

May  
2017

# The Hartselle



*Serving Hartselle's People, Building for Hartselle's Future*

## Summer Wastewater Fees Capped Beginning in May

Hartselle has just had one of the driest seasons ever, and many residents are planning to spend more time watering lawns and gardens this summer to compensate for Mother Nature. Water used outside doesn't enter into our wastewater system, and so Hartselle Utilities has a long-standing policy to cap summer sewer fees.

Water and Wastewater are two separate services provided by Hartselle Utilities. HU purchases water from Decatur Utilities and distributes it to customers. Wastewater – what is returned through the sewer pipes – is treated at HU's Wastewater Treatment Plant and cleaned before it is returned to Shoal Creek.

Sewer charges are higher than water charges, because the costs to treat wastewater to meet federal and state standards, and ensure that it is clean enough to be returned safely to our environment, are higher than the cost to purchase water.

Hartselle Utilities meters the amount of water each customer uses each month. Typically, most of the water a household uses enters the sewer system as waste, so each customer's water bill is used to calculate their sewer fees. This is the national standard for calculating residential wastewater treatment charges.

During the summer months, residents generally use more water

outdoors – to irrigate lawns, top off swimming pools and wash cars, for example – and this water does not enter the sewer system. For this reason, HU sets a cap for the summer sewer rates at 120 percent of the average of each customer's winter usage. From May 1 to October 31, customers are not charged a sewer fee for water used above the cap.

HU uses the months between November and April to calculate winter averages, and then caps each customer's summer sewer rates at 120 percent of that figure. If a customer does not have a long enough billing history to provide a winter average, the system average is used to calculate their summer sewer cap.

HU customers who use a great deal of water outdoors year-round might consider an outdoor water irrigation meter, says Customer Service Manager Terri Harris. The cost to install a one-inch irrigation meter is \$528. There is no sewer charge for water received through an irrigation meter.

However, Harris cautions, for the typical household with a backyard garden, the cost of an irrigation meter does not lower the customer's sewer bill enough to pay for itself. She strongly suggests that customers considering an irrigation meter calculate their total costs, and the expected savings, before installing one.

## New Commercial Development in Hartselle

Hartselle has several new commercial developments coming to the city in 2017. Along Highway 31, construction has begun on several projects including Zaxby's, Hartselle Medical Plaza, and the 31 Centre shopping mall.

"The City of Hartselle is very excited to see new growth in the commercial/retail area," says Hartselle Mayor Randy Garrison. "We welcome Zaxby's, Arby's, 31 Centre and Hartselle Medical Plaza as new members of the Hartselle family. We appreciate the confidence the new developers have in our city and are thankful to them for investing in Hartselle."

The new developments will help boost Hartselle Utilities' number of commercial customers. HU has also provided utility service to a new mini-storage facility on the south end of Hwy. 31, and will also be providing utilities for the Alfa Insurance building that will be torn down and re-constructed on the same site.

"We have seen a definite spike in commercial development over the past few months, and we are working hard to provide the desired utilities to each of these new establishments," says HU Engineering Services Manager Daxton Maze.

Construction at Zaxby's, located

on Hwy 31 next to O'Reilly's, is well underway and all utility connections have been installed as of April, with the addition of a new hydrant for fire protection.

Hartselle Medical Plaza will be at the corner of Hwy. 31 and Mynatt Street. It will house several medical providers, including a general physician practice, physical rehabilitation, and a pharmacy. Hartselle Utilities has provided underground power, installed a new manhole, and provided eight domestic water meters as part of the utility connection costs for the developer.

Alfa Insurance, located on Hwy. 31 next to the HU Water Tank, will be demolishing their existing structure and building a new office

*Continued on back*



The shell of the new Zaxby's is taking shape on Hwy 31. The lot was previously a truck stop and carwash, and HU crews removed several old water connections to get the site ready for the new building.

