



the Pipeline

www.PowdersvilleWater.org

50th Anniversary Commemorative Edition

The Early Days

It was 1971 and the Powdersville area had just experienced one of driest years on record. Sound familiar?

The only difference between then and now was that everyone was dependent on well water.

But the deep wells had been running dry, and some of the shallow wells would turn muddy after a hard rain. It was clear that the water supply was unreliable and sometimes unsafe to drink—something had to be done. But some of the leaders in the Powdersville area had already anticipated this problem and were taking steps to solve it.

From Dream to Reality

As early as September of 1967, a group of concerned citizens, spurred on by community leaders such as the husband-wife team of L.N. and Dora Sue Evans, had banded together to discuss bringing “city water” to the area. In August of 1968, this group formed

the Saluda Valley-Powdersville Water Company. They immediately set out to secure the funds necessary to build a water system that would meet the water needs of Powdersville. In order to qualify for a federal loan, scores of volunteers manned a customer sign-up desk at the fire station on Highway 81—signing up 1,200 customers, charging just \$75 for a residential tap. This effort resulted in a \$1.2 million Farmers Home Administration loan to fund the water system.

In June of 1971, all the planning became a reality when water began flowing to 1,260 customers. Because the office building was not complete, the first official company meeting was held in the parking lot from a flatbed trailer. But on Saturday, October 23, 1971, a new building was dedicated, with Senator Strom Thurmond giving the keynote address.

The Future is Now

More than just the tap fee has changed since those early days. By 1992 the

customer base had grown to 6,200, the name had been changed to Powdersville Water Company, and a new building had been built at the present location on Highway 81. In 2001, now close to 9,000 customers, the Company became a Special Purpose District and changed its name to the Powdersville Water District.

In 2020 Powdersville Water (PW) upgraded its connection with Greenville Water in order to purchase over 90% of its water from this very reliable and robust source. The system now has over 14,000 active taps and delivers an average of 3.25 million gallons a day to approximately 35,000 citizens.

PW's continuing commitment to planning, innovation, excellence, safety and the education of customers on wise water usage has made it a leader in efficient resource management. These qualities will be crucial as PW seeks to maximize its opportunities over the next 50 years.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS

1971-2021

MILESTONES

- 1967** Concerned citizens meet; officers elected; Jim M. Beeson selected as engineer
- 1968** First Board of Directors elected
- 1967-68** Taps sold for \$75
- 1969** Farmers Home Administration Loan secured for \$1.2 million
- 1971** Construction completed; Saluda Valley-Powdersville Water Company, Inc. started serving 1,200 customers; one water supplier—Easley Combined Utilities
- 1983** First computer purchased for office
- 1992** Name changed to Powdersville Water Company, Inc.; office relocated to Highway 81; SCADA computer system purchased
- 1993** Greenville Water added as water supplier
- 2001** Becomes a special purpose district; name changed to Powdersville Water District; Anderson Regional Joint Water System added as third water supplier; system expanded
- 2004** Dyke Spencer hired as the first General Manager
- 2005** Exceeded 10,000 active taps
- 2007** Office remodeled, expanded
- 2009** Constructed \$2.2 million, 1 million gallon tank on Hwy. 153; installed \$1.0 million 12" main along I-85 to loop the southern end of the distribution system
- 2011** Established Pressure Zones to stabilize the distribution system; implemented safety incentive program—Priority One
- 2012** Established Water Efficiency and Accountability Program (WEAP) and Distribution System Optimization Program (DSO)
- 2013** Implemented new Utility Billing Software
- 2014** Implemented Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI); meters now read every hour; exceeded 12,000 active taps
- 2015** Directors Award in the Partnership for Safe Water's DSO Program; first utility in South Carolina and one of only eleven nationwide
- 2017** Began proactive school system plumbing flushing program in conjunction with Anderson School District One; completed \$882,000 River Road main improvement
- 2018** Introduced AMI customer portal to alert customers for abnormal or continuous hourly usage; received SC Rural Water—System of the Year award; rolled out 25-year Water Resources Master Plan
- 2019** \$2.7 million Highway 153 main completed Implemented Mobile Service Orders; safety celebration—10 years without a lost-time accident
- 2020** PW secured 3.5 million gallons per day capacity from Greenville Water; Greenville Water becomes main supplier; PW exceeded 14,000 active taps
- 2021** Upgrade two transmission mains on Fishtrap Road and Highway 88 at a cost of \$4.9 million



Saluda Valley - Powdersville
Water Company, Inc.



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS 1971-2021

50 Years of Pioneers, People and Progress

This country was founded by pioneers, men and women who were trailblazers and pathfinders—always looking ahead. I think the folks who started Powdersville Water were cut from the same American cloth. These were forward-thinking people who had a vision and took action. They first met together in 1967 with the dream of providing reliable, potable water to the Powdersville community. These were true public servants, working tirelessly to better the lives of their fellow citizens. Their dream was finally realized when, in June of 1971—50 years ago this year—water began flowing to 1,260 families.

Before long, however, this small distribution system grew to include many communities in Anderson County, as well as portions of Pickens County. In 2004, I was fortunate enough to be hired as General Manager. Over the last 17 years, I have had the opportunity to witness many more positive changes in this company as our service area has experienced explosive economic growth. It has been a source of great

personal fulfillment to be a part of a number of success stories during that time. I have the pleasure of working with many fine employees—the people have always been the difference at Powdersville Water!

A lot has changed in these 50 years; we are now providing over 14,000 homes and businesses with water—transported through over 410 miles of pipe. But we have always tried to maintain the spirit of those original pioneers. Our goal is to always be trailblazers, leading the way in our industry in providing more efficient, better and safer ways to provide you with water. This newsletter seeks to illustrate in a small way what people working together for the common good can accomplish. Join us in celebrating 50 eventful years of providing quality drinking water to our growing community. Enjoy!

Thank you,
Dyke Spencer,
Executive Director

