



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION

Apply by April 15, 2026

Welcome to ECUA!

Emerald Coast Utilities Authority (ECUA) is seeking an accomplished leader to direct its day-to-day operations. Supported by a highly committed staff and strong elected leadership, ECUA is poised for continued growth and excellence. Located in and primarily serving Escambia County, Florida, ECUA offers an exceptional place to work, live, and enjoy a high quality of life. Qualified utility professionals with proven leadership experience are encouraged to apply.

Tucked away in Florida's panhandle, Escambia County is the gem of the Emerald Coast. Covering 875 square miles, it stretches from the Gulf of America on the south to the Alabama/Florida border on the north and west. To the east lies Florida's Santa Rosa County. Escambia County is world-renowned for its spectacular sugar white sand beaches, its many attractions, and its vibrancy. It is also known for its quality of life and its relatively low cost of living. It is a place you will come to love!

Opportunities for outdoor activities abound in the southern portion of the county. Bordered on three sides by the Gulf of America, Pensacola Bay, and Perdido Bay, one will find miles of shoreline, including Pensacola Beach and the Gulf Islands National Seashore. A primary feature of the Gulf Islands National Seashore is a 45-mile-long barrier island composed of largely undeveloped beaches and wildlife sanctuaries. Dolphins, sea turtles, and osprey are common, and activities include boating, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, parasailing, surfing, paddle boarding, snorkeling, and tubing.



The City of Pensacola is the county seat and heart of ECUA's service area. Here you will find many attractions. Concerts and outdoor movies at the Hunter Amphitheater within the Community Maritime Park are popular. The Community Maritime Park also serves as home to the Blue Wahoos, a Double-A baseball team that is affiliated with the Miami Marlins. The Blue Wahoos were established in 2012 and won the Southern League Championship in 2017 and 2022. The Pensacola Bay Center is home to our hometown hockey team, the Pensacola Ice Flyers. The Ice Flyers rank in the top three in attendance amongst the Southern Professional Hockey League, have secured four championships, and are celebrating 30 years of hockey in Pensacola with the combined Ice Pilots and Ice Flyers franchises. Downtown Pensacola offers a myriad of charming shops, many notable sites, and a wide variety of dining opportunities. Must-sees are: Historic Pensacola, the Pensacola Museum of History, and the Pensacola Museum of Art. Local performing arts venues offer classic ballet, symphony, opera, and live theater.

Pensacola is home to Naval Air Station Pensacola, the "Cradle of Naval Aviation," the first Navy site to be designated a Naval Air Station back in 1911. This Air Station is home to more than 16,000 military and 7,400 civilian personnel. It is where all Naval and Marine Corps aviators start their Wings of Gold training, and it is home to the world-renowned U.S. Navy Blue Angels. The area's rich naval history is documented in the National Naval Aviation Museum, which is open to the public. It showcases more than 150 carefully restored aircraft and is one of the most visited museums in Florida. The area's naval history is further highlighted by the Pensacola Lighthouse, Fort Barrancas, and Fort Pickens. The Pensacola Lighthouse, built in 1859, welcomes visitors and is open for climbing if one is undaunted by its ghost stories. Fort Barrancas previously provided defense for the Pensacola Navy Yard, although the only time the fort saw actual combat was during the American Civil War. Fort Pickens is a historic landmark that offers many recreational activities including fishing from the shore and the pier, exploring trails and the fort, birdwatching, camping, and so much more.

Escambia County has a variety of housing options at affordable prices. Realtor.com shows a median home sale price of \$329,000. The area offers many local public and private school options as well as higher education, including the University of West Florida (home of the Argonauts) with its 1,600-acre campus located in a nature preserve and Pensacola State College (home of the Pirates), the oldest and largest college in the panhandle.



Best of all are Escambia County's residents! They are warm and friendly. Neighbors help neighbors and look after each other. They welcome newcomers and, with little effort, you will quickly become part of the community.

Travel is convenient as Pensacola International Airport hosts eight airlines (American, Delta, Southwest, United, Frontier, Breeze, Contour, and Spirit) and provides multiple non-stop flights a day to locations throughout the United States.