## If you pay your bill by convenience pay or online banking, please make sure your account number is up to date!

When HU converted to a 'new' accounting system in November 2014, all customer account numbers were changed. However, some customers still list their old account numbers on their payments, and this creates more work for the Customer Service staff who post payments. Please help us by making sure your payment includes your current account number!

### Commercial Development *continued from front*

at the same location. HU has assisted in providing temporary water for an on-site agent office where the employees will work during construction.

Across from Eddie Preuitt Ford, 31 Centre is a new three tenant development that will be anchored by Arby's. Construction began on this project the first week of April.

"We believe this is just the beginning of growth the city will be experiencing in the near future and welcome others who are contemplating expanding to take a look at Hartselle," says Mayor Garrison. "We look forward to working with Hartselle Utilities on new projects as we all join together to move Hartselle forward."

### Getting a project going

Prior to most commercial projects, developers inquire to HU about availability of utilities to determine their site layout and utility locations. HU will provide field locates for verification for 'as-built' developer construction maps. Also, HU provides an estimated cost of connection for each utility per our customer service and rates policies.

HU's Engineering Staff and Field Crew Superintendent hold a meeting with each developer and general contractor prior to construction to ensure all questions are answered and all details are ironed out. Developments are reviewed at several levels prior to being approved for construction, including the Technical Review Committee that consists of City of Hartselle Development Department, City of Hartselle consulting engineer, Hartselle Fire Department, Hartselle Public Works, and Hartselle Utilities Engineering Department. The plans are inspected for proper utility sizing, adequate fire protection, adequate means of ingress and egress, proper site drainage, appropriate signage, along with other items.

The Planning Commission and the Board of Zoning and Adjustment are also often involved in the approval process of developments.

"As a utility provider, our goal is to assist the developers with the construction process, ensuring we are on time with our pieces of the project, along with providing open communication to make certain the project can stay on schedule," says Maze.

## Help Prevent Fire-Related Injuries and Deaths

In Alabama this year, fires and fire-related injuries have caused 16 deaths. Most, if not all, of these deaths could have been prevented with a few small steps. Here are some tips from the Hartselle Fire Department to help keep you and your family safe:

- Most home fires occur in the kitchen while cooking. Stay in the kitchen when you are frying, grilling or broiling food – if you must leave, turn off the stove.
- Never use the range or oven to heat your home.
- When in use, move barbecue grills out from under eaves and overhanging branches. Keep grills at least 10 feet away from siding and deck railings.
- Keep flammable materials at least three feet away from heat sources.
- Make sure cigarettes are put out and discarded safely.
- Replace worn or damaged appliance cords, and avoid running cords under rugs.
- Do not use portable generators indoors.



## Have you signed up for E-Bill?

- Less paper to handle
  - Get your statement faster
  - Access your utility bill from anywhere
- To sign up for E-



Bill, go to our website at [hartselleutilities.org/e-bill](http://hartselleutilities.org/e-bill). From there, you will be prompted to register online. Enter your account name and account number – including dashes – exactly as they appear on your bill. If you have questions about E-Bill, call HU Customer Service at (256) 773-3340.

## May - August 2017 City of Hartselle Recycling Calendar

The next few months of Hartselle's 2017 Recycling Calendar are shown below. If you have a question about sanitation pickup or containers, visit [www.hartselle.org](http://www.hartselle.org) or call Public Works at (256) 773-2643.

Recycling Pick Up							City Holiday						
<b>May '17</b>							<b>June '17</b>						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
30	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	
<b>July '17</b>							<b>August '17</b>						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31		

Have a non-emergency question or a question about your bill? Email us at [inquiries@hartselleutilities.org](mailto:inquiries@hartselleutilities.org).

We try to respond to billing and general questions within 24 hours; service issues that need investigation may take up to 48 hours.

**To report a gas leak, sewer backup or power outage, call our office.** Our phones are answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During business hours (M-F, 7:30 am - 4:30 pm), call (256) 773-3340. After hours, call (256) 773-2533 or (256) 773-2588.



**256-773-2533 or 911**



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