



March 2023



LIHWAP can help with water and sewer bills

CFPUA wants to remind customers
that they may be eligible for financial

assistance with water and sewer bills through the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP).

LIHWAP is a federally funded program administered locally by the [New Hanover County Department of Health and Human Services \(DHHS\)](#). This temporary program is open for applications through September 30, 2023, or until funds run out.

Customers can apply for LIHWAP:

- [Online at the N.C. DHHS ePass website](#)
- By phone by calling 910-798-3500 (Select Option 4)
- By printing and mailing the application
([English](#) & [Spanish](#)) to 1650 Greenfield Street, Wilmington, NC 28401
- By printing and faxing the application
([English](#) & [Spanish](#)) to 910-798-7824
- In person at 1650 Greenfield Street, Wilmington, NC 28401

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CONTACT US

Customer Service: (910) 332-6550

Engineering: (910) 332-6560

Human Resources: (910) 332-6570

Water Conservation Hotline: (910) 332-6566

Water/Sewer Emergencies: (910) 332-6565

Email: communications@cfpua.org

[Click here to learn more about eligibility for the program.](#)

Spring is here! Don't forget your backflow test!



As the weather warms and we all get back outdoors, CFPUA reminds customers to make sure their backflow prevention assemblies are up to date on inspection and testing.

A backflow prevention assembly, sometimes called an RPZ (reduced pressure zone) or double-check valve, is equipment installed between the public water supply and a potential source of contaminants, such as swimming pools, irrigation systems, and fire sprinkler systems. These assemblies prevent the accidental backflow of water into the public drinking water supply during periods of low or no pressure, which can be caused by back-siphonage or maintenance and cleaning activities. CFPUA requires all backflow prevention assemblies to be inspected and tested upon installation and re-tested annually. Customers must submit a copy of their test to CFPUA within 60 days of the testing date.

Customers who are newly installing a backflow prevention assembly can contact [CFPUA Community Compliance](#) using [this online form](#).

[Click here for more information, including a list of certified backflow testers.](#) Help us help you protect your family and neighbors: Call CFPUA Community Compliance at 910-332-6558 with questions or concerns about backflow.

Sweeney Plant reopens for school tours



Since 2020, first due to COVID-19 and then to construction on new water filters, CFPUA's Sweeney Water Treatment Plant has been temporarily closed to school tours. This month, we were happy to welcome our first K-12 groups in three years, from the International School at Gregory and Southeast Area Technical High School (SEA-TECH).

[School groups can request tours of both the Sweeney Plant and the Richardson Water Treatment Plant using this online form.](#)

Because of the industrial setting of our facilities, children under 5 are not permitted at either plant. Student/ school groups are required to provide an appropriate number of chaperones – generally one chaperone per five students.

Celebrating Better Water, and Better Beer

This week is [Cape Fear Craft Beer Week](#), an annual event celebrating Wilmington-area brews!

Water is a key building block of beer, and we're proud to provide breweries in CFPUA's service area with a product that lets them brew their best. Thank you to the Cape Fear Craft Beer Alliance for having CFPUA at Beer Week's kick-off event, the Ultimate Brewing Championship. We had a great time answering brewers' questions and sharing information about our new water filters to remove PFAS, including GenX.

[For an overview of water quality information relevant to breweries and restaurants, click here.](#)



Employee Spotlight

Each month we introduce you to one of the more than 300 employees at CFPUA who work to provide you with the best water and wastewater services.



Marco Merrick
Camera Operator

Name: *Marco Merrick*

Birthplace: *Charlotte, N.C.; raised in Navassa, N.C.*

Department/Division: *Collections*

Position: *Camera Operator*

Length of employment: *10 years this July*

Briefly describe your typical day at work: *A typical day for me at CFPUA is getting to work, greeting everyone, finding out my assignments for the day, and planning out me and my assistants' day. Most of my jobs will be warranty work, which consists of me inspecting newly installed sewer pipe and water utilities.*

What do you enjoy most about your job? *I enjoy working with my colleagues and operating the remote-controlled CCTV roller to investigate sewer problems that can only be seen underground in pipe, because viewing the surface doesn't fully show the possible defects underground. You would be amazed about all the things I see in the sewer main, things from cell phones to baby gators and squirrels.*

Tell us about one of your biggest accomplishments or challenges while working at CFPUA? *One of my biggest accomplishments is getting my certification for Construction Management Project*

Management, being NASSCO Certified, and obtaining my Collection 1 license. I am proud of this because one day I plan on leading my colleagues to do great things for the organization. One of my biggest challenges is to get all the certificates and licenses to be the Operator in Responsible Charge (ORC) of my department.

What advice would you give to recent new hires? *My advice for the newly hired employees is to stay humble and loyal to yourself and your crew, and great things will follow you. Never fear a challenge and to better yourself mentally and physically. Always think outside the box; don't let anybody take you out of your work zone, because one day a door will open, and you will be ready. Also, respect, as I would say, "the OG's" (people that been here for a long time). They are the ones that have knowledge of the job you cannot learn in a book. It's always best to have both.*

What's one thing you'd want customers to know about your department, position, or CFPUA in general? *To the community we serve, we work so hard to make sure the inky stinky sewer stays underground and does not penetrate the surface and reach the resources we need to live. We have a preventive maintenance system to ensure that all the sewer lines are checked for defects so that customers can always be safe and at ease.*

What do you like to do when you're not at work? *When I'm not at work I am attending school. I will be graduating Cape Fear Community College this year with an Associates in Arts, majoring in Psychology. I always looking for ways to better myself as a person and support my family. I'm just a person trying to always be in a better place in life than I was yesterday.*

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