

Proposed 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Water and Sewer Rates

DeKalb County has identified more than \$1.4 billion in critical capital improvement projects that are needed in its water and sewer system over the next five years.

These investments are crucial to the health and welfare of the residents and businesses in DeKalb County. They provide for the continued supply of safe drinking water, adequate fire protection, opportunity for continued growth and development, and comprehensive wastewater collection and treatment, in full compliance with all state and federal regulations.

The County operates one of the larger systems in the Southeast U.S., serving more than 730,000 people each day, and more than 20,000 businesses, with more than 2,600 miles of water lines and more than 2,600 miles of sewer lines. All of the County's drinking water is treated at the Scott Candler Water Treatment Plant; the County's wastewater is treated at 3 locations: the Snapfinger Wastewater Treatment Plant and Polebridge Wastewater Treatment Plant on the South River, and the R.M. Clayton Water Reclamation Center (operated by the City of Atlanta) on the Chattahoochee River.

The County's treatment plants, as well as thousands of miles of water and sewer pipes, need significant repairs and upgrades. For example, the Snapfinger Wastewater Treatment Plant was built in 1963, and has not had substantial upgrades since 1983; the Polebridge Wastewater Treatment Plant was built in 1973, and was last substantially updated in 1990. Extensive work is necessary to address aged conditions, satisfy tightening federal and state regulations for water and wastewater, and plan for future demands due to growth. Among the critical types of improvements are the following:

- \$378 million to rebuild, upgrade, and expand the Snapfinger Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- \$65 million to upgrade sections of the Polebridge Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- \$38 million to upgrade the Scott Candler Water Treatment Plant.
- \$179 million to repair, replace, and update parts of the water distribution system.
- \$600 million to repair, replace, and update the wastewater collection system.
- \$82 million to begin water reuse and to return treated wastewater to the Chattahoochee River, per state water planning requirements.
- \$36 million for vehicles and equipment necessary to deliver repairs and improvements to the water and wastewater systems

To finance the cost of the capital improvements program, it will be necessary to raise water and sewer rates each year by 13% for the years 2012, 2013, and 2014 which amounts to an increase of approximately \$8.00 to \$11.00 per month for the average household each year until 2014.

Investing now in the water and wastewater systems will ensure that DeKalb County maintains reliable water and sewer services for current and future generations.