

Dalton Utilities Employee Named "Top Water Operator" in Georgia



The Georgia Association of Water Professionals' (GAWP) President Allen Walker presented Michael Silvers, Class One Water Operator for Dalton Utilities, with the coveted Top Op Award for District 1 in April 2007. This prestigious award is conferred annually to a water treatment plant operator who has demonstrated consistent and outstanding contributions to the drinking water treatment profession.

Silvers joined the Dalton Utilities' staff in November 1999 and is currently employed as a water filtration plant operator at the V.D. Parrott Jr. Water Filtration Plant. Since joining the Utility, Silvers has obtained numerous state certifications - including Water-Class 1 (highest level of certification), Water Laboratory Analyst, Wastewater-Class 3 and Water Distribution. Silvers also worked closely with the information system contractors who were installing the water plant's SCADA

(supervisory control and data acquisition) system and continues to work with SCADA operators. He has also been instrumental in optimizing plant operations in the area of chemical dosages and equipment maintenance.

Silvers received this award at GAWP's Spring Conference and Exposition held in Macon in May 2007. GAWP is Georgia's largest professional water and wastewater organization with more than 5,000 members involved in every aspect of water management and protection. Jack Dozier, Executive Director of GAWP stated, "This award is the highest achievement a water treatment plant operator can obtain. We are very proud of the service and commitment Michael Silvers has provided our profession and our organization. Dalton Utilities has met the challenge of providing safe and affordable drinking water services head on and with a high degree of success. Dalton citizens should be very proud of this service."

Water Conservation Measures Saves Prized Azaleas

A customer recently called Dalton Utilities to commend the utility on publishing water conservation materials in previous summers which saved her "azaleas from ruin" during our very dry spring. At this customer's request, we are reprinting these easy-to-do and effective watering tips!

- Use a soaker hose or drip irrigation to slowly water plants and prevent waste. In a pinch, poke a small hole in a gallon milk jug and place it near the roots of the plants you wish to water slowly.
- Organic mulch acts as insulation for soil. Place newspapers (2 sheets thick) under organic mulch to help conserve water. Soak the newspapers thoroughly after applying the mulch.

For more information about maintaining lawns and landscapes during the drought, visit our website at www.dutil.com or www.conservewatergeorgia.net.

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Join Project Share - Neighbors Helping Neighbors!

Project Share is a way for the citizens of Dalton, Whitfield and Murray counties to help their neighbors in need. Each month, Dalton Utilities customers add an additional \$1, \$2, \$5 or other amount in addition to their regular utility bill for Project Share. Dalton Utilities then transfers the entire amount donated by customers to the Salvation Army who uses the monies to allow families to keep their homes, pay their utility bills and provide assistance in emergency situations.

If you'd like to be a part of Project Share and help families in crisis in our community, just fill out the form provided and:

- Submit with your bill payment.
- Fax to Dalton Utilities at 706-281-1094 or drop the form off at our business offices.

Dalton Utilities will then add the amount you pledge to your utility bill each month until further notified.

Together, we can make a real difference for those who need it most. Thanks for being a part of this very important program!

____ Yes! I'd like to participate in Project SHARE! Please add the amount indicated below to my monthly utility bill:

___ \$1 ___ \$2 ___ \$3 ___ \$4 ___ \$5 ___ Other amount

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Account Number: _____

Si usted quisiera leer la información contenida en este boletín de noticias del cliente de Dalton Utilities en español, vaya por favor a nuestro Web site a <http://www.dutil.com/home.html> para leer esta información en línea o pase a nuestras oficinas en 1200 V.D Parrott Jr. Parkway y solicite una versión traducida de este boletín de noticias



Now Available on OptiLink TV & Internet.....



Braves HD

OptiLink HD Subscribers can now view BRAVES HD at no additional cost on OptiLink Channel 219.

If you would like to add OptiLink HD to your account for only \$8.95/month, give us a call at 706-529-1313.

OptiLink's HD tier includes FOX HD, ESPN HD, ESPN 2 HD, TNT HD, Discovery HD Theater & Outdoor Channel HD (and, of course, Braves HD!)

New & Improved Webmail

In June, OptiLink improved the look and functionality of our Webmail service to feature enhanced spam and virus filters and an expanded mailbox size of 250 megabytes! Any OptiLink Webmail customers who have contacts built in your OptiLink Webmail address book and wish to import them to the new system should contact us. These contacts will need to be manually imported to the new webmail system. This change only applies to Webmail and will NOT affect your address books in Outlook or similar software.

We hope you enjoy the new format, but should you experience any issues, please contact our OptiLink Help Desk at helpdesk@optilink.us or call us at 706-529-1313. (Please note that this change will only be seen by WEBMAIL users. Outlook users will not be affected.)



