

We live and work in a little piece of paradise, and DWU is intent on doing our part to keep it that way.



CONNECTIONS



Pictured Left to Right: Chrystal Vickers, Autumn Lyfe and Terra Pruett, the friendly faces of DWU's Customer Service Team available to answer any questions and assist as needed.

FALL 2024



A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Every once in a while, we need to take a stand and tell people what to do and now is one of those times. We have a problem with FOG in our wastewater systems and I need you to be ambassadors to help fix the problem. I need you to tell your family, friends, and neighbors: Don't put that down the drain!!! Let's work together to help fix this problem.

"Don't put that down the drain!" Have you ever heard those words before? Maybe you heard it at a relative's house that was on a septic tank, or they had old plumbing; possibly you heard it while traveling to another country. There is good reason for the warning because not all waste should be thrown down the drain.

Destin Water Users has talked about FOG, Fats Oils and Grease, and how pouring that down the drain can contribute to sewer backups. When FOG is washed down the sink, it cools and sticks to the inside lining of sewer pipes. The accumulation

GM Message	1
Director Elections	2
Employees of The Month	3
Message from The President	3
Call Before You Dig	4

Continued on page 2



**NOMINATE
NOW!**

GET ON BOARD

Director Elections

Destin Water Users, Inc. is a member owned not for profit utility cooperative. The business of the corporation is to construct, maintain and operate a water and wastewater system for its members. The business affairs of the corporation are overseen by a seven-member Board of Directors elected from the membership of the corporation. The Directors are elected to staggered three year terms. The Board members meet monthly to conduct their regular business and they also meet in special session from time to time to conduct business of the various subcommittees of the Board. The Directors receive no compensation for their services.

Elections for the Board of Directors are held annually. Candidates for Director are nominated by members of the corporation. Secret ballots will be mailed out around the first part of the New Year and the election results will be announced at the annual meeting in March.

If you or someone you know is interested in serving on the Board of Directors, please go to our website, www.dwuinc.com, for details on how to nominate a director.

Message from the GM continued

of this grease can cause clogs in the sewer pipes, which may lead to Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs). We've seen FOG accumulate on equipment in our lift stations and it has caused upsets at the plant, disrupting the treatment process.

We urge you to put your sewer lines on a fat-free diet and be careful when disposing of fats, oils, and grease (FOG) after cooking by never pouring FOG down the sink or toilet. To keep FOG out of sewers, DWU suggests scraping all food scraps from pots, pans, cooking utensils and dishes into the trash before washing or rinsing the dishes and we regularly repeat this message with posts to our Facebook page explaining how to dispose of FOG.

We want to reinforce this message because we are still seeing lots of FOG in our system. This is disconcerting to us because, we have implemented a grease trap inspection program for commercial food establishments, and they are complying with the program. They are not the major contributors to FOG problem. As we look further into this matter, we are seeing concentrations of FOG coming from our single-family and multi-family residential areas; therefore, we need your help to eliminate our FOG problem because most of our FOG is coming from you.

Now, I know many of you will claim that you never pour FOG down the drain. Let me ask you some questions. What do you do with left over or spoiled milk? Dairy products contain milk fat that is considered FOG. Do you eat salad? Salad dressings usually contain some oil content. What do you do with the greasy liquid left over after broiling a chicken breast, pork chop, fish or steak? These items along with many prepared foods contain FOG that can contribute to a grease backup in the sewer line.

By following the simple suggestions below, you can help us eliminate our FOG problem.

Helpful Hints for FOG:

- Never pour FOG down the drain, sink or garbage disposal.
- Pour FOG into jars, cans, and plastic tubs. Let contents cool and solidify. When the container is full, throw it away with your trash.
- Mix cooking oil with an absorbent material such as cat litter or coffee grounds, place in a container (lid securely fastened) for disposal with your trash.
- For greasy pans, pour off the grease into a container, and use a paper towel to wipe out the remaining grease in the pan prior to washing.
- Store the container in the freezer, which will keep the grease solid, and pull it out whenever you have fats, oils and grease to dispose of. When it gets full, dump the whole container into the trash.

Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) clog sewer pipes (yours and ours) and cause preventable, costly damage that can have detrimental effects on our infrastructure and environment. Putting FOG down the drain can cause sewer overflows into our waterways and put our beautiful Destin ecosystems at risk. We all have a collective responsibility to divert FOG from our sinks, drains and toilets, keeping our systems clean and making a positive impact on our environment. Help us keep Destin beautiful!

