

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

Due to the present economic climate in our service area, we have noticed an increase in delinquent water and sewer bills in our customer accounts. If you or someone you know is having difficulty in paying their water / sewer bills, we may be able to be of assistance.

If your usage has increased recently without explanation, you may have a water leak in your system. Check your sinks and toilets for obvious leaks and correct any you find. Contact the YCUA customer service department representatives for information on testing toilets for silent leaks or other leaks in your plumbing system.

Additionally, YCUA may be able to schedule a meter service technician to visit your residence and check for leaks in your fixtures. Even a small leak running 24 hours a day for a two month billing cycle can add up to a significant usage.

If you have fallen behind in your water / sewer bill payments, contact YCUA's cus-

tomers service department at extension 156 to ask about payment arrangements to pay off past due accounts over time. Don't wait until your water is in danger of being shut off. We cannot accept payment arrangements if we have tagged an account with a 24-hour notice of termination.

Finally, the Washtenaw County United Way has a 211 telephone referral system to help individuals who are experiencing financial difficulties and are in danger of termination of their water service for non-payment. Just dial 211 to get to the main help switchboard and they will direct you to agencies that may be able to assist you.

It's our desire to assist our customers in these tough economic times and it is our hope that this information may help.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Larry R. Brown".

- YCUA Director

YCUA Wastewater Plant Receives Countywide Construction Award

Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority's recently expanded and improved wastewater treatment plant has received an award for the Best Project Team Over \$25 Million at the 2007 Pyramid Awards sponsored by the Washtenaw Contractors Association. YCUA, consulting engineers Tetra Tech, and construction contractor The Christman Company, were honored at the Pyramid Awards Gala at the Kensington Court Hotel in Ann Arbor on March 2, 2007.

These team members worked together for three and a half years to complete YCUA's wastewater treatment plant expansion and improvements project. The work involved building a new facility surrounding the existing one and then blending the renovated plant to create a single modern operation.

Due to the close proximity of the YCUA facility to Willow Run Airport, FAA approval was required for crane boom height limits to avoid issues with air traffic landing approach height restrictions. Christman created and monitored detailed crane location schedules and kept in constant communication with the airport to ensure safety.

The team also had to overcome the challenge of keeping the facility operating while construction took place. Tetra Tech was keen to the fact that construction needs were secondary to YCUA's operational needs and presented designs with this in mind. Because of the uniqueness of the project, two construction teams worked on opposite sides of the facility to successfully meet the goals of the project.

With the help of all team members, the plant was able to maintain smooth operation through construction. YCUA can now process 45 million gallons of wastewater per day compared to the 29 million gallons per day processed before the renovations were completed.

The Washtenaw Contractors Association Pyramid Awards program recognizes the contractors, subcontractors, and owners for their teamwork, service, and innovation on exceptional projects. Pyramid award winners are selected by an independent panel composed of a cross section of construction industry experts from outside the southeast Michigan area.

Remember, You're Not Just Fertilizing Your Lawn!

Healthy lawns keep water clean. After months of Michigan snow, our lawns begin to show signs of green again. It's exciting, but kicking your lawn routine into high gear can cause trouble for our water. Storm drains in our streets and yards empty directly into our lakes and streams. Fertilizer on our driveways and sidewalks washes directly to our lakes and streams polluting the water. Here are some simple lawn care tips for a great looking lawn:

- ◆ Mow high. Keep your grass at least three inches tall to promote healthier roots.
- ◆ Lawns love leftovers. Keep your grass clippings on the lawn ... they are good food for your lawn.
- ◆ Follow the directions. Too much fertilizer isn't a good thing and will just run off the lawn if it rains.
- ◆ Don't fertilize until three weeks after green up in the spring.
- ◆ Sweep it. Fertilizer left on sidewalks and driveways easily washes into storm drains. Sweep it back onto the lawn.
- ◆ Take control. Consider a fertilizer spreader with a directional control that avoids non-lawn areas.
- ◆ Get to the root of it. Instead of spreading weed killer over your entire lawn, use a pre-mixed spot treatment, directed at the root of the problem.

Bridge Road Water Treatment Plant Demolition Completed

YCUA has completed the demolition of the water treatment facility located on Bridge Road. Authority staff and consulting engineers from Stantec Consulting of Michigan Inc. prepared the project specifications for the demolition and contracted Adamo Demolition Company for the demolition task. The project has been completed on schedule and under budget with all regulatory waste disposal requirements fulfilled.

With the project completed, the property will be utilized by the Charter Township of Ypsilanti for future park development. YCUA would like to thank its customers for their patience during the project.

Summer Water Main Replacement and Improvement Projects

In an ongoing effort to enhance service to our customers and to provide preventative maintenance to our water distribution system, a number of water mains will be replaced or repaired between June and October of 2007 in cooperation with the Charter Township of Ypsilanti road re-paving projects.

Areas receiving water main improvements will be Devonshire, Midway, Lowell, Hewitt / Valley / Congress, and M-17 / Ecorse.

The Hewitt / Valley / Congress project has a total estimated construction cost of \$2,000,000. The project will replace the 4" and 6" water mains with an estimated 10,260 feet of 8" water main. The affected streets are: Valley from Hewitt to Congress, Harding from Hewitt to Valley, Congress from Valley to Hewitt, McKinley from Hewitt to Valley, Midvale from Hewitt to Valley, Merrill from Hewitt to Congress, and Burns from Hewitt to Valley.

The Lowell Street project has a total estimated construction cost of \$433,000. The project will replace 2,100 feet of water main between Forest Avenue and Huron River Drive. The Midway Blvd. project has a total estimated construction cost of \$300,000 for the replacement of 1,270 feet of water main between Holmes and Clark Roads.

Also this summer, YCUA is planning a sanitary sewer relining project in the Candlewood area.

YCUA staff appreciates your patience while these projects are under construction and expects the upgrades will result in marked improvements to the water service in those areas.

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!

- ◆ Choose the right seed mix for your Michigan lawn. It should contain Kentucky bluegrass, fescues, and perennial rye grass.
- ◆ Make your grassy lawn as small as possible by landscaping with native shrubs, plants, and flowers that require less watering.
- ◆ Keep your grass at least three inches high. This promotes healthier roots that better tolerate hot and dry conditions.
- ◆ Don't water according to a strict schedule; water only when the grass or plants show signs of needing it. During cool, cloudy, or rainy periods, you do not have to water as often.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Water applied quickly and heavily tends to run off the surface whereas a light, slow shower will sink into the turf and maximize the benefits of your sprinkler.
- ◆ To further conserve water, avoid sprinkling onto pavement.

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

YCUA Welcomes New Board Member Gregory A. Peoples

YCUA welcomes Greg Peoples to the YCUA Board of Commissioners. Mr. Peoples holds a Master of Arts Degree in Higher Education Administration from Kent State University and currently serves as Ombudsman for Eastern Michigan University.

He is active as a community leader as well. In 1993, Mr. Peoples was awarded the Community Service Award by the Ypsilanti - Willow Run Chapter of the NAACP. From 1986 through 1994, he served as a trustee for the Willow Run Board of Education, President of the Lincoln Consolidated School Board, and a Board member of the Washtenaw Intermediate School District. Mr. Peoples also serves on the Board of Directors for the Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB).



In addition, he has served as Vice President of the Hope Medical Clinic Board of Directors. Mr. Peoples has been recognized by the Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., as well as the Washtenaw United Way for his leadership in the Greater Ypsilanti area.

He and his wife Alice reside in Ypsilanti with their four children.