who both went on to win the SC Rural Water Upstate District competition (\$50.00 prize) and the SC Rural Water State competition (\$100.00 US savings bond)! The winning posters will also be featured on the cover of "Water for Life" magazine, a publication of SC Rural Water Association. The winners and their families were recognized by the SJWD Commission and SC Rural Water Association at a special luncheon.



Pictured left to right:
Ethan Owens, Rose Stancil (SC Rural Water Assoc.), Aleyah Chandler

WATER LINES



Winter 2005

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HIGH WATER USAGE

Many customers call us each month with concerns about their high water bills, but some customers may be experiencing higher water bills unnecessarily. In most cases, those high water bills are attributed to high water usage. So what can be done about this problem? The good news is there is a lot you can do to reduce your water usage.

What is normal usage?

First, we have to look at what is “normal”. Every household is different, but all of our basic water needs are the same...drinking, cooking, cleaning, and personal sanitation. According to national surveys, the average person uses 50 gallons of water per day to meet these needs. It would not include outside usage such as watering lawns and gardens, filling pools, or washing cars. Winter is a good time to look at your household usage, since outside usage is reduced in colder weather.

Number of People in Home	Average Monthly Water Usage
1	1500
2	3000
3	4500
4	6000
5	7500
6	9000

Look at your monthly water bill to see how much water you are using. If it is more than the average monthly usage, you may need to look at a few areas that can be causing higher usage. Some of these are:

Personal Water Habits

Look at the water use habits of your household. Do you leave the faucet running while you brush your teeth, wash dishes, or perform other tasks? Do you take long showers, letting the water run while you shampoo or shave? Do you run the washing machine or dishwasher when half full? Do you use the water hose to clean driveways and sidewalks rather than a broom? These may not seem like big water users, but over the course of a month, they certainly add up. An average faucet dispenses about three gallons per minute, so watch how much water is going down the drain.

Plumbing Problems

The number one cause of high usage in a household is due to plumbing problems. And the most common of those is a leaking toilet. This is a tricky one to detect, because you can't see it leaking without some help. SJWD offers a free dye test kit that you can pick up from our office or have mailed to you. Or, simply put a little food coloring in the back of the toilet tank (plain tea, coffee, or Kool-Aid will also work). Do not flush the toilet. Let the coloring sit in the tank for 15 minutes. If any of the color appears in the toilet bowl, you have a leak! The repair is fairly simple, with some assistance from your home improvement store. Do the test every six months for peace of mind.

If the toilet sometimes “runs” after flushing, do you have to shake the handle to make it stop? If so, the entire time it is “running”, you are using water. If someone forgets to shake the handle and walks away, hundreds of gallons per hour could be lost. Again, this is a simple repair most people can do themselves.

Dripping faucets and hose connections also add to your monthly water usage. Just a tiny drip can use hundreds of gallons over a period of time. Replace faucet washers and fittings whenever a drip appears.

Other plumbing problems can be trickier to locate. They can occur behind walls, under floors, and even under ground. The best way to detect these problems is to have us check the leak indicator on the water meter. Just call our Customer Service Department, and we'll be glad to check it for you. There is a dial on the meter that indicates if water is flowing to the property when no water is intentionally being used. Unfortunately, we cannot help you locate or correct the problem. You may need to contact a plumbing professional to assist you.

Unusual Events

If everything checks out fine and you still don't have an answer to where the water went, consider any unusual events that may have occurred at your home. Look over the bill to determine the meter reading dates. Try to remember if anything unusual happened during that period. Did you have guests or a party? Were the children home from school? Did someone leave a hose or faucet running? Ask all the members of the household to think about this so that nothing is overlooked.

Water Billing

Each customer is responsible for all water usage billed, whether intentionally used or not. Of course, if SJWD makes a mistake reading the meter, we will immediately correct the billing. If you do have a plumbing problem and it has been corrected, contact our Customer Service Department to report it. We may be able to offer a billing adjustment to reduce the amount of the bill.

Wasting water is wasting money! Don't let it go down the drain!



SOURCE WATER PROTECTION IS GOOD FOR EVERYONE

A message from Mike Caston, P.E., Executive Director



SJWD is proactively working to help preserve, protect, and develop the water resources in our area. Our watershed management and protection program is a grassroots approach to identify, address, and resolve current and potential impacts that

threaten our source water. A stakeholder committee was formed with the following goals and objectives:

- Hold regular planning meetings
- Review the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's (DHEC) source water assessment
- Confirm and identify all potential contaminant sources
- Establish the source water protection area and its geographic boundaries
- Identify potential funding sources
- Determine the appropriate management methods to control or mitigate contaminant sources
- Implement management methods
- Track the progress and success of management methods employed
- Ultimately, preserve or improve water quality

The task of this stakeholder group is daunting and it will take time. But, with the support and help of all of the real stakeholders, those who work, live, and play in our area, success will be realized. We have a responsibility to assure that future generations have an abundant supply of safe, clean drinking water. Source water protection is good for everyone.