All in all, Escambia County is truly the complete package: history, arts, culture, nature, dining, and outdoor activities, all in a warm, relaxing, friendly beachside community. We invite you to become part of this piece of paradise and apply to be the Executive Director of Emerald Coast Utilities Authority.

HISTORY OF ECUA

Emerald Coast Utilities Authority was created by a special act of the Florida Legislature in 1981. Its purpose was to manage and operate the water and wastewater systems within Escambia County.

Upon its creation, ECUA assumed ownership of the City of Pensacola's water and wastewater infrastructure, including the downtown Main Street Wastewater Treatment Plant, locally known as "Old Stinky," and of nine independent wastewater facilities owned by Escambia County.

In the early 2000s, "Old Stinky" became a major issue, and members of the community developed a plan to move the plant to a new site. A \$25 million grant from the state funded a preliminary engineering study in 2003. In 2004, the timely arrival of Hurricane Ivan, a strong Category 3 storm, provided \$150 million in FEMA Public Assistance fund

ing. Completed in 2010, the new 22.5 MGD Central Water Reclamation Facility cost \$316 million and is located on a 2,200-acre site approximately 17 miles north of Pensacola.

The responsibility to provide solid waste collection within Escambia County was granted to ECUA in the early 1990s. In 1992, ECUA acquired Escambia County's sanitation collection system and began collecting solid waste in much of the unincorporated county areas.

In 2016, ECUA's Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), Escambia County's only locally managed facility of this kind, opened to process recyclable materials from the solid waste stream. The MRF currently processes approximately 16,000 tons of recyclables annually with consistent uptime and daily commodity turnaround. Part of that recycling is composting the biosolid byproduct from the wastewater treatment process with the yard waste materials.

The facility incorporates AI-assisted robotic sortation to support staff by improving material capture and reducing contamination while maintaining safe and efficient operations. Combined with experienced operators and in-house maintenance, the Materials Recovery Facility provides reliable, locally managed recycling services for the region.



DEMOGRAPHICS

Estimated Population: 321,905			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	64.2%	0 to 15	17.5%
Black	21.4%	16 to 25	14.5%
Asian	3.1%	26 to 45	26.2%
Native American/ Pacific Islander	0.9%	46 to 65	24.4%
Two or More Races	8%	66 to 85	15.6%
Other Race (Not Specified)	2.4%	Over 85	2.1%
Total	100%		
Hispanic Ethnicity (All Races)	6.4%		

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	90.9%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	29.7%

Other Statistics	
Median Age – Escambia County	38.1
Median Age – U.S.	39.2
Poverty Rate	14.2%

Source: US Census Bureau

CLIMATE

Escambia County has a humid, subtropical climate with mild winters and long, hot summers. The average winter low is 45°F while the average summer high is 91°F. The county averages 73 inches of precipitation annually.

Tropical storms strike the area from time to time, typically between June 1 and November 30. The two most recent major hurricanes to significantly affect Pensacola were Hurricane Ivan in 2004 and Hurricane Sally in 2020.

GEOGRAPHY

Escambia County is the westernmost county in Florida

and shares its western and northern borders with Alabama. It is approximately 200 miles west of Tallahassee, Florida’s capital, and about 200 miles east of New Orleans. It encompasses 875 square miles, including 219 square miles of water.

COMMERCE

While Escambia County is Florida’s oldest county, in many ways it is just being discovered. Since 2010, its population has grown by approximately 9%. Navy Federal Credit Union, the world’s largest credit union, opened its headquarters in Pensacola in 2003 with a 240-acre campus that has since expanded to 440 acres and nearly 10,000 employees. Baptist Health Care, Sacred Heart Health Systems, Florida Power & Light, West Florida Healthcare, Ascend Performance Materials, and West Corporation are also principal employers in Escambia County.

THE AUTHORITY

ECUA is governed by an elected five-member board. Members serve staggered, four-year terms, and elections are held in even-numbered years. Historically, the Board has been very stable, with current members serving tenures of 31, 21, and 13 years and two members having 5 years of service. All of the board members work diligently to further the interests of ECUA’s rate payers. They exhibit a great deal of respect for the staff and do not intervene in the day-to-day management of ECUA.