**LOCKWOOD WERNET
General Manager**



ABBY MARTIN
JUNE 2024



ANDY EISENZIMER
JULY 2024



KEVIN JOB
AUGUST 2024



ZACH HILTON
AUGUST 2024

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



TOM WEIDENHAMER, PRESIDENT

WATER REUSE

According to the article Water Reuse in OPFLOW (Volume 50, Number 8, October 2024) Water reuse is becoming increasingly important worldwide, including in the United States and Canada, because of growing scarcity, population growth, and the need for sustainable water management practices. In fact, reclaimed water is a drought-resistant water source that is locally available even during a prolonged drought. As the saying goes, “It rains every day at a wastewater plant.” Reusing reclaimed water within communities recovers a resource that would otherwise be discharged to a receiving stream for someone downstream to use for drinking water. Reuse keeps the resource locally available.

Destin Water Users realized the important role reuse could play in its resource management in 1985 when our reclaimed system came online making it one of the most mature operations in Florida. DWU realized

it could not continue to dispose of its treated wastewater through its typical method of rapid infiltration basin systems because of growth and limitations on available land and DWU did not want to discharge its treated wastewater into any waterbodies. Therefore, it built the treatment processes needed to reclaim and reuse its treated wastewater.

The majority of all wastewater returned to our wastewater reclamation facility is treated and sent back out for beneficial reuse. Most of this reclaimed water is reused for landscape irrigation with a significant amount being used each day for in-plant operations. By using reclaimed water for these types of uses, we are limiting the need to use potable drinking water for non-potable uses and we are protecting our valuable resource.

Each day DWU tries to provide an adequate supply of reclaimed water for customers to use throughout the year. However, there are some challenging months where sometimes the demand for reclaimed water exceeds our daily supply. A few years back, DWU developed an Aquifer Storage & Recovery (ASR) system to provide additional storage to help offset those times when supply lags demand. The ASR system has provided us with a

more reliable supply to our customers. However, in order to provide the supply when it’s needed, we must also store the water when we have excess available.

In an effort to better manage our reclaimed water system and provide our customers with a more reliable service, DWU implemented a Reclaimed Water – Irrigation Schedule. This schedule adjusts the days of the week and watering times that reclaimed water is available for irrigation purposes.

Unfortunately, reclaimed water is not available throughout our entire service area. We do have plans to expand our reclaimed water system, and you are welcome to call to see if reclaimed water is available where you live.

What I hope this shows you is that DWU is intent of living out our mission statement that “We live and work in a little piece of paradise, and DWU is intent on doing our part to keep it that way.” Treating our wastewater for beneficial reuse is proof that we are doing our part to preserve our paradise and we have been doing it for nearly 40 years.

Tom Weidenhamer



DESTIN WATER USERS, INC.

P.O. Box 308
Destin, FL 32540-0308

OFFICE HOURS

The DWU office is open Monday through Friday
8am – 4pm

PHONE NUMBERS

Administrative Office – Bill Payment Questions and
Concerns
(850) 837-6146

Emergencies, Nights, Sundays and Holidays
(850) 837-6146

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Running late? Pay your DWU bill over the phone! We
accept American Express, MasterCard, Visa and Discover.
Contact a Customer Service Representative for more
information. You can also pay your bill online at www.dwuinc.com or dial 1-833-454-2973

WANT YOUR MONTHLY BILL PAID AUTOMATICALLY?

You can now sign up for autopay using a credit card or your
checking account by visiting www.dwuinc.com

PAY ONLINE



Paying your DWU bill is easier than ever! Simply go online to dwuinc.com and click “Payment Options” at the top of the page. It will
take you to the correct location and provide instructions on getting set up for this convenient payment method.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG!

Have you ever wondered why there were those colored flags in your front yard or along the roadside? Did
you ever ask yourself what their purpose was? Well, the simple answer is they are there to protect you,
your neighbors and any utilities located in the area.

Call 811 before you dig! When calling 811, homeowners and contractors are connected to Sunshine 811.
Sunshine 811 notifies the appropriate utility companies of your intent to dig. Professional locators are then
sent to the requested dig site to mark the approximate locations of underground lines with flags, paint, or
both.



DESTIN WATER USERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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HAMER



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