

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

YCUA has just completed a major renovation of the sewer mains in the West Willow area of Ypsilanti Township. Many of the sewer mains in that neighborhood are located in the backyards. This is unusual as the majority of the collection sewers are located in the streets or easements in front of the houses, allowing YCUA crews easy access to the sewers in the event of emergencies or maintenance. In the West Willow area, the streets with backyard sewers include Lori, Zephyr, Studebaker, Buick, Desoto, Jeff, Nash, Woodglen, Chevrolet, Mary Catherine, and Ravinewood. Accessing backyard sewers, especially in emergency situations, is time consuming and disturbing to residents. In order to address this, YCUA contracted the cleaning, televising, and relining of those sewers. This will ensure less maintenance and better operation of those areas to serve our customers better. YCUA would like to express its thanks to the customers that allowed access to their backyards in order to complete this project. YCUA is committed to the maintenance of our sewer infrastructure

and to the customers we serve.

YCUA has recently embarked on many new programs that are intended to further enhance our commitment to exceptional customer service. We recently instituted new payment options to make paying your bill easier, including online bill payments. Our new customer service-billing software makes inquiries about your bill quick and easy to handle. We are replacing old meters with new radio read units, which ensures that your meter is read more accurately and in a more timely manner. YCUA customers may have a sprinkler meter installed that will eliminate the sanitary treatment cost of the water used outdoors. If you are interested, please contact our Customer Service department at 734.484.4600 for additional information.

- YCUA Director

YCUA Welcomes New Finance Director

Jeffrey L. Williams joined YCUA on August 1, 2005, assuming the position of director of finance. Mr. Williams 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. Williams comes to the Authority with twenty years of financial experience. His most recent position was corporate controller for Computational Systems, Inc. (CSI, a division of Emerson Electric Co.) in Knoxville, Tennessee, a \$100 million software company with 600 employees. He successfully completed the company's Initial Public Offering (IPO), as well as two acquisitions and a merger between CSI and Emerson Electric Company (\$12 billion in annual sales).

Mr. Williams received a master of public administration from Eastern Michigan University in 1992 and also holds a bachelor's degree in political science and English literature from the University of Michigan. He is a member of the Michigan Government Finance Officers' Association, Financial Executives International, and the Controllers' Council of the Institute of Management Accountants. His professional honors include membership in the National Political Science Honor Society and induction into Who's Who in International Entrepreneurs. He is a lifetime member of National Eagle Scout Association.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion/Improvements Project Nears Completion

YCUA is nearing the completion of the three-year, \$110 million dollar expansion and improvements project at its wastewater treatment plant. The project is ahead of schedule and under budget and was done without any disruption of services to our customers. This enhanced facility will bring many new technologies to assist us in addressing the needs of our environment and concerns of our customers.

Our twenty-year-old incinerator, which was used to dispose of the sludge produced by our wastewater treatment operations has been replaced by a new state-of-the-art fluidized bed incinerator. This new unit is far more efficient and is equipped with the latest pollution control equipment. In fact it runs significantly cleaner than is required by state and Federal regulations. Our customers can be assured that this is the most environmentally sound and cost-effective method of disposing of wastewater treatment byproducts.

The incinerator's exhaust gases pass through two heat exchangers to capture heat for reuse, a scrubber to remove ash, a tray cooler and wet electrostatic precipitator to remove fine particles, a gas conditioning unit, and an activated-carbon bed absorber to remove any toxic material potentially present such as mercury. This technology insures that the exhaust is thoroughly cleaned prior to being released to the atmosphere.

Odor control is also a major concern for the staff of YCUA. There is no way around it: wastewater smells bad. Our goal, however, is to not emit odors from the wastewater facility because our neighbors deserve nothing less. We have chosen air ionization to control odors, a technology that is being successfully utilized in other locations worldwide. We are committed to being good neighbors in our community.

Another state of the art improvement to our wastewater treatment facility is a new system for treating discharge water with ultraviolet light to kill any pathogenic (harmful) bacteria. This system eliminates the use of potentially dangerous and costly chemicals, another example of YCUA looking out for the environment and you.

With the completion of the expansion and improvements project YCUA's wastewater treatment facility will have the capacity to treat 45.9 million gallons of wastewater per day. The state-of-the-art technology we are installing will ensure the protection of our environment for the future.