Tennis Channel

OptiLink has added The Tennis Channel to its digital line-up on Channel 174. The Tennis Channel is the only 24-hour all tennis network.

Tournament coverage includes:

- US Open Series
- ATP Masters Series
- Sony Ericsson WTA Tour championship competitions
- Davis Cup
- Fed Cup
- Hopman Cup

Tune in for instruction, classic matches and behind the scenes access to the players' colorful off-court lives.

OptiLink Expansion Continues in North and West Whitfield County

Dalton Utilities' OptiLink family of services – cable TV, high-speed internet and telephone – is now available in parts of North Whitfield County and the Westside – Rocky Face and Tunnel Hill. Customer sign-ups continue to increase every week as county customers take advantage of OptiLink's great offerings, prices and customer service.

OptiLink was designed locally and is delivered locally which translates into several meaningful advantages for Dalton Utilities customers.

"We are here," Cope said. "We live here and work here, and we, too, are customers of Dalton Utilities. And because we know and understand our customers' needs best, we can be more responsive to our customers' questions and requests."

So call us if you have any questions about OptiLink's many services. You'll talk to someone here in Dalton....maybe even someone you know! For more information on OptiLink services, you can also visit our website at www.optilink.us.

Dalton Utilities Extends Bill Payment Periods for Senior Citizens

On June 19, 2007, the Board of Water, Light and Sinking Fund Commissioners voted to extend the payment period for residential utility bills for all of its senior citizen customers who apply for the extension.

Each month, Dalton Utilities offers a 5% discount to all customers for prompt payment of their utility bills. Recognizing that many of our senior customers are on fixed incomes and may not receive their income in time to take advantage of this 5% savings for their respective utility billing cycles, Dalton Utilities initiated the extended payment window program for all those customers eligible by age to draw Social Security.

All senior citizen customers of Dalton Utilities who wish to have their bill payment period extended to take advantage of the 5% discount for prompt payment may register for this service in person at Dalton Utilities' business offices at 1200 V.D. Parrott Jr. Parkway. Customers requesting this service must bring proof of age to the Utility's Customer Service Department. The Utility will then flag their accounts to reflect the new extended payment period for all future bills. Dalton Utilities' business office is open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm.

Summer Electric Rates Go Into Effect

Summer electric rates went into effect June 1, 2007 and will remain in effect through September 30, 2007. The summer rates will be reflected in the bills received by customers during the July 2007 billing cycle. During the hot summer months, the Utility experiences an increased demand for electricity by customers, mainly for power required to air condition homes and businesses. The increased demand requires the utilization of higher cost generation units which, as a result, increases the Utility's operating costs.

Do YOU live near a natural gas pipeline?

Natural gas is one of the safest, cleanest and most affordable forms of energy available. It is piped across the state through high-pressure transmission lines, marked with signage, that are maintained and monitored by the owners (like Dalton Utilities) to keep them in safe and proper operating condition. However, individuals living or working near these pipelines need to be aware that care must be taken with construction or excavation. Before you dig, always call the Utilities Protection Center at 1-800-282-7411.

Dig Safely.
1-800-282-7411

Georgia Drought Update

May is often dry (with average rainfall of 3 to 4 inches), but this past May set record lows for rainfall – with only 0.36 inch recorded locally. Although some parts of Georgia received rainfall from Tropical Storm Barry, Northwest Georgia received little to no rainfall, intensifying the already extreme drought conditions in our area. “Extreme” drought conditions are defined as those expected once in 50 years, based on many indicators.

No Relief in Sight

The long-term outlook is for the drought to continue to intensify. Little if any widespread, sustained relief from the drought is anticipated. There is a slight possibility that increased tropical storm activity may produce rainfall later in the summer. However, the severity of the current situation requires that Dalton Utilities plan for the worst. Throughout the state, stream flows remain at record to near-record low levels. **The flow in the Conasauga River on June 24 was 53 cubic feet per second (cfs) which is 84% LOWER than the 69-year average for this time of year - 325 cfs.**

The total precipitation for our area to date in 2007 is approximately 10.5 inches. In 2005, that figure was 23.9 inches, and historically, from 1961 to 1990, the figure was 29.5 inches for the same time period.

According to the University of Georgia’s College for Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Northwest Georgia would need rainfall of 11.6 inches to end the current state of “extreme drought”.

Outdoor Water Use Actually INCREASING in Some Neighborhoods

Dalton Utilities’ Freeman Springs water treatment plant in Rocky Face is all but shut down because the water table is so low that the spring’s production cannot support treatment operations. Water tanks serving residential areas are becoming so depleted from daily usage (particularly during the hours when outdoor watering is allowed - midnight to 10 a.m.) that we are having difficulty keeping tanks at optimal functioning levels required for providing fire fighting support.

