

UTILITY MANAGER'S REPORT

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 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 still being concentrated on finding vacuum leaks in the sewer collection system. Major inflow problems are being experienced during rain events.
- ✓ Station No. 1, 4 and 8 : Need new shingle roofs.
- ✓ Station No. 3: Needs the electrical service upgraded to accommodate the operation of both discharge pumps simultaneously.
- ✓ Station No. 4: Has the worst inflow problems.
- ✓ Station No.5: Breaker tripping on one discharge pump, pump out of service.
- ✓ Station No. 6: Busch pump hour meter only works part-time.
- ✓ Station No. 10: Electrical short near cover at ground level.
- ✓ Vacuum Station Pump Repairs/Problems:
 - No. 2: One discharge pump had repairs made under *warranty*:
 - *Problem*: Seal failure; replaced seals and bearings (\$FREE).
 - No. 4: Seal oil canister bleeding through seals too quickly?
 - *EMR is assisting with identifying problem*; Canister or seal type/design? Pump was rebuilt last year.
 - No. 6: Seal oil canister bleeding through seals too quickly?
 - *Identifying problem*; Canister or seal type/design? Pump was rebuilt last year.
 - No. 8: One Discharge Pump; EMR pulled pump for repairs:
 - *Problem*: Water leaking past seals badly.
- ✓ Lift Station Repairs:
 - No. 7: One Discharge Pump (5HP):
 - *Problem*: Seal failure; replaced seals and bearings and baked windings (\$700).
 - No. 9: One Discharge pump (15HP):
 - *Problem*: Seal failure; replaced seals and bearings and baked windings (\$1,500).
- ✓ Performed work orders:
 - January 113
 - February 114
- ✓ Disconnects for non-payment:
 - January 14
 - February 16
- ✓ Performed vacuum-sewer leak detection for one day with the IRWA. Additional work will be scheduled during more appropriate weather.
- ✓ Repaired five (5) water leaks. One leak on Dorchester Place required a “Boil Water Advisory”.

- ✓ Installed one (1) water tap.
- ✓ Rebuilt valves and controllers.
- ✓ Removed all aerators from old lagoons.

Daily/Monthly Routine Tasks: Performed daily maintenance inspections of all vacuum/lift stations, which frequently requires the inspection of vacuum lines in troublesome areas, perform work orders and respond to customer concerns. Monthly, we do non-payment disconnects on the 10th, begin reading meters around the 17th, which generally takes 4-5 days depending on the weather and perform station maintenance.

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- Normal Operations
- Schedule training for: “*Troubleshooting Station Problems, Electrical and Pump*”, and “*Proper Maintenance Techniques and Documentation*”. Tom Earnhart has generously offered to share his many years of pump & motor maintenance experience with utility staff.
- Replace two old and inoperable fire hydrants.
 - Funds should be made available if at all possible given the recent “increased” concerns from the Country Squire Lakes’ Home Owners Association. These would normally have been replaced prior to now if funds were already appropriated.
- Hydrant inspections and maintenance. (Warm Weather Work, WWW)
- Installing flush hydrants (pending funds availability & WWW)
- 1988 Ford Service Truck repairs:
 - Fuel pump, catalytic converter and muffler.
- Ron has requested the use of summer help to assist with meter pit maintenance (cleaning/repair) and trimming weeds around hydrants and valve pits. A large number of meter pits need to be dug out so that the meters can be read quicker and to prevent freezing in the winter. There are also a lot of meter pit lids that are broken or installed improperly that need repaired and/or reinstalled to prevent damage to the meter setting and to protect people in the area from potentially falling into the pit. I’ve dealt with several insurance claims dealing with this specifically but was never held liable so long as there was a program in place to maintain the pits and prevent this type of problem. That program would basically mean that if you know there are hazardous situations, you fix them as quickly as you can.
- Prior Reports Continued:
 - Coordinating “*additional*” leak detection with field personnel from the Indiana Rural Water Alliance. (Not scheduled yet)
 - Inspect vacuum stations to address the concerns that were outlined in the July 5, 2001 Managers Report.
 - Equipment Problems: Not updated.
 - Truck Problems: Similar as reported in May 2001.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT (WWTP)*Mike Ruby, Wastewater Operations Supervisor*RECENT ACTIVITY