“It has been refreshing to work with an elected Board who stays focused on the policy and finances of the organization and only uses politics to build coalitions, partner with other public jurisdictions to create financial efficiencies, and to look out for the interests of our customers. You are supportive of ECUA’s administration, provide the resources the staff need to do their work, and trust the staff’s professional recommendations and judgment. Your support and guidance are very appreciated and helps maintain a strong culture of service and dedication.”

- Bruce Woody, ECUA Executive Director 2020-2026

Overall, ECUA operates:

- 30 water wells at a variety of locations throughout the southern portion of the county. The wells are between 200 and 450 feet deep and draw from the Sand-and-Gravel Aquifer. They produce an average of 31.7 MGD of potable water and serve 101,652 customers.
- 14 water storage facilities - 5 elevated storage tanks (4 million gallons total) and 8 ground storage tanks (15 million gallons total) with 5 pump stations and 2 booster stations. We recently completed the construction of a new 3 million gallon ground storage tank that will be in service soon.
- 1,745 miles of water main and 1,360 miles of sewer lines
- 380 pumping stations
- 3 wastewater/water reclamation facilities processing approximately 21 MGD of wastewater: the Central Water Reclamation Facility (permitted capacity 22.5 MGD), the Bayou Marcus Water Reclamation Facility (8.2 MGD), and the Pensacola Beach Wastewater Treatment Plant (2.4 MGD)
- Sanitation services to 101,000 customers (25,000 of which are recycling-only customers), collecting a total daily average approaching 170 tons of garbage, recycling, and yard waste
- A materials recovery facility processing approximately 16,000 tons of recyclables annually
- A biosolids composting facility processing over 23,000 tons of yard waste annually



ECUA's utility operations have garnered awards and recognition for performance and innovation. ECUA's compost facility was recognized by two solid waste trade associations as the Best Composting Facility in 2019. The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) awarded ECUA with the Gold Excellence Award for the facility, and the National Solid Waste and Recycling Association (SWRA) awarded ECUA with two Gold Awards: one for actual composting operations and one for ECUA's public education campaign for composting. The Compost Program also earned a National Environmental Achievement Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA).

Additionally, NACWA has recognized the operation of ECUA's water reclamation facilities through its presentation of 12 Peak Performance Awards over the past ten years, and ECUA's drinking water has earned the annual Best Tasting Water Award five times in the Florida Section/American Water Works Association (AWWA) Region IX since 2005.

ECUA's Information Technology Department is award-winning as well and has been able to improve operations efficiency to adapt to future challenges. The IT Department received both the Florida Local Government Information Systems Association (FLGISA): Technology Achievement Award and the Special Districts Southeast Technology Innovation Award: Operations Category,



Remote Workers and COVID-19 Operations in 2020.

ECUA's Finance Department has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for 37 consecutive years. ECUA's annual budget for FY 2026 is \$207 million for the water and wastewater systems and \$46.9 million for the sanitation system. The 5-year capital budget for FY 2026-2030 includes \$441 million for water and wastewater projects and \$45 million for sanitation. ECUA has 642 authorized positions and 596 current employees, broken down as shown in the table below. It is a participating member agency in the Florida Retirement System (FRS).

Number of Employees by Department:

Department Description	Total
Administration	2
Finance	36
Shared Services	9
Information Technology	13
Human Resources	12
Customer Services	48
Regional Services (System Maintenance)	108
Maintenance & Construction	71
Water Reclamation	71
Engineering	27
Water Production	46
Sanitation	144
Materials Recovery Facility	9
Total Active Employees	596

Source: ECUA Human Resources Department

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Emerald Coast Utilities Authority prides itself on being a

well run organization. The staff is excellent and works well together. Financially, ECUA operates conservatively and is financially sound. That said, ECUA has experienced challenges, albeit manageable ones. When ECUA was formed, it assumed ownership of a significant amount of poorly maintained infrastructure. While much has been done to update, renovate, and replace these physical assets, a great deal of work remains. ECUA is currently subject to an FDEP Consent Order requiring it to reduce sanitary sewer overflows. ECUA is now in its 7th year of the 10-year corrective action phase of the program, and it plans to spend \$11 million this year on the effort. Compliance with the order is not an issue. ECUA will continue to meet its obligations and has the funds to do so.

