



IWA Pipeline

The Island Water Association's Semi-Annual Newsletter



WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

IWA RATES REMAIN STABLE

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SMART METER IMPLEMENTATION

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...and more!

[IWA Absorbs Cost Increases, Rates Remain Stable](#)

Driven by the highest rate of inflation in 40 years, cost increases for nearly all goods and services have made opening monthly bills an unpleasant task for many. As one would expect, The Island Water Association is not immune to these skyrocketing costs, and we are receiving an increased number of calls from members inquiring about future water rates.

Significant quantities of electricity, chemicals, specialized equipment, and a qualified workforce are required to deliver quality potable water to Sanibel and Captiva Islands. The cost of these inputs has escalated dramatically throughout 2022 and have made the financial management of IWA more challenging. Typically, companies react to increasing costs by passing them on to consumers through higher rates and service fees, which brings us to the rate question.

IWA is proud of its record of not having a rate increase in over 13 years, which followed 15 previous years without an increase. During these long periods of rate stability, IWA has prudently built reserves to fund planned capital improvements, pay debt service, and provide the compensation and benefits required to recruit, train, and retain a knowledgeable and professional staff. IWA's culture of process improvement, proactive maintenance, and implementation of efficiencies has successfully trimmed costs over the years, while achieving an award-winning water company.

IWA's Board of Directors and management continually examine the company's financial health to ensure our rate structure provides adequate revenue to operate, maintain, and improve the system. We are pleased to report that despite today's escalating costs, our financial evaluations confirm that the revenue generated under the current rate structure remains adequate for these purposes, and rates are not expected to increase in the near term. Members can be assured that the IWA Board of Directors, management, and staff will continue to do everything within their control to maintain reasonable rates while also ensuring that IWA has the necessary resources to provide our members with reliable, high quality water.

[Lead & Copper Rule Compliance](#)

IWA performs rigorous water quality monitoring to ensure that our members receive the highest possible water quality. Included in our monitoring protocol is a three-year schedule to analyze lead and copper levels at 30 locations in the water system. In 1991, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) began regulating the levels of lead and copper in drinking water through the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR). The LCR protects public health through stringent sampling and corrective action requirements if elevated lead and/or copper levels are found at more than 10% of sampled locations in a water system. We are pleased to report that for the 14th consecutive monitoring period, IWA has met the requirements of the LCR with all recently collected samples testing well below the established action levels for lead and copper.

Where does lead and copper come from?

Lead and copper are not present in IWA's treated water or our distribution network of water mains.

Lead and copper typically enter drinking water by leaching from old-style lead service lines connected to the distribution mains, and the corrosion of plumbing, fixtures, and fittings inside homes and buildings. Because of improved plumbing codes and lead-free construction requirements, most homes built after 1986 are safe from lead problems. On Sanibel and Captiva Islands, there are no known lead service lines in the water system.

What are the health risks of lead and copper in drinking water?

Lead exposure became headline news in 2015, when exorbitantly high levels of lead were found in the drinking water system of Flint, Michigan. Lead is a known neurotoxin and exposure to elevated levels can damage the liver, kidneys, and brain. Children are particularly vulnerable to exposure. Studies have shown that prolonged lead exposure may reduce intelligence, impair cognitive function, and cause mental development delays. Although copper is an essential micronutrient, excessive consumption can result in gastrointestinal distress and disruption of kidney and liver function. The LCR sets an action level for lead at 15 parts per billion and 1.3 parts per million for copper. IWA's treatment methods and careful control of water quality parameters has resulted in lead and copper levels below these public health thresholds.

Water quality is the top priority at IWA. If you have questions about your water quality or service, please contact our office at (239)472-1502. Additionally, IWA publishes the results of water quality testing in our annual Consumer Confidence Report available at www.islandwater.com.

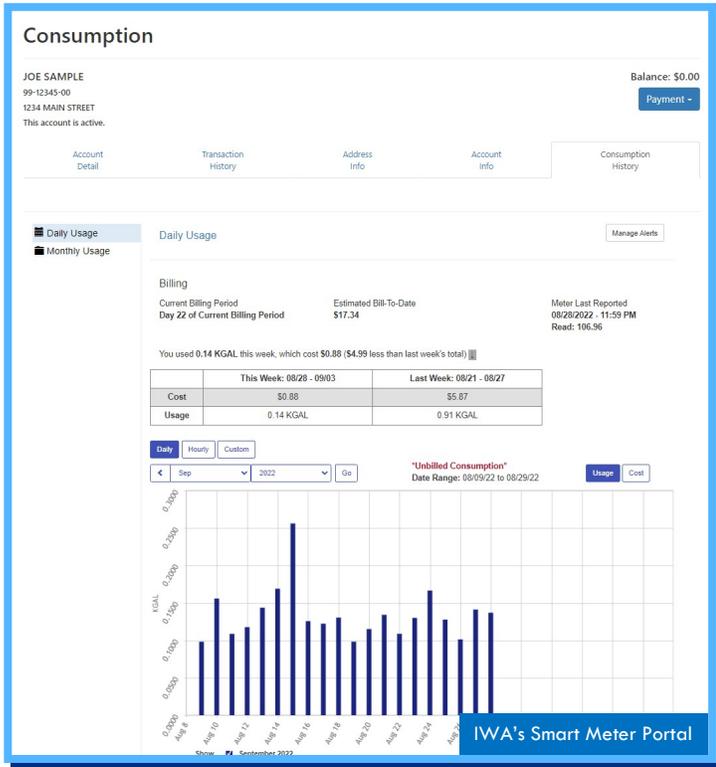
[New Meters Improve Data Access](#)

Modern technology allows people to monitor and adjust their home's thermostat, view the contents of their refrigerator, and verify that an Amazon delivery is at their doorstep; and all from the convenience of a smart phone. These 'smart' systems provide useful information that drive decisions and can save time and money. Recognizing these benefits, IWA has been implementing a multi-year smart water meter project that will provide members with real-time information on water consumption, potential leaks, and estimated monthly bill amounts.

