

NEWSLINE

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Fort Valley Utility Commission

Since 1891

500 Anthoine Street

Fort Valley, Georgia 31030

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Elected Commissioners

Dollie Horton

Chairman

Bob Hunnicutt

Vice Chairman

Alre' Horton

Linda Johnson

Mayor Barbara B. Williams

*The Commission meets the second
Monday of each month at 6:00
p.m. at Fort Valley City Hall.*



June 2019

Editor: Martha McAfee

COMMISSION RECEIVES RELIABLE PUBLIC POWER PROVIDER DESIGNATION

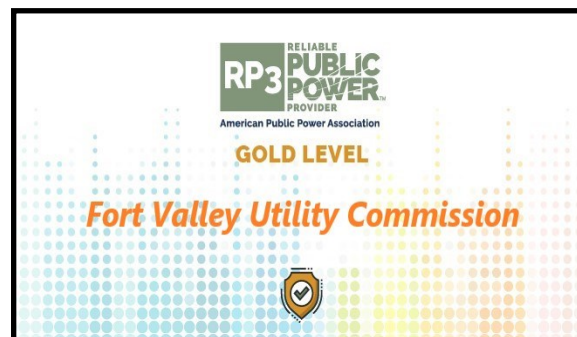
Fort Valley Utility Commission has earned a Reliable Public Power Provider (RP₃)[®] designation from the American Public Power Association (APPA) for providing reliable and safe electric service. The RP₃ designation, which lasts for three years, recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate proficiency in four key disciplines: reliability, safety, workforce development, and system improvement. Criteria include sound business practices and a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity.

"Receiving a RP3 designation is a great honor. It demonstrates that a utility strives for a high level of service and is constantly looking to improve," said Aaron Haderle. "Aside from demonstrating reliability, these designated utilities have shown commitment to system improvement, safety, and developing a strong and sustainable workforce." Haderle is Manager of Transmission and Distribution Operations at Kissimmee Utility Authority and chair of APPA's RP3 Review Panel.



"This is a great honor," said FVUC General Manager/CEO Craig Mims. "We take a lot of pride in the work we do to power our community. We are excited to be recognized as among the 'best of the best' on a national level."

The application seeking the designation was completed over several months and recipients must achieve a minimum score to receive the designation status. The application is then reviewed by an 18-member panel



comprised of national utility experts in safety, transmission and distribution, and system planning. Less than 10 percent of the approximately 2400 public power providers hold this designation of which only four are in the state of Georgia.

UTILITY COMMISSION • PROVIDING SERVICES TO PEACH, CRAWFORD & MACON COUNTIES

From the General Manager's Desk.....



“**Striving for Excellence**” is a commonly used theme in organizations desiring to provide top notch products or services to customers. The Commission is one of those organizations. For us, excellence takes several paths and is a continuing goal. Do we always get it right? No, but we continue to set annual goals, reassess those goals to evaluate on-going relevancy and establish action plans to get there. In this Newsline edition, you will read about some of the goals that have been accomplished that support our efforts to strive for excellence.

The front-page article regarding the Commission’s **Reliable Public Power Provider (RP3) designation** tells the story of one of our efforts to achieve excellence. Receiving the designation was not an easy task and maintaining the designation will be challenging. However, we are committed to taking the steps needed to continue providing reliable power to our customers. To achieve this takes the dedication of all our departments working together and we are extremely proud of the designation.

Excellence in the finance arena is also a goal that we strive to achieve each year. We do not take lightly the multimillions of dollars that flow through the coffers of the Commission annually. High accountability is placed on employees to ensure that all funds are collected and used for the purpose in which the funds were allocated. An independent audit is conducted each year and as another article in this edition explains, the Commission has once again **passed the independent audit with flying colors** as well as received an award for excellence in financial reporting. We will continue to set excellence in financial accountability and reporting as one of our top goals.

Economic development focused on business recruitment, retention, and expansion will continue to be another major excellence goal of the Commission. To highlight our dedication in the economic development field, the Commission was presented the **Economic Development Award by the Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia**

(MGAG) for our role in bringing Southern Flavor Farms to Peach County. We are excited to continue to work with our Economic Development partners to bring businesses to our service area as well as providing support to our current customers as these businesses implement expansion plans.

