



## Streetscapes in Downtown Dalton: Sometimes it's what you DON'T see!

Dalton Utilities is the water, wastewater, electric and natural gas provider for Downtown Dalton. Some of the existing utility infrastructure in the downtown area had been in place for several decades. When the City of Dalton began its Streetscape beautification program in 2001, Dalton Utilities seized the opportunity provided by the ongoing construction to replace and/or rehabilitate its utility services in the downtown area. With construction ongoing for other aspects of Streetscapes, Dalton Utilities was able to schedule replacement and rehabilitation work of utility services to align with other construction schedules to minimize the inconvenience to downtown businesses and patrons. Now Dalton citizens have an improved downtown area - above and below ground.

Additionally, Dalton Utilities launched its telecommunications sector around the time that Streetscapes construction began. This timing was also fortuitous as it allowed the Utility to place fiber optic cables in the downtown area during our telecommunications build-out in a non-disruptive manner. As a result, Downtown Dalton is wired with state-of-the-art fiber optics from Dalton Utilities' OptiLink family of services which provides broadband, high-speed Internet, telephone and television.

Dalton Utilities invested a total of \$1.39 million in Streetscapes infrastructure refurbishments in natural gas, electricity, water, wastewater and telecommunications.

Within the Streetscapes project footprint along Hamilton, Pentz and intersecting streets, the utility replaced 1,402 feet of 2 ½" steel gas main with 4" poly gas pipe. Overhead electrical lines were relocated underground with approximately 3,482 feet of wire and conduit, three switching cabinets, one concrete pole, five junction boxes and six pad-mount transformers installed. Water and wastewater improvements include replacing and/or upgrading 3,940 linear feet of water pipe/main and rehabilitating 4,700 linear feet of sewer pipe.

The Streetscapes project encompasses Hamilton, Pentz, Morris, Cuyler, Waugh, Gordon, Crawford, King and Selvidge streets. The City of Dalton managed the construction phases of the project, which ran 2001 to 2007 and were funded by SPLOST dollars.

**Financial  
Assistance  
Available for  
Heating Costs**

For those who need financial assistance with their heating bills, several local organizations have assistance programs available to those who meet the qualifications.

**Federal funding:** Community Action Center (706-226-7241)

**Local funding:** Department of Family and Children's Services (706-272-2331)

DOC-UP (706-278-7883)

Salvation Army/Project Share (706-278-3966)



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## DALTON UTILITIES' WATER LAB RECEIVES TOP HONORS FROM GAWP

The Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP) recognized exceptional municipal laboratory operations at their recent Fall Conference and Exposition held in Athens, Georgia. Dalton Utilities received the 2007 GAWP Municipal Laboratory of the Year Award in the category of Drinking Water Serving 10,000 - 100K population. Over 100 of the top water and wastewater municipalities in the State were eligible to participate in this annual competition. This award is given annually to a utility that has demonstrated a high level of achievement that far exceeds standard practice and sets an example for other municipalities to follow.

"We are proud to recognize municipal programs that exemplify exceptional operations and management while providing outstanding water resource protection," said Jack Dozier, GAWP Executive Director. "The Municipal Laboratory of the Year Award is presented to the best overall program in the state and is the highest recognition offered by our Association."



Left to right: Lem Henderson, Brian Mashburn, David White and Dena Haverland display the 2007 Georgia Association of Water Professionals Water Laboratory Award recently won by Dalton Utilities

The Utility won the same honor in 2005 but could not compete in 2006 as award winners are not eligible for competition for two consecutive years. Additionally, in 2006, Dalton Utilities received GAWP's Wastewater Laboratory Quality Assurance/Quality Control Award.

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

# Area School Children Learn About Water Conservation

*Local third graders are taking an active role in area water conservation efforts thanks to an educational program (I'm In The Know About H2O) sponsored by Dalton Utilities.*



Area students are learning about how important it is to save water through a resource packet created exclusively for third graders and their teachers by Dalton Utilities. The resource packets include rain gauges, water wheels and lesson plans for teachers, as well as coloring books and other engaging learning aids for students.

"Our mission is to improve water conservation education at the elementary level by providing local teachers with educational outreach opportunities, resources and materials" said Lori McDaniel of Dalton Utilities.

