

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



# CONNECTIONS



## WINTER 2026



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

### Why Is That Fire Hydrant Being Flushed?

You may occasionally notice water flowing from a fire hydrant in your neighborhood and wonder why it's happening. While it might look unusual, hydrant flushing is a normal and important part of maintaining a safe, reliable drinking water system.

### Where Your Water Comes From

Destin Water Users (DWU) pumps drinking water from the **Floridan aquifer** and delivers it to customers through our water distribution system. As required by state permits, a small amount of **chlorine** is added to ensure the water remains free of harmful bacteria as it travels through our pipes.

Our operators routinely test water quality at multiple locations across the system to confirm that required chlorine levels and pressure standards are being met. One of the key ways we do this is through **hydrant flushing**.

### What Is Hydrant Flushing?

Hydrant flushing involves temporarily opening a fire hydrant and allowing water to

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## Message from the GM continued .....

flow freely through the system. This process serves several important purposes:

- **Maintains proper chlorine levels** by moving fresh water through the pipes
- **Removes air and potential contaminants** from the system
- **Verifies water pressure** to ensure the system is operating correctly

To control the flow, DWU operators install **diffusers** on the hydrant. These devices spread the water gently across the ground, rather than releasing it in a high-pressure stream, helping prevent erosion or washouts.

### Flushing After Repairs

DWU crews regularly perform repairs on water mains and service lines. During this work, small amounts of sand or other materials can enter the pipes. Before a repaired main is placed back into service, flushing is required to:

- Remove any debris from the pipes
- Ensure chlorine levels meet standards needed to eliminate bacteria

When flushing follows a main break repair, DWU may issue a **Precautionary Boil Water Notice (PBWN)** for affected customers. This notice remains in place until water samples are tested and confirmed safe—a process that typically takes **48 hours**. Once testing is complete, the PBWN is lifted. If your area is affected, DWU staff will place **door hangers** at impacted properties to keep you informed.

### Fire Hydrant Testing

You may also see hydrants being flushed when the **Destin Fire Control District (DFCD)** conducts routine hydrant testing. These tests verify that hydrants provide adequate water pressure for firefighting. DWU and DFCD work closely together to maintain accurate flow data, which is used for emergency response planning and insurance ratings.

The DFCD tests hydrants every **two years**. If any issues with a hydrant are identified, they are reported to DWU or, in the case of privately owned hydrants, to the property owner for repair. As the DFCD is testing hydrants for high flows, scale can be released from pipe walls causing brown or red colored water. Should you encounter this, we recommend removing faucet screens and running water inside your home to clear it up, usually for 5-10 minutes. If it doesn't clear up, please call DWU and we'll be happy to investigate it further.

### Our Commitment to You

Hydrant flushing and testing are essential steps in ensuring your water remains **safe, reliable, and ready when you need it**—whether for daily use or emergency response. While it may be inconvenient to see water flowing temporarily, these efforts help protect public health and maintain system performance.

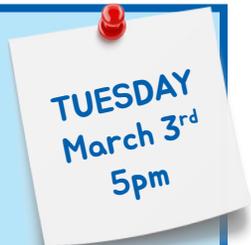
If you ever have questions about water quality or system maintenance, DWU staff is always happy to help. Contact us at 850-837-6146 or [cs@dwuinc.com](mailto:cs@dwuinc.com).

**MONICA WALLIS, P.E.**  
General Manager



### Annual Meeting Notice

The Annual Meeting of Destin Waters Users, Inc. will be held on Tuesday, March 3rd, 2026, starting at 5 P.M. in the Board Room at the DWU Main office located at 218 Main Street. Reports concerning the status of the Corporation will be presented by the President, Treasurer and General Manager. Results from the director election will be announced and the DWU Employee of the Year will be recognized. *All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.*



September



Autumn Lyfe  
Customer Service Specialist

October



Larry Burgess  
Field Crew Leader

November



Karen McAfee  
Accounts Payable

## EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

## Message from the PRESIDENT



TOM WEIDENHAMER, PRESIDENT

### Preserving Our Resources, Preparing for the Future

At Destin Water Users (DWU), our Board of Directors takes great pride in providing high-quality service at a fair and responsible cost. Each year, the Board carefully reviews and approves our annual budget, along with any rate adjustments needed to continue offering safe, reliable water and wastewater services.

### Staying Ahead of Regulatory Requirements

Utilities across the country continue to adapt to changing regulations. Following the national response to the Flint, Michigan water crisis, all utilities were required to perform system inspections and assessments. We are pleased to report that DWU found no lead in our system.

There has also been increased regulatory attention on fluoride. DWU does **not** add fluoride to our water; however, very small, naturally occurring amounts are present, which is common in groundwater

systems. Also, as a reminder, many of these topics addressed for DWU are located on our website at [dwuinc.com](http://dwuinc.com).

### Investing in Safety and Reliability

To further strengthen system safety, DWU is planning improvements in 2026 that will replace chlorine gas at several of our well sites with a liquid disinfectant already used successfully elsewhere in our system. This transition enhances operator safety and modernizes our treatment processes.

On the wastewater side, our team has been diligently working to reduce backups and environmental spills. Their efforts are paying off—DWU has had only one sewer spill since 2022 that was not caused by outside drilling and required environmental sampling. We are committed to meeting regulatory expectations and protecting the environment we all share.

### Managing Rising Costs and Maintaining Infrastructure

Like many organizations, DWU is experiencing rising operational costs. Chemical prices for water and wastewater treatment, meter replacement costs, and software expenses for customer service and plant operations have all increased

significantly in the last year. Maintaining a resilient infrastructure also requires ongoing investment in fire hydrant replacements, gravity main repairs, lift station rehabilitation, and adding system valves to reduce service interruptions. Rising costs of materials make us evaluate how much infrastructure we can repair or replace each year.

### Rate Adjustment in 2026

To continue providing reliable service and support critical system upgrades, the Board has approved a **5% rate increase** for water and sewer services. This adjustment will take effect on your **January 2026 bill**. These new rates were posted on our website in December 2025.

As we look ahead, we're committed to keeping you informed about the important work our staff is doing and the progress we're making to protect and preserve our community—our little piece of paradise.



**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, Weekends 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](http://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](http://www.dwuinc.com)

**PAY ONLINE**



Paying your DWU bill is easier than ever! Simply go online to [dwuinc.com](http://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.



**DESTIN WATER USERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



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President



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