“To achieve excellence, we must raise the bar—create a gap between where we are and where we want to be.”

In this edition you can read our 2018 Annual Water Quality Report. The Commission is committed to providing customers with a safe, healthy, and reliable supply of high-quality drinking water. Water tests conducted over the past year using sophisticated equipment and advanced procedures show that the Commission’s water **continually meets or surpasses state and federal standards for drinking water and consistently exceeds** safe drinking water health standards.

Excellence means different things to different people in different situations. For us, excellence means providing our customers with the level of service that is expected and then surpassing that expectation.

Commission Recognized for Two Financial Excellence Achievements

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada announced that The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting has been awarded to the Fort Valley Utility Commission for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR). The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by the organization and its management.

“My hat’s off to our Director of Financial and Administrative Services Cathy Johnson and her team for going that extra mile in preparing our financial report,” said Craig Mims, General Manager/CEO at the Commission. “They spend tireless hours throughout the year ensuring that our finances are in order and it pays off.”

The CAFR was judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards. The panel includes financial statement preparers, independent auditors, academics, and other finance professionals. GFOA established the CAFR program in 1945 to encourage and assist state and local governments to go beyond the minimum requirements of generally accepted accounting principles to prepare comprehensive annual financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency and full disclosure and then to recognize individual governments that succeed in achieving that goal.



Pictured left to right: Cathy Johnson, Danyelle Jones, Dollie Horton, Craig Mims

In a related issue, Danyelle Jones, partner at the independent auditing firm of Butler Williams and Wyche presented the Commission with a clean audit report letter. “This means that the Commission’s audit report is clean with no findings. This is the highest and best audit letter an organization can receive,” said Jones.

“We are very proud of the work that the Commission staff does to ensure that our finances are in order and properly accounted for,” stated Commission Chairman, Dollie Horton. “This award and our clean audit report confirm our commitment to being good stewards of the Commission’s funds,” further stated Horton.

Fort Valley Utility Commission Governance

Your Utility Commission is governed by an elected group of five members referred to as the Board of Commissioners. The legislative power rests in the collective judgement and discretion of the Commissioners. Four members are elected by the people in the same manner by which the Fort Valley City Council members are elected. Two representatives are elected to At-Large seats, one from the East Ward and one from the West Ward. The Mayor of the City of Fort Valley is the fifth member and serves on the Board as an ex officio member.

The commission members select a Commissioner to serve as the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, and as Secretary.



Dollie D. Horton, Chairman
At Large

HELLO
My Name Is

Meet Your Commissioners



Bob Hunnicutt, Vice Chairman
West Ward



Dr. Linda Johnson, Secretary
East Ward



Alre' Horton
At Large



Barbara B. Williams
Mayor

"Our mission is to provide quality utility service to all users in the Fort Valley customer service area at the best possible rates, provide long range planning for upgrades and modernization of utility facilities, infrastructure, and equipment, take advantage of the latest usable and practical technology."



Customers Care through Cares

Small change can make a big difference. This has been proven exponentially as some customers of the Fort Valley Utility Commission each month participate in a bill round up program. Established in 1998, the program allows customers to voluntarily have their bills “rounded up” to the nearest dollar with the proceeds being used to aid eligible applicants with their utility bills. The option also exists to contribute any additional amount and the donations are tax deductible.

The program was originally established to benefit only the customers within the City limits but was later revised to include all customers within the Commission’s service area. The most recent revision to the program dedicates 70% of the funds collected to a newly established Weatherization Program. “The Commission is dedicated to helping our customers lower energy use through education, home energy audits, and by providing energy efficient supplies,” said Craig Mims, General Manager/CEO at the Commission. Martha McAfee, Economic | Community Development Manager has been slated to lead a committee to fully implement the weatherization portion of the program. “It is great to provide assistance to pay the bills, but we also need to work on getting people to pay special attention to items such as more efficient lighting and sealing up cracks and windows,” stated McAfee. Several Commission employees have received training to go into homes and conduct energy audits. The resident is provided tips on how to make the home more energy efficient. Eligible residents are provided with complimentary items such as LED light bulbs, weather stripping, and power strips. As funds become available, larger grants will provide items such as insulation and window replacements.