- ✓ Completed the *Discharge Monitoring Report (DMR)* and *Monthly Report of Operations (MRO)* for January and February. January violations were outlined in the Manager's Report dated January 17, 2002. February violations are outlined below as follows: **(Presidents Signature Required)**
- ✓ NPDES Violations; Total Suspended Solids TSS (February):
 - A heavy rain event during the month of February placed the WWTP in a storm-flow mode during the night, which led to 30-minute settling cycles and a loss of solids above the NPDES limits. The plant requires approximately two to three hours of settling to prevent the loss of solids during decants ever since December's freezing temperatures slowed the plant's bacteriological process.
 - Repeated heavy rainfall events in February and March have been controlled by operations staff and myself manually controlling the treatment process during and after working hours as necessary.
 - Settling problems prevented the single-basin operating mode from being pursued further for ammonia removal. However, the rains and warmer temperatures have brought the final ammonia levels back within permit limits without the change.
 - IDEM was notified in writing, by telephone and in person (Kevin Hotz, IDEM).
- ✓ Completed Land Application reports as follows:
 - Monthly Report
 - Annual EPA DMRs
- ✓ Purchased new ammonia probe after it took a nasty spill in the lab, oops, sorry, won't happen again.
- ✓ B.L. Anderson Inc. has repaired the following:
 - Large Influent (Raw) flow meter: No parts charges, only labor. The meter was repaired under warranty, although lightning is believed to be the cause of the damage.
 - All lightning damaged equipment repair invoices are submitted to the insurance adjustor now. I expect the adjustor to release a check this week or early next week.
- ✓ Hoosier Electric:
 - Replaced a transformer on the Modulating Valve and corrected the electrical problems. Aqua-Aerobics corrected other operational problems.
- ✓ Aqua-Aerobics:
 - Spent several days at the plant in January correcting PLC programming problems and addressing Mike and my operational control concerns as outlined below:
 - Modulating valve control parameters and devices (i.e. EQ basin floats, storm flow conditions, etc...)
 - EQ basin aerator's operating cycle timer controls having limits that prevented operators from making desired adjustments because of built in control parameters.
 - Similar concerns with SBR aerator's operating cycle timer control limits.
 - EQ Basin "low level" shut off control device??? Not shutting modulating valve when it goes into storm-flow mode.
 - Storm-flow mode control programming change required to properly control with the top float in the EQ Basin.
- ✓ O'Mara Construction:

- Jeff Fuller checked in January 22, 2002 to discuss our schedule for draining SBR basin No. 1 for a liner inspection. I informed that it would still be a few months before the plant could handle single-basin operations. He was reminded that they still have drainage problems to correct and curbing to install around the new liner in SBR basin No. 2.
- ✓ Training seminars:
 - Mike Ruby attended a “*Plant Surge Protection*” seminar presented by the Indiana Rural Water Alliance (IRWA) on February 11, 2002.
 - Jeff Maddux and Mike Ruby attended a “*Laboratory Procedures*” seminar presented by the (IRWA) on February 13, 2002.
 - Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are required for licensed operators and were earned at both seminars. 6-8 CEUs are earned for a \$10 paperwork-processing fee. Each CEU is equivalent to one hour in class.
 - The JNRU will be hosting an IRWA seminar in 2002.
 - Mike Ruby was invited to give a presentation on “*Lagoons*” or “*Activated Sludge*” in 2002 for the IRWA. This date has not been scheduled yet.
- ✓ Purchased laboratory chemicals/supplies needed to perform E-coli testing in 2002, this starts April 1, every year.

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- Continue close monitoring and additional operations the WWTP as it recovers from settling problems.
- Continue training personnel to perform laboratory/operations work.
- Normal operations and maintenance.
- Mike will work in the collection system intermittently during the summer months, alternating laboratory duties with Jeff Maddux, as he assists in establishing an efficient method of documenting system maintenance, equipment identification/inventory and improvement needs.