IWA technicians are installing smart meter devices on



over 5200 accounts throughout the water system. This smart meter installation project began in 2021 and is scheduled for completion by 2025. To date, IWA technicians have installed smart devices on approximately 30% of the system's water utility accounts, including large multi-family residences, and condominium associations. Members will be notified of smart meter device installation at their property in future newsletters and in the 'Notes' section included in IWA's monthly bill.



Once a smart device is installed on a property, the system will measure water flow in 15-minute intervals and transmit data to an account portal, which is refreshed several times each day. Members must register their online account to review graphical information on water use and set up email alerts for leaks, bill amounts, and consumption thresholds. Instructions to register an online account and set up usage alerts can be found at www.islandwater.com/portalguide. Account monitoring and alerts can prevent the unwelcome surprise of a large water bill and reduce the amount of water waste and potential property damage caused by plumbing and irrigation leaks.

IWA Welcomes New Employees

The friendly voice that picks up when you dial The Island Water Association's office line belongs to our



Aerica Brisco

new Membership Coordinator, Aerica Brisco. Aerica joined IWA in June of this year and has been busy learning the billing program and processes that IWA has implemented over the last year. Aerica and her two children, Julian (12) and Maddie (6), live on Sanibel and stay busy juggling school, sports, and active social calendars.

IWA also welcomes our newest Water Plant Operator Trainee, Jacob Moore. Jacob lives in Cape Coral with his wife, Ariana, and young son Levi. Originally from Maryland, Jacob started his career in the water industry as a meter technician before moving to Florida and working as a plumber for several years before coming to IWA.



Jacob Moore

We are excited to have Aerica and Jacob join the IWA team.

House Valves 101

From time to time, IWA receives calls from members confused about a sudden loss of water service inside their residence. Oftentimes, we send out a technician only to discover that the house valve has been closed. House valves can accidentally get turned off by a well-intentioned homeowner or landscaper, as the house valve is oftentimes found below or nearby an outside spigot.

On Sanibel and Captiva, house valves are typically located on the same side of the house as the water meter. A stilt home's valve is usually located on a vertical pipe under the house on the same side of the property as the water meter. The style of a house valve depends on the age of the home's plumbing, with the most common being red-handled PVC or brass ball valves. These valves close and open using quarter turn levers. If the lever is horizontal to the pipe, then the water to the house is off. If the lever is vertically lined up with the pipe, the water is on.

We often recommend that our members turn off their



house valve when not in residence to prevent high usage caused by a running toilet, faucet, or an interior broken pipe. In most cases, the house valve turns the water off to the inside of your residence, as well as outside spigots, but leaves irrigation and pool fill systems active. Another option is to turn the valve at the meter box which will stop all water service to the property, including the home, irrigation, and pool fill systems. As always, if you have questions about your water service or the operation of your house valves, call our main office at (239) 472-1502.



Consumer Confidence Report

The 2021 edition of IWA's Annual Drinking Water Quality Report, also known as a Consumer Confidence Report (CCR), can be found on the top right of our website's homepage under the Reports tab at www.islandwater.com, obtained in our lobby, or by using this direct link:

bit.ly/IWA2021CCR

The CCR can also be requested by calling (239) 472-1502. The EPA required annual report covers our water quality for 2021 which meets and exceeds all

water quality standards, as has always been the case. If you have any further water quality-related questions, just give our Production Manager Pat Henry a call at (239) 472-1502.

Irrigation Rules

IWA estimates that 60% of the potable water produced for Sanibel and Captiva Islands is used to irrigate lawns and landscaping. To protect our regional freshwater resources, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) developed the Year-Round Irrigation Rule which limits the days and times of day that turf and landscape irrigation can occur. Locally, the City of Sanibel and Lee County have adopted ordinances in line with the SFWMD's rule to restrict irrigation to two-days per week with watering prohibited between the hours of 9 AM and 5 PM. In addition to the water conservation benefits, widespread adherence to the Lee County and the City of Sanibel ordinances will stabilize daily irrigation demands and reduce IWA's need for costly equipment upgrades in the future.

The approved irrigation schedule for Sanibel and Captiva Islands is provided at the bottom of this newsletter. IWA members must utilize this schedule when setting irrigation timer devices or manually watering lawns and landscaping. The websites listed below provide detailed information about the local water irrigation ordinances and additional conservation measures to ensure sustainable freshwater resources.

City of Sanibel, Ordinance No. 20-001

<http://www.mysanibel.com/City-Council/Recently-Adopted-Ordinances>

Lee County, Year-Round Irrigation Restrictions

<https://www.leegov.com/utilities/customer-resource-center/water-restrictions>

Sanibel Island's Permitted Schedule for Irrigation

Address Ends With	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
EVEN (0, 2, 4, 6, 8)		✓			✓		
ODD (1, 3, 5, 7, 9)	✓			✓			

Lee County's Permitted Schedule for Captiva Island Irrigation

Address Ends With	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
EVEN (0, 2, 4, 6, 8)				✓			✓
ODD (1, 3, 5, 7, 9)			✓			✓	