

# Customer PipeLine

## Main Street Replacement Project: Where Are We Today?

The replacement of the Main Street Wastewater Treatment Plant, located on Pensacola Bay in downtown Pensacola, was a major component of the ECUA's long-range planning even before it was inundated by storm waters driven by Hurricane Ivan on September 16, 2004. But after the storm, which knocked out ECUA's main wastewater treatment facility for three days, aging the already 70 year-old facility by an estimated 10 years, the desire to replace the plant became a necessity.

During our community's prolonged hurricane recovery, Dr. John J. Lanza, Director of the Escambia County Health Department, said he could envision, that should a future storm destroy the Main Street plant (or make it inoperable

**AFTER HURRICANE IVAN, THE ECUA IMMEDIATELY BEGAN THE COMPLEX TASK OF REPLACING THE MAIN STREET PLANT**

for a considerable length of time), a severe health threat could result, and the possible evacuation of the southern portion of the county and an accompanying economic disaster would ensue.

Following Ivan, the ECUA almost immediately began to tackle the complex task of replacing the plant. Since that time the agency has:

- Acquired approximately 2,000 acres of land needed for the replacement plant and for the relocation of necessary sewage transmission lines, while continuing negotiations to complete the land acquisitions.
- Begun the complex and time-consuming task of applying for the necessary environmental permits.
- Completed more than 60 percent of the engineering design required for the replacement facility.
- Held numerous public hearings and meetings.
- Begun the aggregation of funds necessary to finance the plant replacement from several sources, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the State of Florida and ECUA.

These continuing steps by ECUA have moved the project forward to the point that it is expected that ECUA will award seven to nine major construction contracts within the next few months, and that construction on the replacement site in central Escambia County will begin by July 2007.

After Ivan, FEMA awarded the ECUA \$134 million that can be used to either replace the plant, a project expected to cost \$302 million, or to "armor" the existing plant in-place to protect it against future hurricane damage. Though ECUA

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

ECUA offices will be closed Monday, February 20, 2006 in observance of Presidents' Day.

There will be no change in the collection schedule for the Presidents' Day holiday. All ECUA garbage and yard trash collections will be made on their regularly scheduled collection days.

ECUA Board Chairman Logan Fink will be discussing various ECUA issues including the Main Street Replacement Project with "Your Turn" host, Mike Bates, on WEBY - 1330 AM., February 26, 2007, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. To call-in, dial 623-1330.

## Residential Cooking Grease Disposal Program Sites:

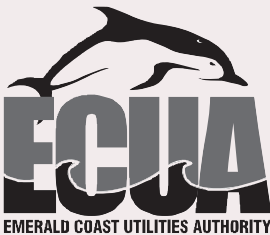
At Clean & Green:  
3303 N. Davis Hwy.

ECUA at Ellyson  
Industrial Park:  
9255 Sturdevant St.  
(Outside gate, left of  
Garage Entrance)

ECUA Sanitation Dept.:  
3050 Godwin Lane  
(At east end of  
employee parking)

ECUA Main Street Plant:  
401 W Government St.  
(Corner of Government  
& Coyle St.)

ECUA Bayou Marcus Water  
Reclamation Facility:  
3050 Fayal Dr.  
(Outside gate, right of  
plant entrance)



applied to FEMA for an additional \$115 million needed to complete the project, that request was rejected. FEMA requires that it be more expensive to repair the plant than to replace it, and that a documented history of repeated plant failures be provided. It will cost more to replace than repair the Main Street plant, and much of the required documentation needed to substantiate previous plant failures was destroyed in Ivan.

Counting FEMA's \$134 million grant, a \$24 million grant from the State of Florida, and \$24 million already committed to the project by ECUA, it is still expected that another \$120 million is needed to accomplish the replacement. Mort O'Sullivan, a partner in the Pensacola accounting firm of O'Sullivan-Creel, was retained as a financial consultant to develop funding scenarios. Several funding options were evaluated, and it was determined that the most viable included rate increases adding an additional \$3.60 to \$5.25 monthly to the average residential sewer customer's bill, and an additional \$36 to \$52.50 monthly to the average commercial customer's bill. This scenario was presented to both the Pensacola City Council and the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners in early January with the understanding that the rate increases would be determined by whether the City of Pensacola and Escambia County contributed to the plant's replacement costs. Because it is expected that both the City and County would reap substantial economic benefits from the removal of the Main Street plant, the ECUA believes it is fair that the two entities participate in the replacement project.

As of this writing, the ECUA, the City of Pensacola, and Escambia County are involved in negotiations to reach a solution.

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## Remember to Use the New ECUA Residential Cooking Grease Disposal Program

The aim of ECUA's new Residential Grease Disposal Program is to help our customers capture and dispose of their cooking grease in an environmentally safe and effective way. In early December, ECUA began the distribution of containers that can be used to store and dispose of household cooking grease. Return your filled container to any of the locations listed in the column above, and exchange it for an empty one, ready to repeat the process. It's that simple! Please be on the look-out for the beginning of this important program at a location near you, and help us keep sewer lines and your home's plumbing clear and unclogged.