UTILITY OFFICE

Dan Wooton, 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
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Office clerks have written out the procedures/steps for the various tasks that they are responsible for. These are being reviewed and edited in the initial phase of creating a manual for standard operating procedures.
- Taxes:
 - State sales tax on sold Water: The information being used to report and pay sales tax has been used inappropriately. Basically the JNRU has paid tax based on sales tax billed prior to collecting it. The appropriate method is to pay sales tax based on the sales tax payments made by customers. This will result in an in-house audit of prior sales tax payments and should result in a credit balance with the Indiana Department of Revenue. How much is yet to be determined.
 - Federal 941 Quarterly (Federal Employee withholdings):
 - We've received IRS refunds for apparent overpayment of federal withholdings. This too, will result in an in-house audit to identify the discrepancies.

✓ **Billing; collections:**

Three-month review:

○ Customers billed in Dollars:	<u>December 2001</u>	<u>January 2002</u>	<u>February 2002</u>
▪ Customers w/active service:	\$79,062	\$73,369	\$80,766
▪ Availability & Closed Acts.	\$197,274	\$197,470	\$338,945
▪ Total billed:	\$276,336	\$270,839	\$419,711
▪ Total "Unbillable", February 2002:.....			\$2,646
○ Number of Customers billed:	<u>December 2001</u>	<u>January 2002</u>	<u>February 2002</u>
▪ Customers w/active service:	1438	1548	1507
▪ Availability & Closed Acts.	728	605	1819
▪ Total customers billed:	2166	2153	3326

✓ **Financial snapshot, Three month summary**

○ Sewer	<u>December 2001</u>	<u>January 2002</u>	<u>February 2002</u>
▪ Revenue:	\$35,845	\$38,309	\$38,455
▪ Expenses:	\$37,848	\$31,133	\$40,332

○ Water	<u>December 2001</u>	<u>January 2002</u>	<u>February 2002</u>
▪ Revenue:	\$40,296	\$47,998	\$48,418
▪ Expenses:	\$33,215	\$48,837	\$58,624

- *January 2002* revenues not included above are IRS refunds that are shown below:
 - Sewer:\$11,045.56
 - Water:.....\$3,865.94

✓ **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 (198)	\$28,066
○ “200” accounts (436)	\$129,654
Total, currently unable to collect without pursuing collections:	\$157,720

This total represents collections progress made during January and February. The total uncollectible balance has dropped over the past two months by \$8,420. Again, this progress is primarily attributed to collections letter responses:

.....
 ● 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**

○ Construction:	
▪ Checking:.....	\$16,894.04
○ Sewer:	
▪ Checking: \$69,978.19 – OSC (\$1,323.06).....	\$62,655.13
▪ Bond & Interest:	\$17,788.27
▪ Debt Service Reserve:	\$83,113.58
○ Water:	
▪ Checking: \$43,788.44 – OSC (\$1,240.89).....	\$42,547.55
▪ Bond & Interest:	\$28,871.00
▪ Debt Service Reserve:	\$114,125.42

✓ **Ledger:**

- Progress:
 - Dan Wooton began working for the JNRU as its new Office Manager on February 4, 2002. He is proving to be a very motivated individual and has worked with the previous Assistant Office Manager, Kim Rogers, to learn the basics of our Ledger software and past accounting practices. Kim has completed her work with the Ledger and her services will

not be needed any longer. Dan has also been deeply involved in preparing financial reports and information during the past month.

SDAR Reports for 2000 and 2001:

- Completed by H.J. Umbaugh & Associates and approved by David Brinkman.

✓ **Miscellaneous:**

Long Distance Service:

- Changed from Verizon to Transworld Network (REMC) for a considerable savings. Actual savings not reviewed yet.

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- In-house tax audits
- Manual of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- 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.

GENERALRECENT ACTIVITY✓ **Legal Council:**

Larry Eaton: Current local representation ([Proposal attached](#))

Mary Ann Gay: ([Proposal attached](#))

John Cook: ([Proposal attached](#))

"All others contacted on the list were not interested"

✓ **Legal Bond/BAN Council:**

Barnes & Thornburg, Rick Hall: Expressed interest and is looking forward to talking with the utility board and it's legal council.

