

Western Carolina Continues to Provide Top Service

Our community has an excellent sewer service dedicated to protecting public health.

By: John V. Boyette Jr.

As chairman of the board, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the over 200 professionals at the Western Carolina Regional Sewer Authority (Western Carolina) who serve more than 400,000 customers every day in Greenville County and parts of Anderson, Spartanburg, Pickens and Laurens counties.

For over 80 years, the mission of Western Carolina has been to protect the public health and provide the necessary sewer infrastructure to support economic growth. The organization maintains over 300 miles of major sewer trunk lines and conducts operations through 10 major treatment facilities.

Western Carolina works in partnership with 17 subdistricts: Anderson County; Berea Public Service District; city of Fountain Inn; Gantt Fire, Sewer and Police District; city of Greenville; Greer Commission of Public Works; Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission; Marietta Water Fire Sanitation and Sewer District; city of Mauldin; Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict; Parker Sewer and Fire Subdistrict; Piedmont Public Service District; Slater Water, Sewer and Light District; city of Simpsonville; Taylors Fire and Sewer District; city of Travelers Rest; and Wade Hampton Fire and Sewer District.

As we all know, sewer service and wastewater treatment are critical to the function of homes and businesses every day. However, we may not stop to think about how important a quality sewer and treatment

system is to our region's economic growth. Without dependable service and adequate capacity, there simply wouldn't be any residential, commercial, or industrial growth in our region. Collection sewer lines and treatment services are critical components that have to be in place before any construction can take place.

For our community's residents and businesses, we are truly fortunate to have one of the best systems in place. Executive Director Ray T. Orvin Jr., his staff and current and past boards are to be commended for their leadership, superior service, dedication to maintaining reasonable rates, outstanding efforts towards environmental protection, implementation of new technology, and foresight to ensure that our community can continue to grow and prosper while exceeding water quality standards.

Western Carolina is very sensitive to maintaining rates for customers. In fact, the organization consistently maintains some of the most competitive rates compared to similar metropolitan areas in the Southeast. Many people may not realize that Western Carolina does not receive funds from local, federal or state taxes. All expenditures are funded through a combination of user fees, state revolving loans, revenue debt issues and internal equity.

Every day, Western Carolina works conscientiously to provide a cleaner environment for you. The organization has been recognized for their outstanding performance with numerous awards from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Water Environment Association of South Carolina, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies and many more.

Western Carolina's Capital Improvements Program has been designed to accommodate our community's growth, ensure quality service and comply with environmental standards. This program was developed after the evaluation of current conditions, growth projections and regulatory requirements. Capital improvements include upgrades of

specific treatment processes to increase capacity at the various facilities, a new regional site in the Saluda River Basin, and the upgrade and consolidation of various pump stations.

Sewer authorities across the country are now facing challenges to expand system capacity and meet stricter state and federal environmental regulations. Western Carolina is well positioned to deal with these challenges, and has already partnered with several subdistricts to successfully complete agreements that will ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place to sustain future economic growth. The organization will continue to work with other subdistricts to achieve similar agreements and targeted goals.

As we look to the future, we must support the organizations and utilities that help support our community's phenomenal growth. The Upstate is one of the fastest-growing MSAs in the nation, with a work force that has doubled in the last 10 years to more than 400,000. In the last five years, Greenville County alone has attracted \$3.2 billion in capital investments.

Our community is poised for the type of growth that will promote a quality of life that translates into a secure economic future with additional jobs for residents. I would like to thank the Western Carolina Regional Sewer Authority for their outstanding efforts to help facilitate our growth and ensure our community's success.