

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

The construction season is beginning for this year. After four very busy years with water main replacements in the City of Ypsilanti, water main replacement work will be back to more normal levels. We will be replacing mains on First Avenue and Warner Avenue this summer as well as the water mains in the North Huron Street parking lot downtown. We may proceed with main replacements in the South Huron parking lot as well, but that continues to be studied.

In Ypsilanti Township, we will also be replacing water mains along a portion of Textile Road in the area around Tuttle Hill Road. A portion of sewer main along West Michigan Avenue in the area of Ellsworth will be

replaced as well. We apologize for any inconvenience these projects may cause you.

The expansion/improvements project at our wastewater treatment plant is scheduled to be completed this summer as well. It has been a long project, but it is slightly ahead of schedule and below budget. Our replacement incinerator will be starting up at that time also. Please visit our website at www.ycua.org/PDFs/FAQs.pdf if you have any questions or concerns regarding this piece of equipment.

Have a wonderful summer!

- YCUA Director

Credit Card and Online Bill Payments Now Accepted

This past fall, YCUA began accepting credit cards for water bill payments through third-party bill payment service, NCO. For a small fee, you can pay your bill online using VISA, MasterCard, and Discover through a link on the YCUA website at www.ycua.org. Also on our website, you can download an application to enroll in our electronic bank account withdrawal payment program. You may still pay your bills by mail or at our office at 2777 State Road in Ypsilanti Township. Please bring your bill with you when paying in person. For more information on these new services, please check the back of your bill.

Your New and Improved Billing Statement

We are now six months into the new billing software installed at YCUA that is designed to increase processing efficiencies as well as provide our staff with more up-to-the-minute information about your account. We now provide your bills within ten days of your meter being read. This change in billing alerts you to leaks in your plumbing system on a more timely basis and also reduces postage costs, which result in direct savings to you.

Other highlights of the new statement include more detailed account information such as: previous balance, payments made during the billing period, current charges, and ending balance. A comparison of the last 12 months (six bills) is shown in a bar graph format to illustrate consumption trends. Sprinkling meter data is now combined with the main house meter and prints on one bill statement, under one account number. Detailed Benefit Charges, if applicable, are provided including the balance left to pay. Payment arrangements, if previously made through our Collection Department, are also shown, including the balance left to pay off.

YCUA would very much like to receive your feedback on the new billing format. We value knowing how well it is working for you and what, if any, continued improvements you would like to see. Please contact us at custserv@ycua.org.

Did you know ... YCUA's replacement incinerator system will reduce total potential air emissions by 78%, and will actually improve local air quality. Other biosolids disposal options, such as landfilling or composting, would actually emit more particulates and carbon monoxide than the replacement incinerator system, due to the amount of truck traffic required to haul the product from the plant.

YCUA Employees Honored for Thwarting Potential Child Abduction

Two YCUA employees were recently honored by the Authority for their role in preventing a possible kidnapping. Don Nichols and Luther V. Blackburn were checking manholes near East Middle School in Ypsilanti Township when they saw a girl in tears being followed by a slow-moving vehicle. The YCUA employees asked the girl if she was okay and, when she replied that she was not, the driver fled. The girl, an eighth grade student at the school, then used her cell phone to call her father while Nichols and Blackburn called police.

Nichols and Blackburn were presented with Resolutions of Commendation at YCUA's March 22, 2005 Board of Commissioners meeting. "We have to be in favor of people like this in our community, it's a mandate," YCUA Commissioner J. Ray Scott commented. Blackburn later downplayed his heroism. "Most people would have done that or I would hope they would," he said. "I don't think I did anything special."

In conjunction with the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department and Charter Township of Ypsilanti Fire Department, it is YCUA's pledge to actively participate in the Crime Prevention Neighborhood Watch Program as "Eyes and Ears" for the Ypsilanti community. This event is an example of that commitment. YCUA is proud of the dedication of its staff to assuring the safety of local residents and is grateful to Nichols and Blackburn for their service to the community beyond the call of duty.

