

# W on the Waterfront

A Publication of the Hilton Head Public Service District

Fall 2016

## PSD's response to Hurricane Matthew

- No tap water quality problems during nor resulting from storm.
- All tap water production facilities fully operational within 24 hours after storm.
- Normal tap water distribution system pressure restored within approximately 48 hours after storm.
- Repaired approximately 20 broken water mains.
- Repaired scores of broken private water service lines.
- Wastewater treatment plant fully functional within hours after storm.
- No sewer mains broken.
- No breaks to private sewer service lines.
- Small number of isolated sewer manhole overflows due to use of sewer system prior to power restoration in all areas.
- PSD automated meter reading infrastructure (smartpoint-to-tower system) functioning normally.

## PSD handles Hurricane Matthew; thanks to team, customers

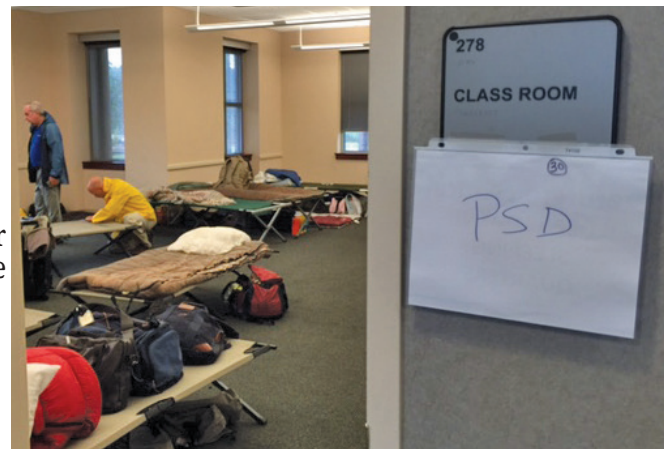
by Pete Nardi, General Manager, Hilton Head Public Service District

I want to take a moment to recognize the hard work, dedication, bravery and self-sacrifice of the Hilton Head Public Service District (PSD) "operations team" – our group of utility first responders who work on the water and sewer systems. This group's expertise, wisdom and commitment to duty enable very complex systems to run like clockwork, even after a category 2 hurricane strikes.

There is no piece of equipment, no plan and no technology that replaces the people who work for your PSD. Hurricane Matthew served as an unfortunate and harsh reminder of this, but it is my hope we will never forget it.

In emergencies such as Matthew, the PSD functions as a first responder organization under the unified command structure of the Town's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), through which we send out public advisories about the water and sewer services. The utility entered "Opcon 1" (Operational Condition 1 – Emergency Operations) at 9 a.m. on October 5. We returned to Opcon 5 (Normal Operations) at 5 p.m. on October 14. The nine days of that time period were packed with extraordinary circumstances and incredible achievements in the face of very tough conditions.

Our PSD building on Oak Park Drive is hurricane-hardened and served as the Town's EOC until it was evacuated on October 7. We bunked in our building for several nights leading up to the storm. We then linked up with our sister utility,



The PSD's first responders set up their cots in a classroom at USCBA in Bluffton at the Beaufort County Southern Command Base Camp on the eve of Hurricane Matthew. The PSD's team evacuated to base camp with other first responders and began immediate recovery operations following the storm.

Broad Creek PSD of Shelter Cove and Palmetto Dunes, and evacuated

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Customer Service Center  
21 Oak Park Drive, off Mathews Drive  
Hours: 8:30 – 5 p.m., Mon. – Fri.

## PSD EMERGENCY HOTLINE (843) 681-5525

Hilton Head PSD Commission  
9 a.m., 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the Month  
Community Room  
at Customer Service Center

Bob Manne, Chair  
Bob Gentzler, Vice Chair  
John Geisler, Secretary  
Gary Kratz, Treasurer  
Frank Drehwing, Commissioner  
Herbert Ford, Commissioner  
David McCoy, Commissioner

Pete Nardi, General Manager

[www.hhpsd.com](http://www.hhpsd.com)



Hurricane Matthew tore the metal skirting from the top of the Union Cemetery Water Tower and deposited it on the ground below.

## PSD Handles

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together to the Beaufort County Southern Command Base Camp at USCB New River with other first responders on October 7.

We returned on the morning of October 8, just hours after Matthew passed our area, and began the recovery. PSD crews

worked first to rebuild the pressure in our tap water distribution system, which had lost pressure due to power outages, and issued a boil water advisory as a precaution. Our tap water production facilities were up and running within 24 hours after the storm and we restored normal water system pressure by the morning of October 10. We

never experienced any water quality problems during or after the hurricane and were able to lift the advisory by October 13. PSD crews worked to repair approximately 20 broken water mains and completed that work by October 14.

