

# The Mainstream

A semiannual newsletter dedicated to enhancing water and wastewater services brought to you by  
*The Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority*



Your water and wastewater service providers

## From The Director

**Storm sewers versus sanitary sewers.** Knowing the differences in these sewer systems is instrumental in knowing what you can do to help protect our natural water resources and the environment.

Here is some information that may be useful in understanding how our wastewater system works.

**What is a watershed?** A watershed is another word for a river basin. It is all the land that drains to a common body of water, such as a river, lake, or stream.

**What is storm water?** Storm water is the rainfall or snowmelt that flows over our yards, streets, parking lots, and buildings and either enters the storm drain system or runs directly into a lake or stream.

**What is a storm drain?** Storm drains are the openings you see along curbs and in streets and parking lots. They carry away rainwater and snowmelt and transport it through the system to nearby lakes and streams. Water and other debris that enter storm drains do not go to a treatment facility.

### What is a sanitary sewer?

A sanitary sewer takes household water and waste from toilets, sinks and showers, and transports it to a wastewater treatment facility. There, the water is treated and then discharged back to a river, lake, or stream.

### How does storm water get polluted?

As storm water flows over our lawns and driveways, it picks up anything else in its path. The storm drain system then transports these pollutants, now in the water, to local lakes and streams. Anything that goes into a storm drain eventually ends up in a river, lake, or stream.

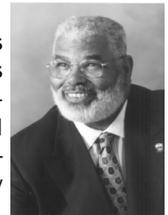
Common sources of storm sewer pollution include urban landscape runoff (fertilizer, detergents), atmospheric deposition, improperly functioning septic systems, pets and urban wildlife waste, car washing, and improper disposal of automobile oil. Just four quarts of oil can form an eight acre oil slick if spilled or dumped down a storm drain.

YCUA Director

## YCUA Appoints New Board Officers

At the February 26, 2008 regular meeting of the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority Board of Commissioners, new officers were appointed.

J. Ray Scott, who has served the YCUA Board as a commissioner since October 26, 2004, was elected as the new Chair. A former Detroit Pistons player and coach and Michigan Sports Hall of Famer, Mr. Scott is an Ambassador for Children and Families for Lutheran Child and Family Service of Michigan.



Assuming the position of Vice-Chair was Mark Namatevs, a YCUA commissioner who also served as the Board's Secretary—Treasurer beginning October 26, 2004. Mr. Namatevs works as a manufacturer's representative and has been a resident of the City of Ypsilanti for 15 years.

The Board also elected Deedra Climer-Bass as its new Secretary—Treasurer. Ms. Bass has been serving the YCUA Board of Commissioners since June 22, 2007. She holds a Master of Human Resources and Organizational Development from Eastern Michigan University and currently serves as a Senior Consultant with the Organization and Human Resource Development team at Henry Ford Health System.



## It's Time To Winterize!

The time to prepare your home for winter is before the freezing temperatures and snow arrive. Follow these tips to help prevent frozen pipes in your home:

1. Disconnect outdoor hoses and make sure hose bibs are not dripping.
2. Insulate pipes in unheated areas or seal off unheated areas.
3. Find your water meter shutoff so if a break does occur, you can turn off your water service quickly.
4. If you have an in-ground sprinkler system, contact your dealer about scheduling an appointment to have your system thoroughly winterized.
5. If your home's water will be turned off for winter, there should be heat to protect the meter as well as the plumbing.
6. YCUA always recommends that customers winterize their homes just in case there is a complete power outage.

Visit our website at [www.ycua.org](http://www.ycua.org)  
for more information on these  
and other topics.

## Correction to 2007 Consumer Confidence Report

We regret that a typographical error was made on the 2007 YCUA Consumer Confidence Report. On page three of the report, the second sentence of the entry for Total Organic Carbon (TOC) Removal should have read "During 2007, TOC was measured each month and because the level was low, there was no requirement for TOC removal." We inadvertently left in the year 2006.