The educational program was made available to all area third graders, including those attending Whitfield County, Dalton City and Christian Heritage Schools.

"I met with a group of 3rd grade teachers, and they LOVE the resources," said Rhonda Hayes, Curriculum Director for Dalton City Schools. "They said their students have really gotten into water conservation....and the timing couldn't have been better." Tips the children are learning about to conserve water include: Taking shorter showers (under 10 minutes); asking parents to fix leaks; washing full loads of laundry and dishes; and not letting water run when brushing teeth or washing dishes.

"At home, my family used to not think about saving water," said Andrew Brumbelow a third grader at Christian Heritage. "But my teacher told me we are running out of water, and if we aren't careful, we'll run out."

"The serious nature of the current drought has really emphasized the need for water conservation on an everyday basis," said Ms. McDaniel. "We want to use every method we can to help spread the word about the need for water conservation. We believe that through this program, children will be able to encourage their families and friends to conserve. The primary focus of the student packets is to show what children can actually do to help conserve and protect our water resources. Our vision is to introduce students to new ideas, options and solutions, so they will conserve and protect water for the future. This program, I'm In The Know About H2O, is to help students understand that water is an essential and limited resource and what each of us can do to protect and conserve our precious water in a fun and interactive atmosphere."

This program for children is the latest in a long line of educational efforts by Dalton Utilities to promote water conservation. Dalton Utilities has been participating in a state-sponsored pilot program, WaterSmart, to encourage water conservation since March 2007 – before many Georgia residents understood the gravity of the drought situation. Since that time, Dalton Utilities has encouraged water conservation through newspaper ads, direct mail, TV and radio.



Pictured: Andrew Brumbelow, a third grader at Christian Heritage

## ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Please observe these simple prevention tips and have a safe and "shock-free" holiday season!! At this time of year...with holiday lights, leaf blowers, space heaters, and a multitude of small appliances in use...it is a good idea to review electrical safety.

**Did you know?** Electricity is so easy to use that you probably take it for granted, but you might be surprised to learn that each year, electricity-related incidents in the home cause approximately 300 electrocutions, 12,000 shocks and burn injuries and 150,000 fires. Remember....Never touch someone who is being shocked. Immediately turn off the power.

**Appliance Safety.** Remember the most important rule for appliances – electricity and water do not mix. Keep appliances, especially hair dryers, away from bathtubs, puddles of standing water, sinks and wet hands. Wet skin increases the risk of shock, so unplug an appliance before cleaning it – even if it's turned off and still plugged in, it can shock. Never put metal objects in live parts of appliances or in outlets. If an appliance overheats, unplug it and have it checked. Don't overload outlets.

**The Great Outdoors.** Only use tools and appliances that approved for outdoor use. Protect outdoor electrical outlets with weatherproof covers and GFCIs to protect against shock. Never climb a utility pole or nearby tree if a toy gets caught in power lines. Call the utility company. ALWAYS call the Utilities Protection Center at 1-800-282-7411 before digging!! Electrical lines are sometimes underground, as well as natural gas, water and sewer lines!!

**Play it safe – and stay away from transformers.** In neighborhoods or areas where electrical power is run underground, you will find transformer boxes on the ground. These boxes are clearly marked with Danger – High Voltage stickers, but parents should take a further precaution of warning their children not to play on or around these structures to prevent accidents.

## Residential Electricity Rates in Georgia Summer 2007 Survey

(Per 500 kilowatt hours)

City	Cents per kilowatt hour
<b>1. Dalton Utilities</b>	<b>6.51 ¢ * (new 2008 rate)</b>
2. Fort Valley Utility Commission	6.60¢
3. City of LaFayette	8.40¢
4. Chickamauga Electric System	8.64¢
5. North GA EMC	9.52¢
6. Georgia Power	9.57¢
7. City of Cartersville	9.90¢
8. Calhoun Utilities	10.86¢
9. Rayle EMC	13.91¢
<b>Average</b>	<b>10.43¢</b>

## Frozen Pipes Can Put You in Hot Water

When you're insulating your home against the cold.....remember to insulate all exposed pipes as well! Frozen pipes can lead to a long list of household repairs...and a lot of expense! According to State Farm Insurance, each winter approximately 250,000 families have their homes damaged because of frozen water pipes.