Our sewer system suffered power outages and tree damage to its sewer pump stations. We had to get the pumps turned back on and perform emergency pumping to draw down the flooded sewer system. We experienced some isolated sewer manhole overflows, which occurred as a result of sewer system use before power was restored everywhere, but there were no breaks to any of our sewer mains.

We thank all of our customers who did their part by not using the sewer system until the OK was given and by limiting their use of water to help us rebuild vital water system pressure in the days following the storm. You played a major role in expediting our recovery. The storm served as a reminder that it is always important to follow public advisories about water and sewer availability after disasters.

Our restoration of water and sewer service was extremely rapid given the severity of the damage in our service area. Many have called the PSD's speedy recovery "amazing." I again want to credit the team members here at the PSD, along with our multiple recovery partners, for recovering these life-sustaining services for our area. As General Manager of the PSD, and as one of its customers, thank you.



The storm toppled trees that smashed the PSD's sewer pump stations at Headlands (top) and Old Fort in Hilton Head Plantation.

# Thank you, to our first responders!

The PSD extends its heartfelt thanks to our outstanding and intrepid first-responder team that performed critical recovery work in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Matthew. Your teamwork, commitment to duty, and care for our customers and our island will always be remembered. We thank you:

Victor Adams	Johnny Malphrus	Tim Ryan	Jim Hewitt – Water Services Superintendent
Myron Bolles	Vince Malphrus	Danny Schrock	Bob Davis – Recycled Water Superintendent
L.J. Bush	Keith Manbeck	John Stewart	Ryan Lewis – IT Manager
Gus Christopher	Alex Martinez	Andre Swinton	Bill Davis – Operations Manager
Edwin Graham	Doug Nice	Ben Ueligatone	Pete Nardi – General Manager
Dan Jozic	Darrell Padgett	James Washington	



*The PSD's Vince Malphrus arrives back at headquarters after a day spent recovering the PSD's water and sewer systems following Hurricane Matthew.*

## Avoiding residual damage to your water service

It is important that individuals and contractors performing debris removal during the hurricane recovery avoid damaging vital water system infrastructure such as hydrants and water meters. Such damage can cause outages for individual customers and wider neighborhoods. Please be mindful of this infrastructure and work with your debris removal contractor on your private property to avoid damaging your meter and/or private water service line during the removal process.

## About your PSD bill

The PSD's automated meter reading system, which reads water meters using a smartpoint on the customer meter and remote towers located in our system, is functioning normally.

We are actively monitoring for high bills as a result of water leaks from hurricane damage.

## Thank you, to our recovery partners!

The PSD thanks the following partners for their assistance in our recovery:

- Palmetto Electric Cooperative
- BRW Construction Group
- Consolidated Pipe
- Lexington County (SC) Joint Municipal Water & Sewer Commission
- James Island Public Service District
- Renewable Water Resources
- Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority
- S.C. Water Agency Resource Network
- Town of Hilton Head Island
- University of South Carolina Beaufort
- CH2M



*PSD first responders Doug Nice, Andre Swinton, and James Washington work to repair a broken water connection in the Bear Island area in Hilton Head Plantation during the recovery from Hurricane Matthew.*

## Geisler signs off after 14 years on PSD board



Congratulations go out to PSD Commissioner John Geisler, who completed 14 years of service as PSD commissioner in October. Geisler, who lives in Port Royal Plantation with his wife, Joan, did not seek reelection in the November general election. His years

of service on the commission were marked by a focus on the PSD's financial health, including serving as chair of its Finance Committee.

"John provided a wealth of expertise in the areas of financial management and planning for the PSD," said Commission Chair Bob Manne. "His value to the board and to the PSD was proven over and over again through his participation in board discussions and decisions.

He always made attendance at our meetings a priority, to make sure his constituents were represented and to provide his assistance to the board."

Geisler, who served as Secretary of the Commission, was a key advocate for PSD debt restructuring that has provided an array of positive financial impacts for the utility. He has been active in many community organizations, including Second Helpings and Habitat for Humanity. Geisler, who has lived on Hilton Head since 1998, had a lengthy career in finance with IBM. He holds an undergraduate degree from the University of Vermont.

"John was a source of great wisdom and a steady hand in representing the PSD's customers," said General Manager Pete Nardi. "He was a strong advocate for our PSD team, always encouraging recognition of team members and professional and personal development. We thank him for his outstanding service to Hilton Head PSD."