The Commission is currently taking applications for the weatherization program. The funds that are dedicated to bill payment assistance are placed into a special trust account established exclusively for the Cares Program that is managed by SunMark Bank personnel with program administration being provided by DFACs. For FY 2018, the Cares Program donations averaged \$3,700 per month.

Customers interested in donating to the program or need weatherization assistance should contact Customer Service located at 902 Knoxville Street. Requests for bill payment assistance should be directed to the Peach County DFACs office.



Electric Cities of Ga employee Jon Beasley (above) was inducted into the International Lineman's Museum Hall of Fame. The Commission's GM/CEO Craig Mims who serves as Chairman of ECG's Board of Director presented Jon with a personalized ring. Congratulations, Jon!



Congratulations to Parker Reed for receiving the Commission's very first Team 212 award. This award recognizes employees who go over and above the call of duty. Thanks, Parker!

CONGRATULATIONS!
IT APPLAUSE FAB
HOO RAY!
WONDERFUL NEWS
YOU DID IT CLAP GREAT SUPERB
EXCELLENT
WELL DONE



The Commission received the Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia (MGAG) 2018 Economic Development award for our role in bringing Southern Flavor Farms to Peach County. MGAG represents 79 member organizations in 5 states. Economic|Community Development Manager Martha McAfee is pictured above with MGAG representative.



The Commission received an award from Electric Cities of Georgia for Outstanding Major System Improvement. Operations Manager Jason Johnson is pictured on the left with ECG representatives.



2018 Annual Water Quality Report—Fort Valley Utility Commission Water Quality Excels

The Fort Valley Utility Commission is committed to providing customers with safe, healthy, and reliable supply of high quality drinking water. Water tests conducted over the past year using sophisticated equipment and advanced procedures show that Fort Valley's water continually meets or surpasses state and federal standards for drinking water. This annual water quality report details where our water comes from, what it contains, and other information.

Important Information About the Safety of Your Drinking Water (A Message from Craig Mims, General Manager)

We are pleased to report to you that the drinking water supplied by the Fort Valley Utility Commission is safe. Drinking water in Fort Valley consistently exceeds safe drinking water health standards. As health scientists learn more about our environment and the effect of substances in the environment on human health, new standards will continue to be set for drinking water. Fort Valley continues to add new technology in order to be able to meet further standards. All drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some substances. All water sources pass over the surface of the land or through the ground. The water dissolves naturally occurring minerals and materials and can pick up substances relating to the presence of animals or from human activity. Substances that may be present in source water:

- Biological - may come from human, agriculture, or wildlife sources
- Inorganic - can be natural, from storm run-off, or from industrial or domestic wastewater discharges.
- Pesticides and herbicides - may come from agriculture, storm run-off or residential use.
- Organic chemicals - may come from industrial or domestic processes, storm run-off, and septic systems.
- Radioactive materials - can be naturally occurring or the result of mining or other human activities.

To ensure tap water is safe to drink, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain substances in water provided by public water systems.

Where does our water come from?

The Fort Valley Utility Commission gets its water from the Tuscaloosa aquifer, which is approximately 500 feet below the surface. This aquifer has, so far, provided the City with a safe and dependable supply of water even in the driest years. For information on the Well-Head Protection Plan, contact the Utility Commission's Water Plant at (478) 825-5482.

Treatment Process:

The water is disinfected with chlorine to make it biologically safe. The pH is adjusted by adding sodium hydroxide and lime slurry. Fluoride is added to help prevent dental cavities. Phosphate is added to enhance corrosion control.

What is in our water?

More than 7,500 tests are conducted annually at the Fort Valley Utility Commission's Drinking Water Lab. These tests monitor tap water for micro-organisms, minerals, and organic substances that could cause disease or other adverse health effects. Testing is done for contaminants, including coliform bacteria, metals, nitrates, and pesticides.