A common practice to prevent water pipes from freezing is to leave water running. While this does prevent water pipes from freezing, it is also a great waste of treated drinking water that you have to pay for! This practice causes a great demand on the water system, making it difficult for the Utility to keep up with the demand for water. It is much more cost-effective and environmentally-friendly to take the time to insulate your water pipes against the cold.

### How can homeowners protect themselves from this cold weather hazard?

- Disconnect all garden hoses. Shut off and drain water pipes leading to outside faucets.
- Insulate all exposed pipes in crawl spaces and attics.
- Set the thermostat no lower than 55 degrees - even if home is unoccupied.
- Seal leaks in the home that could allow cold air inside where pipes are located.
- Open cabinet doors so heat can reach uninsulated pipes under sinks

### If your pipes do happen to freeze.....

- Call a plumber immediately.
- Turn off the water at the home's main shut off valve.
- Never try to thaw a pipe with a blow torch or an open flame. Try using warm air from a hair dryer.

# New Rates Go Into Effect January 1, 2008

On Monday, November 12, 2007, the Board of Water, Light and Sinking Fund Commissioners approved Dalton Utilities' 2008 budget. In keeping with the 2008 budget and Dalton Utilities' Financial Policy adopted by the Commission in 2003, new rates will go into effect for certain utility services on January 1, 2008.

Dalton Utilities' rates for services are formulated based on the Financial Policy adopted by the Water, Light and Sinking Fund Commission in 2003. Rates for utility services are based on the cost to provide the service to the customer. Additionally, Dalton Utilities supplements utility rates with earnings on investment, so customers pay less than the true cost of utility services. If the current rate plus investment earnings is not enough to offset operational costs, then the rate will be set accordingly. The Utility's Financial Policy specifies an annual ceiling on rate increases to protect customers from rate "jumps." This policy does not apply to the Utility's telecommunications services (OptiLink) because regulatory restrictions do not allow for telecommunications services to be subsidized.

Rising energy prices, chemical prices and ever-increasing regulatory requirements are huge factors in the cost of providing utility services. When these costs increase, the cost to provide service does as well. How does Dalton Utilities keep utility costs down? By operating all of utility sectors in the leanest, most efficient manner possible, the Utility is able to keep operating costs (the ones controlled by the Utility) as low as possible. In spite of rising costs, Dalton Utilities maintains our commitment to keep utility rates affordable.

## ELECTRIC RATES

On January 1, 2008, new electrical rates for residential customers will go into effect. Currently, a typical residential bill (based on 1000 kWh or kilowatt hours) is \$55.92. With the new 2008 rate, the same usage will cost \$63.30. There will be no electrical rate increase for commercial or industrial customers.

Dalton Utilities' electrical rates are still one of the lowest in the nation, according to Jacksonville Electrical Authority's latest (October 2007) electrical rate survey. Please see the attached rate comparison chart to see how Dalton Utilities' rates stack up against local providers.

## WATER RATES

On January 1, 2008, new water rates for all customers will go into effect. Currently, a typical residential bill (based on 7500 gallons usage) is \$10.89. With the new 2008 rate, the same usage will cost \$13.07. Please note that rates for customers in water project areas (Murray and Whitfield counties) will not change as full operational costs have already been built into those rates.

Commercial customers using 100,000 gallons are currently paying \$89.75. In 2008, they will pay \$90.67. Industrial customers using 10,000,000 gallons currently pay \$10,900 per month. In 2008, their bill will be \$13,100.

## WASTEWATER RATES

On January 1, 2008, new wastewater rates for residential, commercial and industrial customers will go into effect. Currently, a typical residential bill (based on 7500 gallons usage) is \$15.31. With the new 2008 rate, the same usage will cost \$18.37. Commercial customers using 100,000 gallons are currently paying \$203.60. In 2008, they will pay \$225.27. Industrial customers using 10,000,000 gallons currently pay \$25,300 per month. In 2008, their bill will be \$27,100.

Our 2008 water and wastewater residential rates are still 40% lower than the state average, based on a recent survey by the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority.

