

Clayton County Water Authority

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Media Release

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CCWA's Wastewater Collection System and Public Education Program Earn Industry's Top Honors

Morrow, Georgia - - Clayton County Water Authority (CCWA) was named Wastewater Collection System of the Year and Public Education Program of the Year for Large Systems during the Georgia Association of Water Professional's (GAWP) Fall Conference held last week in Dalton.

CCWA competed against other award-winning systems within metro Atlanta and the state for both awards. Competition continues to be very tight for these prestigious awards, which signifies validation from fellow water professionals.

"The Collection System of the Year award is a reflection of our Conveyance Staff's hard work and the team effort that exists among departments here at the Authority. I believe it is our intangible – our employees and the support of our Board of Directors and Management – that put us on top," says Distribution & Conveyance Manager Herbert Etheridge. "We are always looking for ways to step up our game and are fortunate to have a Board of Directors with foresight to implement programs that often become role models for others."

CCWA won this same award in 2005 and 2007, making it ineligible for the award in 2006 and 2008.

CCWA Board Chairman Pete McQueen agrees that it's the caliber of employees that puts the Authority on top. "I always say that we have the best employees in this industry, bar none. They take tremendous pride in their jobs and work hard to develop

and improve their skills,” he adds. “They also keep us ahead of the curve by looking for innovative ways to make us an even better water utility.”

Wastewater collection (or conveyance) system programs focus on maintenance of the sewer lines that collect sewage from homes and businesses and safely transport it through a network of pipes to the treatment plants. CCWA maintains 1,079 miles of sewer lines throughout Clayton County. Prior to the Fall Conference, a GAWP committee visits each eligible system and spends four - six hours inspecting every aspect of the collection system. The evaluation includes hundreds of pages of documentation, plus specific areas are surveyed such as: employee certifications, management information systems, sanitary sewer overflow notifications, fats, oils and grease programs, pump station and lift station maintenance, engineering and sewer system capacity program, customer relations, planning, inspections, safety, material supply, vehicle maintenance, equipment condition, emergency response and employee training.

For the Public Education Program of the Year Award, CCWA submitted a nomination to GAWP’s Public Education Committee detailing the scope and diversity of its program.

In its award notification letter, GAWP Public Education Committee Chair Tonja Halton-Mincey noted, “Your public education program shows a commitment to environmental stewardship and community education that every water provider in the State should aspire to!”

Over the past two years, CCWA has worked hard to increase its public education/community outreach efforts and be more visible in the community. While the Newman Wetlands Center continues to be the focal point of CCWA’s public education efforts, a large group of employees throughout the Authority participate in school presentations, community events and festivals. Plus, employees provide facility tours for groups wanting to learn more about water production and water reclamation processes. CCWA also hosts three large annual events: Household Hazardous Waste Amnesty Day, the Wetlands & Watershed Festival and Rivers Alive Stream Cleanup.

“We see public education as part of our mission – along with providing quality water and quality services,” says P. Michael Thomas, General Manager of the Clayton County Water Authority. “I am very proud of the work our employees have done to ramp up our public education efforts and make us more visible in the community.”

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