

UTILITY MANAGER'S REPORT

THURSDAY, JANUARY 17, 2002

FIELD PROJECTS

Ron Marion, Foreman

Terry Elliott, Field Crewmember

Jeff Maddux, Field Crewmember

Jim White, Field Crewmember

Part-time Meter Readers:

Tina Hammond (& cleaning)

Billie Jean McCollum

RECENT ACTIVITY

- ✓ Field crew efforts are being concentrated on finding vacuum leaks in the sewer collection system. This requires a lot of time devoted solely to walking vacuum lines.
- ✓ Both discharge pumps that were removed last month from the #3 & #4 vacuum stations have been repaired and put back into service. Seal and shaft damage was caused by debris (i.e. gravel, cloth material, pieces of metal, etc...) passing through the pumps.
- ✓ Performed 119 work orders in December.
- ✓ Disconnects for non-payment: 42
- ✓ Rebuilt valves and controllers.
- ✓ Responded to customer concerns.
- ✓ Read water meters for December.
- ✓ Performed daily maintenance inspections of all vacuum/lift stations. In addition, we frequently inspect vacuum lines in troublesome areas.

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- Reading meters for January.
- Coordinating leak detection with field personnel from the Alliance of Indiana Rural Water. (Not rescheduled yet)
- Inspect vacuum stations with Hoosier Electric to address the concerns that were outlined in the July 5, 2001 Managers Report.
- Equipment Problems: Not updated.
- Truck Problems: They're "still" not getting any better. Same as reported in May 2001.
- Hydrant inspections and maintenance.
- Installing flush hydrants (~~Spring, maybe...\$\$\$~~). Probably not in the spring due to cost.
- Normal operations and maintenance.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT (WWTP)

Mike Ruby, Wastewater Operations Supervisor

RECENT ACTIVITY

- ✓ NPDES Violations; Ammonia:
 - During the last week of December the WWTP's ability to remove ammonia began declining due to the freezing temperatures. The air temperature dropped and, in-turn, rapidly dropped the water temperature to near zero degrees Celsius (freezing). The ability

- of the nitrifying bacteria, those that aid in the removal of ammonia, drastically reduces at ten degrees Celsius. Mike identified the temperature change and began working with Aqua-Aerobics in December to make plant adjustments to reduce the amount of heat loss but with limited success. The wastewater's lowered temperature has resulted in violations for the ammonia limits outlined in the NPDES permit.
- We are working with Aqua-Aerobics and IDEM as we take the WWTP from a dual-basin mode to single-basin mode, which will decrease the detention time by half.
 - IDEM was notified in writing and by telephone the same day the violations were identified, January 7, 2002.
- ✓ B.L. Anderson Inc. has repaired the following:
 - Influent (raw) flow meter and chart recorder.
 - The manufacturer is inspecting the second influent flow meter; repairs may be covered by warranty. However, this meter will not be used until the sewer expansion project provides influent flow.
 - Raw and Final samplers.
 - ✓ Modulating Valve:
 - Hoosier Electric has installed a new circuit board but the valve only works in the "manual" position and not in the "automatic" position. The Aqua-Aerobics control panel appears to be the problem again. They will be here tomorrow to make repairs.
 - ✓ Dissolved Oxygen meter; YSI Model 55:
 - Cost of repair v. replacement justifies the need to replace this unit, however, this meter will not be replaced until funds are available.
 - ✓ Erie insurance has processed a claim submitted for lightning/power surge damage to equipment at the WWTP and are prepared to make payment as soon as they receive the last invoice, which we should be receiving soon. (\$500 deductible/\$2,945.90 submitted to date, waiting for last invoice)
 - ✓ Completed the *Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR)* and *Monthly Report of Operations (MRO)* for December. No violations. [\(Presidents Signature Required\)](#)

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- Continue monitoring the WWTP as the ammonia removal process adapts to process modifications.
- Coordinating repairs of electronic equipment.
 - Modulating valve
 - DO meter (\$\$)
- Continue training personnel to perform laboratory/operations work.
- Normal operations and maintenance.

UTILITY OFFICE

Vacant, Assistant Office Manager

Penny Jones, Clerk

Valerie Dixon, Clerk

Cadie Mathis, Part-time Clerk

RECENT ACTIVITY

- ✓ **Billing; progress/changes:**

- *Ordinances: Various office policies and ordinances are being reviewed and updated to accurately reflect current guidelines and specific points of concern as were outlined on July 5, and September 20, 2001; No updates this month.*

✓ **Billing; collections:**

Three-month review:

○ Customers billed in Dollars:	<u>October 2001</u>	<u>November 2001</u>	<u>December 2001</u>
▪ Customers w/active service:	\$76,593	\$78,393	\$79,062
▪ Availability & Closed Acts.	\$212,523	\$198,746	\$197,274
▪ Total billed:	\$289,116	\$277,139	\$276,336

○ Number of Customers billed:	<u>October 2001</u>	<u>November 2001</u>	<u>December 2001</u>
▪ Customers w/active service:	1573	1541	1438
▪ Availability & Closed Acts.	716	728	728
▪ Total customers billed:	2334	2269	2166

✓ **Financial snapshot, Three month summary**

○ Sewer	<u>October 2001</u>	<u>November 2001</u>	<u>December 2001</u>
▪ Revenue:	\$39,897	\$37,243	\$35,845
▪ Expenses:	\$56,050	\$38,733	\$37,848

○ Water	<u>October 2001</u>	<u>November 2001</u>	<u>December 2001</u>
▪ Revenue:	\$63,563	\$46,347	\$40,296
▪ Expenses:	\$88,334	\$59,085	\$33,215