Emerald Coast Utility Authority's second challenge is growth. Assuming Escambia County's population continues to increase, it will place strains on the existing water and sewer systems. That will require planning and implementation.



THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

ECUA is seeking a seasoned professional who is both a leader and manager. The individual will partner with ECUA's Board of Directors to take the organization to the next level. He or she will be able to look beyond the horizon and assist the Board in creating a vision for the future. The new Executive Director will be confident, bold, tenacious, high energy, positive, and proactive with a high degree of integrity.

The ideal candidate will be an excellent communicator, understanding that listening can be as important as speaking. He or she will be equally comfortable working with people from all walks of life and every aspect of the economic spectrum. The individual will place a high degree of importance on service, ensuring that rate payers feel they are being treated fairly and well. He or she will be open, approachable, and comfortable working with the media. Recognizing the importance of having the public view ECUA positively, the Executive Director will be as transparent as possible and work proactively to promote its accomplishments.

While the next Executive Director will understand the importance of day-to-day operations, he or she will not let it divert his or her attention from the need to plan for the future and from accomplishing what needs to be done to ensure the organization's long-term success. The



Being able to make timely and sound decisions under pressure (such as during a hurricane) is imperative. While the next Executive Director will be the CEO, the individual will not spend all day in the office directing traffic. Rather, he or she will be in the plants, on the street with the crews, and in the community ensuring familiarity with their issues and concerns.

The Executive Director will be politically savvy but not politically involved. He or she will understand that individuals, interest groups, and constituencies will sometimes be promoting their own agendas and not necessarily what is best for the community. The Executive Director will be able to navigate the political landscape to protect ECUA and its rate payers. The individual will prioritize what is right over what is expedient. Ideally, the Executive Director will be able to pleasantly tell people, "No," when appropriate.

The individual will inspire, manage, delegate, and mentor the employees. Creativity will be encouraged with staff having the freedom to try new ideas. The Executive Director will have high expectations and set high standards for the staff. He or she will establish clearly defined goals, delegate responsibility and authority, and then expect results. Accountability is essential.

The Executive Director will devote his or her entire working time to the performance of his or her duties and not have outside employment or business. The Executive Director

will be a college graduate. He or she must either possess a degree in science, engineering, business management, or public administration or alternatively, must be a licensed and registered engineer. A masters degree is preferred. The Executive Director must have at least six years of experience in the field of engineering, operations, or management of utility systems of sizes comparable to or larger than the current water and sewer systems of Emerald Coast Utilities Authority. ECUA may allow the substitution of additional years of administrative or management experience in lieu of the specific educational or professional requirements set forth above.

The ideal candidate will have a strong knowledge of finance and best practices and be environmentally oriented. Ideally, he or she will have experience working for and reporting to a board as the organization's CEO.

Skill with intergovernmental relations is necessary given the Executive Director must deal with many agencies at the local, state, regional, and federal levels. He or she will be collaborative and able to effectively work across agency lines to build consensus.

COMPENSATION

The salary range for the Executive Director position is \$195,000 to \$256,880. While the actual salary will depend on the selected candidate's qualifications, the Board is willing to pay at the top of the range for just the right candidate. Benefits are excellent, and the Executive Director will be eligible to participate in the Florida Retirement System. Further, Florida does not have a state income tax.



THE MOST RECENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The current Executive Director is retiring after six years of service with ECUA and 34 years of prior service with municipalities in the Midwest, including nine years as a city manager and 16 years as a director of public works. He is available for candidate questions during the application period as well as for assistance during the transition.

HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your cover letter, resumé, references, and completed forms (accessible at [ECUA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR](#)) to ECUA-Recruiting@lawpensacola.com by April 15, 2026. All questions should be directed to Phillip Pugh at Litvak, Beasley, Wilson & Ball, LLP via the above email address.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Under the Florida Public Records Act, all applications are subject to disclosure upon receipt.

THE PROCESS

Applications must be received by April 15, 2026. ECUA intends to conduct interviews in early May with a selection anticipated shortly thereafter.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

A veterans' preference will be awarded to eligible applicants in accordance with Florida law. This position is not eligible for waiver of postsecondary educational requirements.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the Authority and the local area, visit:

<http://www.ecua.fl.gov/>

<https://myescambia.com/>



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