



## Kelly L. Darden, Jr. Joins GUC Board of Commissioners



The Greenville Utilities Commission welcomes Kelly L. Darden, Jr. to the Greenville Utilities Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Darden was recently appointed by the Greenville City Council to fill the unexpired term of Toya Jacobs, beginning October 18, 2018.

"Being a Greenville Utilities Commissioner is something I wanted to do because of the impact GUC has on the community," said Commissioner Darden, "Every single person in the city uses and relies on the utilities GUC provides. Not everybody knows about what is going on and why things are done a certain way. I really want to be able to be a voice for those people who might have concerns and questions, but don't feel they have a voice."

Darden is a Mental Health Counselor for Visions in View Mental Health. He's also an internationally-known broadcaster, communications professional, and avid outdoorsman.

Born and raised in Greenville, Commissioner Darden is a graduate of Johnson C. Smith University and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where he received degrees for Business Administration and Language Arts / Communication Skills. He was one of the first African-Americans to launch and host a nationally-televised outdoor show, *Outdoor Moments*, which aired on the Outdoor Channel.

Mr. Darden has been involved with environmental concerns for many years, having served on the Board of Directors for the North Carolina Wildlife Federation and the Resource Institute. He was also appointed by Governor Beverly Perdue as a Commissioner on the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission.

## Cease the Grease

You may find yourself cooking more this time of year, so we want to remind you that fat, oil, and grease are a real "pain in the drain." They are the major cause of problems we find in sewer lines. GUC does everything it can to prevent sewer spills, but we can't do it alone. We need your help!

Things like oil, butter, margarine, shortening, pan drippings, and sauces can cause blockages in sewer lines. Clogged lines can lead to sewer spills, which are bad for the environment, and can be expensive.

The best way you can prevent sewer spills is to never pour fat, oil, or grease down the drain. Instead, let it cool down, collect it in a container -- like a used soup can or jar -- and throw it in the trash. We have reusable lids for customers to use in their kitchens. If you'd like one, please call 252-329-2199 and we'll put it in the mail for you.



## GUC Receives Gold Award for Water Resources



Greenville Utilities Commission has picked up one of the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies' (AMWA) most prestigious awards. The AMWA presented GUC with the 2018 Gold Award for Exceptional Utility Performance.

"This is the first time we have won this award," said Anthony Whitehead, GUC's Water Quality Manager. "It's quite the honor, especially because it recognizes not just the Water Resources Department, but GUC as a whole."

AMWA recognized GUC for its strategic plan and goals, employee workforce development, financial stability, water supply sustainability, exceptional customer service, water quality and environmental leadership, and infrastructure investment and management. Also noted was GUC's commitment to exceeding Environmental Protection Agency regulations and achieving higher levels of water quality.

GUC is one of 14 public water systems nationally, and the only one in North Carolina, to be recognized with the AMWA's top utility management awards. The Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies is an organization of the largest publicly owned drinking water suppliers in the United States.





# Mythbuster – Cost of Holiday Lights

As you begin to plan your decorations for the holiday season, you may wonder how much it’s going to cost to deck the halls with those beautiful strands of lights. Here’s some good news – not as much as you might think!

One strand of 100 mini-lights costs around \$1.50 to run for 10 hours a day, for 30 days. A typical family might use eight of those strands to decorate their home, with a cost around \$12.50 if the lights are on for 10 hours a day for 30 days.

If your family goes all out, say like the Griswolds in the movie *Christmas Vacation*, you’ll spend a bit more. Fifty strands (5,000) lights will cost around \$75 if they’re on 10 hours a day for 30 days.

LED (Light Emitting Diode) lights are much more economical. Using the same examples as above, one strand of 100 mini-LED lights would cost just about a quarter; eight strands would be around \$2. The Griswold’s would save even more money – fifty strands would be around \$13.

You might see an increase in your utility bill during the holidays because of other factors. Lower temperatures mean heating systems work harder. Many people entertain and cook more during the holidays, and having friends and family visit could increase your water usage for showers, etc. All these factors contribute to potentially higher bills for the holiday season. So, enjoy your lights!

## Toilets Are Not Trash Cans



Toilets are great for what they’re meant for – and that’s all they’re meant for! When the wrong things get flushed, the results can be costly for you, for GUC, and for the environment. Here are some things to keep in mind:

Disposable does not mean flushable. Even flushable does not always mean you should flush it. If the label reads “flushable,” like some toilet wipes, you are still safer and more environmentally correct to place them in the trash.

### Here’s a partial list of things that should not be flushed:

- Baby wipes, diapers
- Cigarette butts
- Rags and towels
- Cotton swabs
- Medicated wipes (all brands)
- Syringes
- Candy and other food wrappers
- Sponges
- Aquarium gravel or kitty litter
- Sanitary napkins
- Tissues
- Food scraps
- Oil
- Grease
- Medicines
- Dental floss

## Winter Saving Tips

While none of us can control the weather, we do encourage customers to take steps to reduce energy usage and lower bills as much as possible during the winter months. We advise that you focus your efforts on the biggest energy user – heating.

A heating system on average uses 60% of a home’s energy. It can even be as high as 85% with electric-resistance heated homes. As outside temperatures drop, heating systems must work harder to maintain a home’s set temperature.

### Heat Pumps:

- If you have an electric heat pump, in winter only, find the lowest comfortable setting, and don’t change it. Set it and forget it. The Department of Energy recommends a setting of 68 degrees. Every degree you lower the setting will save you money.
- When you adjust the thermostat on a heat pump system, even by just one degree, it automatically forces the less economical back-up system to start running. This can be costly!
- If you are leaving your house for a few days, turn your heat down on your heat pump system.

### Other Forms of Heat:

- For other forms of heat (natural gas, oil, propane, geothermal, electric furnace and electric baseboard), adjust your thermostat as needed daily, and throughout the day. The Department of Energy recommends a setting of 68 degrees (or lower).
- If you’re gone for several hours or more, set the thermostat at 55 degrees, or even cut it off (unless pipes are in danger of freezing). Be sure to turn the thermostat down at night, and cover up with blankets.