YCUA Welcomes New Board Member J. Ray Scott

On October 26, 2004, J. Ray Scott became a Commissioner of the Authority. He was appointed to serve in this position by the Charter Township of Ypsilanti. Mr. Scott is the Director of Development for Lutheran Child and Family Service of Michigan.



For 23 years, he has been associated with the Colonial Supplemental Insurance Company.

A native of Philadelphia, he played high school basketball against Wilt Chamberlain. As team captain of

the Detroit Pistons, Ray scored 12,289 points in 11 seasons in the NBA. During his professional basketball career, Mr. Scott also played for the Baltimore Bullets and the Virginia Squires. In 1973 - 1974, he was the first coach in Pistons history to finish the season with a winning record (52 wins and 30 losses). That season, he was named NBA Coach of The Year. Mr. Scott also coached the Eastern Michigan University and St. Paul's Lady Crusaders basketball teams.

Mr. Scott serves the community as a Board member of Diversified Youth Services, Detroit Renaissance Club, Detroit Legends of Professional Basketball, and Vice President of St. Luke Church Council. He has also been inducted in the Philadelphia Basketball Hall of Fame, the International African-American Hall of Fame, the Brooklyn (NY) Hall of Fame, the Hampton Roads (VA) Hall of Fame, and the West Philadelphia High School Hall of Fame.

Mr. Scott resides in Ypsilanti Township with his wife Jennifer and their three daughters.

Visit our website at www.ycua.org for more information on these and other topics.

Recent Promotions at YCUA

Based on their exceptional skills, outstanding work ethics, and extensive experience, several Authority employees have recently been awarded promotions. At the YCUA Service Center, Henry Gerst has been promoted to the position of Director of Services, Jeff Castro to the position of Water Distribution Supervisor, Keenen Crump to the position of Service Center Supervisor, and Mike Shaffer and Jerry Evans to the position of Transmission and Distribution Foreman.

In our Maintenance Department, Stacey Reynolds was recently awarded the position of Maintenance Supervisor and in our Wastewater Department, Alan Schock has been promoted to the position of Wastewater Supervisor.

Finally, in our Administration Department, Brooke Miller was awarded the position of Human Resources Payroll Clerk.

Congratulations to one and all and continued good luck in your careers!

Did You Know ...

Outdoor watering restrictions and bans are sometimes imposed by YCUA during periods of high demand, particularly in the hot, dry months of summer. However, there are ways that homeowners can help minimize the need for watering restrictions while maintaining a beautiful lawn and garden. These ideas can also help to save you time and money!

1. Choose the right seed mix for your Michigan lawn. It should contain Kentucky bluegrass, fescues, and perennial rye grass.
2. Make your grassy lawn as small as possible by landscaping with native shrubs, plants, and flowers, which require less watering.
3. Keep your grass at least three inches high. This promotes healthier roots that better tolerate hot and dry conditions.
4. Don't water according to a strict schedule; water only when the grass or plants show signs of needing it. During cool, cloudy, or rain periods, you do not have to water as often.
5. Heat and wind will rob your lawn of water before it can be used. To avoid this excess evaporation, it is best to water during the coolest part of the day, usually early morning.
6. Water applied quickly or heavily tends to run off the surface whereas a light, slow shower will sink into the turf and maximize the benefits of your sprinkler.
7. To further conserve water, avoid sprinkling onto pavement.

Be sure to check our web site at www.ycua.org often during the summer months for up-to-the-minute outdoor watering restriction information.

Kevin Dupuis Named MWEA Maintenance Professional of the Year

Congratulations to YCUA staff member Kevin Dupuis on receiving the Michigan Water Environment Association Maintenance Professional of the Year award. This award is a phenomenal accomplishment and is certainly well deserved by Kevin. His skills and abilities have carried him far within YCUA and it is wonderful that other organizations recognize it as well. YCUA thanks Kevin for his leadership, dedication, and commitment. The Authority is extremely fortunate to have someone of his caliber on its team. Great job!