- ✓ **Accounts in Arrears, progress:** Again, the total number of customers billed is accurate. However, office staff have reviewed all “100” and “200” accounts in the billing database to arrive at figures representing all accounts ninety-days past due or greater as outlined below:

Billed on accounts

○ “100” accounts (226)	\$32,537
○ “200” accounts (459)	\$133,603
Total, currently unable to collect without pursuing collections:	\$166,140

This total represents collections progress made during December. The total uncollectible balance has dropped this month by \$4,564. This progress is primarily attributed to collections letter responses:

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 ● These past due accounts are being researched individually and pursued or corrected as
 ● required. We’ve had success with billing these accounts in 2001 and are currently,
 ● though incrementally, mailing a form letter informing the remaining uncollected “100”
 ● accounts of the utility’s intent to pursue payment in “small claims court”. Another
 ● letter will, in turn, inform the remaining uncollected “200 accounts of the utilities
 ● responsibility to place liens on all accounts that are “due and unpaid for at least ninety
 ● days”.
 ●

✓ **Financial, Account Balances for October**

- o Construction:
 - Checking:.....\$184,834.10
- o Sewer:
 - Checking: \$44,170.37 – OSC (\$404.06).....\$43,755.31
 - Bond & Interest:\$27,082.57
 - Debt Service Reserve:.....\$94,343.58
- o Water:
 - Checking: \$37,659.18 – OSC (\$1,985.24).....\$35,673.94
 - Bond & Interest:\$42,383.30
 - Debt Service Reserve:.....\$132,280.42

✓ **Ledger:**

- o Progress:
 - Kim Rogers, the Assistant Office Manager, has continued to work part-time (after business hours) maintaining the Ledger records.
 - I am currently contacting applicants for the Assistant Office Manager position. Three applicants were interviewed but each took other positions.

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- Prepare a document that outlines specific JNRU office policies for customers.
- Collect past-due availability fees through property liens and small claims.
- Collect past-due accounts through small claims court.

GENERAL

RECENT ACTIVITY

✓ **Customer Concerns/Questions:**

- o [REDACTED]:
 - Mrs. [REDACTED] has committed to installing a septic system for her new home in lieu of waiting for approval to tie into the JNRU sewer system due to her construction time constraints.
- o Broad Acres Restaurant:
 - Last month I mentioned that the restaurant had plugged their sewers with grease. They hired a Vactor (sewer cleaning truck) to clean the sewers from their building to the JNRU lift station that services them. This month the line was slightly blocked between the JNRU lift station and the first manhole upstream. Coincidentally, this problem occurred while Reynolds was cleaning the culvert for Mrs. [REDACTED]. At my request, Reynolds cleaned this line too. This section of sewer has four inches of fall and possibly a small (2-3") hump in the line that apparently blocks the water slightly. If the Sewer Expansion Project is completed in this area it will eliminate this section of pipe. I suspect the line will continue to work for quite a while.
- o Country Squire Lakes Association:
 - Asked: "What are the hydrant fees for?", I explained as follows:

- Most communities have fire hydrants for fire protection. Usually they will pay a hydrant fee to the water department, even if the community has its own water company. For example: A tax-based entity (City, Town, etc.) that uses or benefits from the fire hydrants (such as the fire Department) pays the City's Water Department to provide and maintain those hydrants.
 - The Water Department has no specific reason to have large "fire hydrants". It's the community that needs the hydrants to fight fires; that's why they are there. The Water Department does not specifically fight fires, but provides this water service used for fighting fires.
 - Additionally, the exact cost of the hydrant fee was established prior to my employment with the JNRU.
- ✓ **Phase I Sewer Expansion Project, Construction issues:**
- [REDACTED] W. CR 300 N.:
 - Mrs. [REDACTED] culvert pipe was jetted clean by Reynolds Construction. County Highway officials were on site for an inspection of the work and were satisfied. They mentioned that they would be coming back with a ditch machine to dig the ditch deeper.
- ✓ **Insurance Renewals and Quotes:**
- Commercial: Renewal rates on all commercial coverage has stayed the same or risen slightly. Other competing companies will finish their quotes in January. (Not complete)
 - Health: Renewal rates on all health coverage has stayed the same or risen slightly. Other competing companies will finish their quotes in January. (Not complete)
 - Dropped full-coverage on the "88" and "89" pickup trucks for a \$226/year savings.
- ✓ **Petition to IDEM:**
- County Commissioners announced the names of applicants applying for the utility board and discussed various audience members concerns and potentially appointing new members on January 28, 2002.
- ✓ **Jennings County Plan Commission, Dept. of Code Enforcement:**
- The Executive Director, Cheryl B. Trisler, has notified the utility of zoning concerns related to the property permitted for land application of biosolids. After some brief discussion we agreed to meet in late January to review plans and discuss concerns with the local Soil and Water Conservation representatives. (Follow up next week)
- ✓ **Short term budget forecasting based on A/R and A/P from previous months/years to predict financial needs during the winter months:**
- December's B&I transfers for water and sewer were postponed in order to safely maintain fund levels for winter operations and maintenance:
 - Points of Interest: 1) Funds are required to be in the B&I account for the B&I payments due on March 1, 2002. Funds shortages could be borrowed from the DSR accounts at that time and the DSR accounts could be replenished with revenues generated by availability fees in April or May.

✓ Employee Evaluations:

- All Evaluations and Employee Service Records are complete for 2001

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- Monitor winter operations of the new WWTP:
 - Staff training by equipment manufacturer's representatives (one day left)
- Continue receiving and reviewing commercial and health insurance quotes.
- Attending to the final audit issues.
- Review accounting records in an effort to prepare budget guidelines for the upcoming year.
- Prepare sewer and water utility standards.