Ice Miller, Buddy Downs: ([Letter expressing interest attached](#))

✓ **Public Access Council:**

Open Door Law presentation: Sandy Barger is scheduled to give the presentation tomorrow, Friday, March 22, 2002 at 12:30pm at the utility office. Public could arrange to attend if there's an interest.

✓ **Mowing Proposals:**

Morgan's Lawncare: Briefly discussed 2002 mowing specifications. I plan to contract minimal lawncare services this year due to budget constraints. However, I feel that it is necessary to maintain station properties within housing areas similar to the surrounding properties. I plan to define the scope of the work and have proposals for the April board meeting.

✓ **G&K Services:**

Employee Uniforms: Negotiated lower pricing for employee uniforms to the conclusion of an existing contract. Uniform costs went from approximately \$75/week to \$30/week for the duration of an existing eighteen (18) month contract. Rug services were eliminated.

✓ **Old Business:**

Broad Acres Restaurant: [REDACTED] [is expected to be on tonight's agenda](#)

- **(Description from January 17, 2002 Manager's Report)** 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.
- *In addition to the above:*
 - John and I have discussed the maintenance of this line in an effort to protect his restaurant from sewage backups. In that, I have offered to provide fresh water to

flush the line periodically if he would provide the truck to haul it. This discussion has not resulted in flushing the sewer, however, our field crew inspect the sewer line routinely to protect against unexpected sewage backups.

Country Squire Lakes Association; Fire hydrant fees:

- **(Response from January 17, 2002 Manager's Report)** CSL's Tom Weininger and others 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 the hydrants 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.
- *In addition to the above:*
 - Fire hydrant fees could be eliminated, however, the revenue it generates would have to be replaced with revenues from somewhere else.
 - *Food for thought:* When hydrant fees are compared to CSL homeowners' dues, one in lieu of the other, I notice that the hydrant fee is charged for a service that is used 365 days of the year by all, whereas, the homeowners' dues are for many CSL services the utility never uses (i.e. lake, pool, park areas, community functions, gated community, security, primary and supplemental governing systems, etc...); bottom line, the JNRU is not a homeowner, nor is it treated like a homeowner.
- *Also Related:* Spoke with Tony Yoder, Fire Chief of the Geneva Township Volunteer Fire Department. We discussed them having access to fires from the JNRU entrance on 300 North, which I approved of for those purposes, and fire fighting concerns that he would have with existing fire hydrants. He said that the fire department routinely hauls water with tankers to fires throughout Jennings County and that the same is true for CSL. He had no specific concerns with the fire hydrants although we talked about two hydrants that are out of service. We discussed making plans for me to attend a fire department meeting to discuss our mutual concerns.

Availability Fees:

- [REDACTED] & [REDACTED]: Disputing the charges on lots they are being charged an availability fee on. Reference the March 22, 2001 Manager's Report, similar circumstance although not specifically mentioned.
- [REDACTED]: Disputing the cost he should pay for tap fees. Reference the March 22, 2001 Manager's Report.
- *Other customers of a similar nature are also mentioned in these reports.*

Jennings County Plan Commission, Dept. of Code Enforcement:

- **(Description from January 17, 2002 Manager's Report)** 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.
- *In addition to the above:*
 - This meeting was discussed again, however, it was agreed that plans for the meeting will be made after the new JNRU board is better informed on the issue.

Phase I Sewer Expansion Project, Construction issues:

- *Pending Board Action*

Insurance Renewals and Quotes:

- *Commercial:* Renewal rates from Reedy Insurance (Erie) were acceptable on all commercial coverage. (*Quotes not provided but are available for review*)
- *Health:* Renewal rates from Anthem were acceptable on all health coverage. (*Quotes not provided but are available for review; Anthem 2002 rates were provided in board packets delivered to each member on March 20, 2002*)

UPCOMING ACTIVITY

- Follow up with all the above and continue working with board in it's endeavors.
- Monitor winter operations of the new WWTP:
 - Staff training by equipment manufacturer's representatives (one day left)
- Prepare sewer and water utility standards.