Dalton Utilities’ residential and commercial customers use approximately 8.9 million gallons per day (MGD), and during the summer months, additional water use associated with outdoor watering adds as much as 1.5 to 2 MGD to that total. Increasing watering restrictions have actually resulted in INCREASED outdoor water usage in some of our residential areas with residents watering on all THREE of their permitted days – instead of watering once a week as suggested. Should this type of water use continue, Dalton Utilities may be forced by intensifying drought conditions to move to a more restrictive level to contain residential water use to reasonable levels. “I think some customers mistakenly think that because CAN

water three times a week that they SHOULD water that many times. Not only is that wasteful, but frequent watering isn’t good for plants and grass. One good watering every 7 to 10 days creates strong root systems and makes your plants and grass more drought tolerant. And if we receive a significant rain event, you should take that into account in your watering plan,” said Utility spokesperson Lori McDaniel. “Water is essential to all of us and even more valuable in a drought and should be treated as such.”

Local Industry Pitches In

Dalton Utilities’ management recently met with industrial customers who utilize significant volumes of water to discuss the severity of the current drought situation. Curtailment of industry’s water use as the drought intensifies was discussed, and the Utility and its industrial partners are working to create a curtailment schedule in the event that conditions require it. Potential industry curtailment is an indication of the critical nature of this drought. Industry is the economic engine that drives all of Northwest Georgia. In response to the drought situation, industry has committed to undertake further initiatives to conserve water and cease all unnecessary outdoor use of water. Additionally, local industry will be making efforts to educate their employees concerning the drought situation and watering restrictions. **In previous years, the carpet industry, working in partnership with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and Dalton Utilities, significantly reduced the amount of water utilized to produce a square yard of carpet from 20 gallons to 9 gallons - for a water savings of 55%!**

Dalton Utilities is proud of the efforts of all of our customers in conserving water during this difficult time and is especially appreciative of the initiative and leadership displayed by industry in this situation.

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Water Conservation Can Net HUGE Benefits!

In previous summers of drought (1998-2002) when customers decreased their outdoor water use, Dalton Utilities documented water savings of as much as **1 MILLION GALLONS PER DAY!** This is a SIGNIFICANT amount of water to conserve on a daily basis. (One MGD is over 10% of total used for ALL daily residential needs. One MGD can provide drinking water, sanitation and public safety for 10,000 people on a daily basis or produce an equivalent of over 100,000 square yards of carpet.) This illustrates that outdoor watering restrictions can be very effective when everyone pitches in, and that the cumulative efforts of all Dalton Utilities' customers - industrial, commercial and residential - to restrict outdoor water use net HUGE benefits.

Current Watering Restrictions

Odd-numbered addresses may use water outdoors on **Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays.**

Even-numbered addresses or un-numbered addresses may use water outdoors on **Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.**

Outdoor watering is only allowed between **12:00 midnight and 10:00 a.m.** on permitted days.

A surcharge of \$100 (per violation) will be added to your utility bill if you are discovered using water outside of permitted times/days.

What is considered "outdoor water use"? Watering lawns and flowers, washing cars and driveways, fundraiser car washes, the filling of pools, etc.

For a complete copy of the statewide water restrictions rules and exemptions, please go to Dalton Utilities' website at www.dutil.com.

Drought Landscaping Workshops for Garden Clubs and Homeowner Associations

Louis Dykes of the Murray County Extension Office will be teaching waterSmart Landscaping classes for groups this summer. Learn how to help your lawns and gardens survive the drought with inexpensive and easy-to-do tips. Groups who would like to arrange a workshop with Louis may contact him at 706-695-3031 or ldykes@uga.edu

Dalton Utilities Part of State Pilot Study for Water Conservation



www.ConserveWaterGeorgia.net

This summer, six cities in Georgia were chosen to participate in a pilot study for the waterSmart water conservation program - Albany, Augusta, Cobb County, Columbus, Dalton and Macon. This program teaches the public how to maintain healthy lawns and plants with five practical tips that are easy to implement at any budget level and under a variety of climate conditions.

■ Water only once a week.

When it hasn't rained, a deep soaking every week will provide your plants with plenty of moisture.

■ Soak, don't sprinkle.

When you water, aim the nozzle at the base of plants so more water will reach the roots.

■ Don't water in the heat of the day.

You will only lose water to evaporation. If you have an automatic system, set it to come on in the early morning hours between 4 a.m. and 10 a.m.

■ Turn off sprinkler systems when it rains.

Install an inexpensive rain sensor shut-off switch.

■ Mulch!

Using pine straw, bark chips or ground hardwood mulch on the roots of plants and trees helps the soil retain water.