The water in the distribution system is tested on a regular basis. Five water system samples are collected each week. A total of twenty samples are tested each month as required by the EPD to ensure that the drinking water is safe for consumption.

The data presented in this report is from the most recent testing done in accordance with State and Federal regulations. **The table on the next page lists only the regulated substances that were found. Our test results are below the levels allowed by EPA in public drinking water.**

Terms and Abbreviations:

Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG): The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.

Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL): The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLG as feasible using the best available treatment technology.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL): The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbiological contaminants.

Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG): The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant that, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirement that a water system must follow.

N/A: not applicable

PPM: parts per million or milligrams per liter (mg/l) – one part per million corresponds to one minute in two years or a single penny in \$10,000.

PPB: Parts per billion, or micrograms per liter – one part per billion corresponds to one minute in 2,000 years or a single penny in \$10,000,000

(dw): Drinking water.

(a): Fluoride is added in treatment to bring the natural level to the EPA optimum of 1 part per million (see definition of PPM).

(b): Water from the treatment plant does not contain lead or copper. However under EPA test protocol, water is tested at the tap. Tap tests show that where a customer may have lead pipes or lead-soldered copper lines, the water is not corrosive. This means the amount of lead or copper absorbed by the water is limited to safe levels.

Substances Tested and Detected	Unit	Goal MCLG	Maximum Allowed MCL	Amount Detected	Is it safe? (Does it meet standards?)	Probable Source
Fluoride (a)		4	4	0.89	Yes	Water additive that
	PPM					promotes strong teeth
Copper (b)		1,300	AL = 1,300	97	Yes	Corrosion of household
	PPB					plumbing systems
Lead (b)		0	AL = 15	1.4	Yes	Corrosion of household
	PPB					plumbing systems

Substance Tested & Detected	Unit	MRDL	MRDLG	Amount Detected	Range of Detection (Report Year)	Is it safe? (Does it meet standards?)	Source
Chlorine	PPM	4	4	0.75	0.47 – 1.09	Yes	Water additive used to disinfect drinking water

Additional Lead Information

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Fort Valley Utility Commission is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-4791 or at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Cryptosporidium

Cryptosporidium is a protozoan parasite that is common in source water. Cryptosporidium can cause symptoms including diarrhea, nausea, and/or stomach cramps. Cryptosporidium has never been found in the drinking water that goes to your tap.

Notice to Immuno-compromised People

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population.

Immuno-compromised people (such as those with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, people who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune disorders, some older adults and infants) can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about the drinking water from their healthcare providers.

EPA and the Centers for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbiological contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800) 426-4791 or www.epa.gov/drink.

Additional Testing and Research

The EPA has required the Utility Commission and hundreds of U.S. water systems to participate in a major testing program Information Collection Rule (ICR). The ICR is intended to provide EPA information about the occurrence of chemical by-products used in disinfecting, plus information about disease-causing pathogens (microorganisms). The data on how public water supply systems control the chemical by-products and pathogens will be used to revise drinking water standards.

Additional Information Sources:

Web sites with information about water quality: www.epa.gov/ow www.awwa.org www.gaepd.org www.amwa.net

Please join us in making our decisions.

We encourage and invite public interest and participation in the decision-making that affects drinking water. The Fort Valley Utility Commission holds regularly scheduled meetings at 6:00 p.m. on the second Monday of every month. The meetings are open to the public and are held at our Headquarters located at 500 Antoine Street. The Fort Valley Utility Commission business office is open daily except for weekends and holidays. Lobby hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Customer Service telephone number is (478) 825-7701, option 3. The Drinking Water Quality Lab, and emergency after hours, telephone number is (478) 825-5482.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

ORDER

Please come here **first** for:

New Customer Application - Online

- New Customer Information - (Nueva Informacion Para El Cliente)
- New Customer Application (PDF) - (Aplicacion para Servicios Nuevos)
- New Customer Application (Online)

We are excited to roll out our new portal for customers to start new services. Quick, easy, and secure. Visit our website at www.fvuc.com to set up new services and securely upload documents. If you have suggestions on other automated services that you would like to see, please send us your suggestions! Email us at customerservice@fvutil.com.



