



## Sweetwater Utilities Board TMEPA Member Spotlight October 2017



Sweetwater Utilities Board is located in the city of Sweetwater, TN, 60 miles north of Chattanooga and 45 miles south of Knoxville along I-75.

Sweetwater Electric System was established on August 01, 1939 and was managed by S.J. Randall until January 1967. By June 1940, we had 10 full time employees and 935 electric customers. From January 1967 - January 1975, Sweetwater Electric System was managed by J.R. Tennyson. In 1969, we acquired the water, wastewater, and gas departments from the City of Sweetwater. Sweetwater Electric System was subsequently changed to the Board of Public Utilities and was managed by J.E. Smith from January 1975 – January 1976. Wayne Roach, a recipient of the TVPPA Distinguished Service Award, became the General Manager in January 1976 and remained in that position until his passing in late 1998. The Board of Public Utilities was renamed Sweetwater Utilities Board during his tenure in 1978. Robert Bettis was named General Manager after the passing of Wayne Roach and remained in that position until his passing in January 2017. The current General Manager of Sweetwater Utilities Board is Eric Hicks. He is a native of Sweetwater and a 23 year employee of SUB. To date, Sweetwater Utilities Board has 50 full time employees. The Board, Management, and Employees of SUB strive to meet and exceed the expectations of its community and its customers.

### Electric Department

SUB's electric system has grown to 9,016 customers and spans into parts of 4 counties in East TN- Monroe, Loudon, McMinn, and Roane. SUB has 2 substations; the second substation wasn't built until 2007. Out of these 2 substations, there are 645 miles of overhead lines and 164 miles of underground.



## Water and Waste Water Department

SUB's water system has grown to 4,555 customers and 132 miles of mains in Monroe and McMinn counties. We have a water plant that was originally built in 1959; at that point it would produce approximately 1 million gallons a day. A plant addition in 1972 doubled the size of the plant and water production ability to 2.2 million gallons a day. Another plant rehab was completed in 2016 in which \$2 million was invested into the plant for filter and pumping equipment upgrades. Currently SUB produces an average of 29 million gallons of water per month. In 2009, there was a main extension that connects the SUB water system to Tellico Area Services System, a water provider out of Vonore, TN. SUB purchases around 7.5 million gallons a month from TASS.



SUB's waste water system has grown to 2,251 customers and 44 miles of sewer main all within the city limits of Sweetwater. SUB's sewer plant, originally built in 1959, went through a total renewal in 2011 at a price tag of \$5 million. Initially having a trickling filter, the construction of a Sequencing Batch Reactor with UV disinfection and mechanical screens brought the plant into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The total design capacity of the new plant is 1.5 million gallons a day with the average daily use being 1 million gallons a day.

## Natural Gas Department

SUB's Natural Gas system has grown to 2,174 services and 60 miles of main mostly within the City of Sweetwater, with a few just beyond the city limits in Monroe County. SUB just completed its first major gas project in many years; a 5,000 foot extension of 100 PSI main from the city gate to a new regulator station. This project was undertaken by the Board in preparation of expected growth to the natural gas system in the coming years.



SUB is in the process of designing a new administrative office with construction set to begin in the next couple of months. This new office is another step by the Board to have the Utility prepared for growth since the current office space is at capacity. They are hopeful that the new space will give customers ease of access and additional payment options like a 24 hour kiosk in the drive thru area.