We apologize for this error and are pleased to report that our drinking water continues to surpass all state and federal requirements.

## YCUA Welcomes New Finance Director

Dwayne R. Harrigan joined YCUA on May 5, 2008, assuming the position of director of finance. Mr. Harrigan is responsible for the management of the accounting department, maximizing the return of the financial assets of YCUA, directing and evaluating the Authority's fiscal functions and performance, establishing and maintaining financial policies, procedures, internal controls, and reporting systems; and ensuring legal and regulatory compliance of all accounting and financial reporting functions.



Mr. Harrigan comes to the Authority with over eighteen years of financial experience. His most recent position was controller for City of Westland, Michigan. He received a Master of Business Administration from Wayne State University in 1995 and also holds a bachelor's degree in Accounting from Michigan State University.

Mr. Harrigan is a member of the Michigan Government Finance Officers' Association and International City/County Management Association. He is married with two sons and a daughter and is an avid Detroit Red Wings fan.

**Did you know? YCUA winterizes 3,000 fire hydrants every fall to assure their sound operation year-round.**

## New Rates for 2008 Announced

The Ypsilanti Utilities Authority (YCUA) works diligently to contain the costs involved in providing quality water and wastewater services to its customers. Due to the effectiveness of YCUA staff in operating the water distribution system and utilizing available storage, the new contract recently entered into with the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) has allowed YCUA to hold water rates it charges its customers steady in 2008.

Additionally, despite double-digit increases in natural gas, electricity, and fuel, the Authority has been able to effectively manage other operating costs, resulting in a sewer rate increase of 3.5%. YCUA Director Larry R. Thomas gives much of the credit for the Authority maintaining reasonable rates during the difficult economic climate to the dedication and commitment of Authority employees. "Employees at all levels of the organization have devoted great effort to maximizing productivity and efficiencies in the performance of their jobs. This has allowed us the opportunity to minimally impact the rates our customers are charged."

The surcharge applied to City of Ypsilanti customers has decreased from 80% to 78%. The surcharge is an additional fee collected to offset costs of debt service, primarily for the water main replacement projects in the city.

YCUA distributes water from DWSD and provides wastewater treatment services to approximately 27,000 homes and businesses in the City of Ypsilanti and Charter Township of Ypsilanti. In addition, the Authority serves customers in several surrounding communities including Augusta, Pittsfield, Superior, and York Townships in Washtenaw County and Plymouth, Canton, Northville, and Sumpter Townships in Wayne County.

## Phase I of Valve Preventative Maintenance Program Completed

This summer, Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority implemented a preventative maintenance program to protect the longevity and operation of the water system valves. This consisted of a valve exercise program, which requires closing, then opening, each valve in a specific neighborhood. The operation of the valves is extremely important. In an emergency, sections of the water distribution system may need to be isolated without delay.

Areas involved in this exercise included: Ypsilanti Township - South of Textile, between Rawsonville and Whittaker Roads, Partridge Creek North, Partridge Creek South, Creekside Village West, and Creekside Village South subdivisions, Aspen Ridge, Sherman Oaks, Ford Lake Heights, and Ford Lake Village, South Harris Road, Oaklawn and Willow subdivisions (Parkwood, Lamay, Jerome, and Allen), Forest Avenue, Hunt and Hollis, and East Grand Blvd; and City of Ypsilanti - Prospect Street, Prospect Gardens (Towner, Arnet, Mildred, Ford, and Davis), Norris (Oak, Vought, Charles, Helen, Virginia, and Osband); Martin Place area (Miles, Garland, and Vinewood), Northeast Area (Gordon, Stanley, Hemphill, Dwight, and Thomas), Jarvis Area (North Adams, North Washington, Jarvis, and Jenness), Central Business District (area bounded by Huron, Hamilton, Michigan, and Cross), Gerganoff subdivision (Gregory, Mark, and Louise), College Heights (area bounded by Oakwood, Collegewood, Bellvue, and Washtenaw).