Contact us today to sign up!

FREE Home Energy Audit

FREE Energy Saving Tips

**FREE Supplies to Help Weatherize Your Home
(LED Light bulbs, Weather Stripping, etc.)**

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RECEIVE AN APPLICATION

PHONE: (478) 825-7701 Option 3

EMAIL: customerservice@fvutil.com

WEBSITE: www.fvutil.com (Under the Customer Service tab)

Completed applications may be emailed or brought to our Customer Engagement Center located at 902 Knoxville St.



For the 4th year, the Fort Valley Utility Commission held a charity dance event to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. The event dubbed "White Out Cancer" was held downtown Fort Valley at the Austin Theater. In honor of those battling cancer and in memory of those who have succumbed to the disease, attendees wore white attire with a hint of color representing the various forms of cancer. Luminaries were also placed on the tables.

The event netted a record high of **\$6,692.46** which was sent to the American Cancer Society.



Know what's below.
Call before you dig.

An Important Message About Damage Prevention Prior to Excavating

This message is brought to you by **Fort Valley Utility Commission**. There are thousands of dig-in damage incidents in the United States every year. Striking an underground pipeline may lead to expensive fines, serious injury or death. Gas pipelines are built with safety and reliability as top priorities. Over the past 20 years, risk exposure has been rising through increased populations, energy consumption and pipeline miles. At the same time, the number of serious pipeline incidents involving death or injury has declined by 50%. Natural gas leaks do happen and may result in fire, explosion, and/or asphyxiation. Natural gas is a colorless, odorless gas; however, a chemical that smells like rotten eggs is added to help detect a possible leak. It's a bad smell. That's good!

Some of the signs of a gas leak include seeing bubbling water, hearing a hissing or blowing sound from a pipeline or appliance, dead or discolored vegetation in an otherwise green area, or dirt or dust blowing from the ground, or the smell of rotten eggs.

If you smell gas, or just think you might have a gas leak:

- **Leave** the area immediately; **Do Not** congregate around natural gas facilities.
- **Call 478-825-7701 or 911** from a neighboring home or business
- **Never** turn on or off switches, open or close garage doors, use a flashlight or phone/cellphone in the presence of the gas smell, as these devices may be a source of ignition, causing an explosion.
- **Stay** in a safe location until the Emergency Responder arrives and gives you clearance to return to the area.

Here are five easy steps to damage prevention:

1. **Survey and Mark** – Survey the proposed excavation area and mark the dig sites in white paint.
2. **Call Before You Dig** - 48 hours prior to digging, call 811 and get free staking of underground utility lines which helps reduce the chance of injury and unneeded expense. It is the law in Georgia.
3. **Wait!** Wait the required time to allow utility owners to locate and mark the lines.
4. **Respect the Marks!** Maintain visibility of the marks and safely follow them when digging.
5. **Dig** – Dig with care. Hand excavate within 24-inches of each side of the locate marks. If you plan to dig anywhere near a marked area – especially when using mechanized equipment – use a shovel and carefully hand dig to expose the lines.

If your equipment contacts a gas line:

- **Leave** the equipment; jumping clear and shuffling away – **DO NOT** turn off the engine.
- **Warn other and leave** the area quickly.
- **Do Not operate** any gas pipeline valves or stop the flow of gas or try to fold over plastic pipelines.
- Leave the **excavation open**.
- If gas is escaping the pipeline, **call 911**, then **Fort Valley Utility Commission at 478-825-7701**
- If the line is nicked, scraped, gouged, dented or otherwise damaged but not leaking, call **Fort Valley Utility Commission at 478-825-7701**; these may appear to be minor but can lead to future leaks if not properly repaired.