## NATURAL GAS RATES

There will be no changes to natural gas rates across the board. Dalton Utilities' natural gas rate is a "floating index" natural gas tariff which reflects the monthly index price for natural gas. Dalton Utilities residential and commercial interruptible gas customers benefit even more in that they currently only pay 85% of the index price, plus a 26¢ per therm charge to cover transmission and distribution costs incurred by the Utility.

Dalton Utilities' natural gas rates to residential customers remain lower than those of natural gas marketers throughout the state which, in addition to being the entire index rate (our's is 85% of the index), have customer service and monthly base fee charges of as much as \$20 tacked on.

## TELEVISION RATES

Rising content costs will result in new OptiLink television rates in 2008, as well. Basic Cable charges will go from \$31.95 to \$34.95. Enhanced Cable (digital package) rates will go from \$42.95 to \$47.95, and the Supreme Cable (digital plus movie packages) rates will go from \$72.95 to \$77.95. Additionally, the cost to rent a Personal Video Recorder or PVR will increase from \$9.95 to \$10.95.

There will be no increases to OptiLink telephone or internet charges.

# Current Drought Conditions Predicted to Continue Through 2008

## State's Total Outdoor Water Ban May Remain in Effect through Next Summer

### FORECASTS CALLS FOR DRY WINTER

Forecasts call for North Georgia's ongoing drought to continue through summer of 2008. According to the Southeastern Climate Consortium, even if North Georgia receives near normal rainfall this fall, drought conditions are likely to persist with some lessening of the severity possible with winter rainfall. Winter rainfalls recharge surface and groundwater where summer evaporation rates are greater than normal rainfall, resulting in falling water levels even under normal conditions.

North Georgia continues to be in an "exceptional drought" - occurring every 100 years. Some experts have declared the current drought conditions in North Georgia as the worst on record. Our area is unlikely to come out of Level Four restrictions - total outdoor watering ban - by next spring or summer. Everyone needs to be prepared for that. In response to forecasts and the current water situation in our area, Dalton Utilities is tightening up on exempted water use.

### CHANGES TO EXEMPTED WATER USE

#1 - New landscaping installed by a licensed commercial landscaper can still be watered for 30 days after installation, but the Level Two outdoor watering schedule (odd-even days from midnight to 10 a.m.) now applies to this exemption. Additionally, water customers are allowed one exemption per year/per property for new landscaping. (This will go into effect January 1, 2008.)

#2 - Overseeding of lawns is not considered 'new landscaping' - even if performed by a professional and therefore is not exempt from the watering ban.

### CITIZENS ASKED TO CONSERVE

Industry has done a tremendous job this summer and in previous years of reducing their consumption of water. However, in our review of residential customer usage, WHILE we see a steep decline in some customers' usage while others continue to use vast amounts of water. Normal indoor water usage for an average household is 7,000 to 8,000 gallons of water per month. If you are using more than that, you need to investigate why. Do you have a leak? Do you have a toilet that runs constantly and needs to be fixed?

Dalton Utilities will continue to monitor water usage by all customer classes. If we continue in Level Four through next summer, we will most likely narrow down what type of outdoor water use is exempt from the ban and will be strictly enforcing restrictions and applying surcharges for those breaking the water ban."

### TIPS FOR OUTDOOR CONSERVATION

Dalton Utilities recommends that area residents do what they can to save their landscaping, outside of watering. University of Georgia Horticulturist Tim Smalley recommends using organic soil amendments and covering with wood chips and other mulches to help plants survive the drought. Hydrogels can work wonders, too. These granules expand when soaked in water and can slowly release the water to keep soil moist. Smalley also commented that shading and root competition have a great influence on what plants survive. Dalton Utilities will keep customers informed of any changes to the drought status and outdoor watering restrictions. For more information, please call Dalton Utilities at 706-278-1313 or go to [www.dutil.com](http://www.dutil.com)

## CURRENT RESTRICTION LEVEL

**LEVEL FOUR**  
**TOTAL OUTDOOR WATER BAN**  
(Effective September 28, 2007)

**Outdoor water use is banned at all times.**

**A surcharge of \$500 for residential customers and \$10,000 for commercial & industrial customers imposed for each violation.**

**24-Hour Drought Hotline:**  
**706-529-1251**