Natural gas is America's most popular home heating fuel and is increasingly popular for use by homeowners, schools, businesses, factories and electric power-generation plants. Natural gas is efficient, clean, reliable, and a relative bargain compared to alternative energy sources. Natural gas flows through a network of underground main lines that serve approximately **3891** customers in our system. These main lines are typically 2-inch in diameter and branch into household service lines which are typically half-inch to three-quarter-inch in diameter and buried 12- to 18-inches below the surface. The service lines end at each customer's meter where gas is delivered.

This message is brought to you by Fort Valley Utility Commission as a part of our Public Awareness Program. For additional information regarding this message, call 478-825-7701.

Just For Fun!

Striving for Excellence

T	V	X	S	B	F	N	V	D	B	O	F	Z	D	M	S	H	S	T	Z
Q	R	O	T	S	G	L	O	A	F	J	O	I	I	E	S	D	I	B	H
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ARETE
ATTRIBUTE
CLASS
DISTINCTION
ECLAT
EMINENCE
EXCELLENCY
FINENESS
GOODNESS
GREATNESS
HIGH
IMPORTANCE
MERIT
PERFECTION
PREEMINENCE
PRIME
PURITY
QUALITY
SIGNIFICANCE
SUPERBNESS
SUPREMACY
TRANSCENDENCE
VALUE
VIRTUE
WORTH

FILL IN THE BLANKS

- CAFR is short for _____ and outlines the financial status of the Commission.
- The Commission held a fundraiser for the _____ and netted \$_____.
- The RP3 recognition received by the Commission is awarded by an organization named _____.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No: _____

Mail or drop your entry by the Utility Commission office by August 30, 2019, to be eligible to win a \$25 gift certificate.

Utility Commission employees and family members are not eligible to participate.

NEWSLINE

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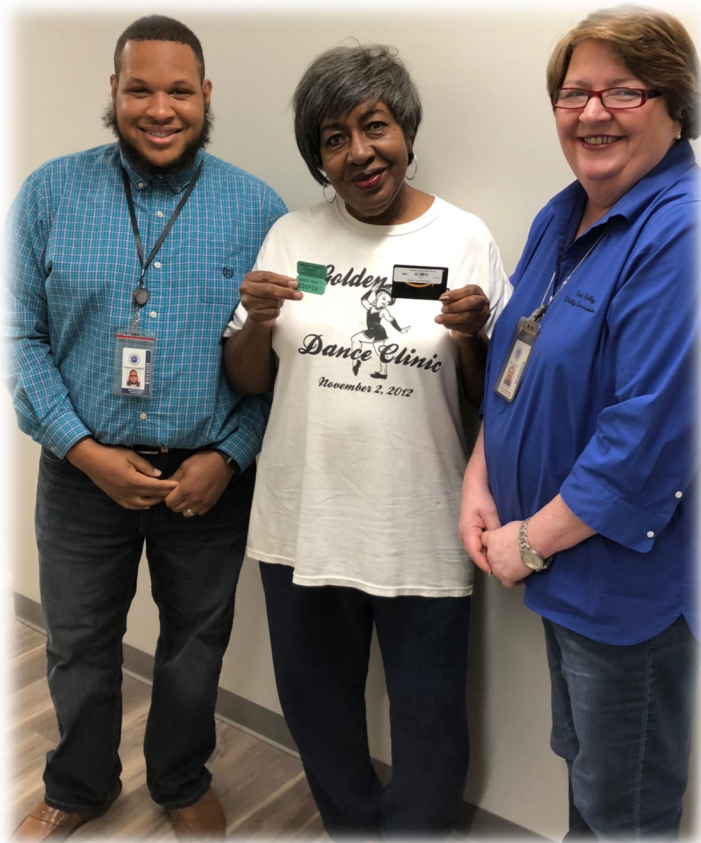
Emergency Service

Nights and Weekends
478-825-5482

Office Hours

8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Monday - Friday
(6:00 pm on Payment Due Dates ONLY)

Contest Winner



Congratulations to Ms. Rosa Hammock for winning our most recent contest! Ms. Hammock was entered into a drawing for using our Drive-Thru window service to conduct business! Be sure to check out our drive thru window at the Customer Engagement Center located at 902 Knoxville St. The drive-thru entrance is off Anthoine Street.