As usual, YCUA is at the forefront of providing the best known operational technology in the treatment of wastewater for our valued customers. It gives us the ability to protect our environment and provide the best water and sewage treatment services to our growing community. If you wish to learn more about our project and/or the replacement incinerator visit our website at www.ycua.org for additional information.

YCUA Employees Join in United Way Day of Caring

September 15, 2005 marked the Washtenaw United Way's 2005 Day of Caring. Each year, the Washtenaw United Way kicks off its fund drive period with this event, which calls for groups of individuals to volunteer for one day to benefit their communities. YCUA employees eagerly join in the Day of Caring activities each year and our hats are off to those employees whose efforts that day made a difference.

A team of eight YCUA employees participated in this year's Washtenaw County United Way Day of Caring and worked at The Ypsilanti Housing Commission. They worked hard painting the exterior of the buildings and landscaping flowerbeds, a vegetable and herb garden, and a playground.

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

2006 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 2006 in cooperation with the Charter Township of Ypsilanti road re-paving projects.

Areas receiving water main improvements will be Hewitt/Valley/Congress (Valley from Hewitt to Congress, Congress from Valley to Hewitt, Midvale from Hewitt to Valley, Burns from Hewitt to Valley, Harding from Hewitt to Valley, McKinley from Hewitt to Valley, and Merrill from Hewitt to Congress); Ecorse/Emerick/I-94 (Emerick from Maus to Tyler, Tyler from Emerick to Dubie, Debbie Court, Auburndale from Emerick to Oaklawn, Montreal, Ottawa, Oaklawn from Ecorse to Tyler, Redwood from Ecorse to Tyler, Rosewood from Ecorse to Tyler, Pinewood from Ecorse to Tyler, Glenwood from Ecorse to Tyler, Wharton from Ecorse to Tyler, Kennedy from Ecorse to Tyler, and Dubie from Ecorse to Tyler), and Snow/Bradley/I-94 (Lakeview from Ide to Bradley, Ide from Lakeview to Grove, Woodale from Lakeview to Grove, Bomber from Lakeview to Grove, McGregor from Lakeview to Grove, Moeller from Lakeview to Grove, Bradley from Lakeview to Grove, Grove from Ide to Rawsonville, Margery, Morris, Nancy, Snow, and Rawsonville north of Grove).

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.

Paint Creek Area Sewer Study Underway

A study in the Paint Creek area of Ypsilanti Township has begun which includes manhole inspection, sump pump monitoring, smoke and dye testing, sewer cleaning and televising, proactive public outreach, and a report of recommended solutions. Field crews began work in June and the project is expected to continue through the end of 2005. Manhole investigations and inventorying are currently underway. Smoke testing and sewer televising began in August and continue through October.

The project study area is serviced by a "separated" sewer system. This means that there is a sanitary sewer to transport sewage and a separate storm water collection system to transport storm water. Sanitary sewage is directed to the YCUA wastewater treatment plant, and storm water is transported directly into Paint Creek. The purpose of this study is to determine why the sanitary sewer system is experiencing increased flow during times of wet weather (rain, snow melt), which can result in system overload.

This investigation will involve "smoke testing" of the sewer to locate improper sanitary sewer service connections to the system. Actual smoke is not used during testing. The "smoke" that you may see coming from the vent stacks on houses, or holes in the ground is non-toxic, odorless, and creates no fire hazard. If you have a pre-existing respiratory condition, please contact us immediately so we can coordinate the work with you to minimize concerns. The "smoke" should not enter your home unless you have defective plumbing or dried-up drain traps. Should "smoke" enter your home, please contact a member of the testing crew working in the area for help identifying the source and suggest solutions. If the "smoke" enters through faulty plumbing, you should also consult a licensed plumber, because this indicates the potential exists for dangerous sewer gases to enter your home.

It is important that all residents and businesses in the project area take action to prevent smoke from entering your home or business. To fill your drain traps and help prevent smoke from entering, pour about a gallon of water down all floor drains, run a gallon of water in all sinks, and flush all toilets. These procedures should be done once weekly during the months of August, September, and October.

We will also be cleaning the sewers at the same time. To avoid odors and drain backups, please keep toilet seat lids down, remove or protect rugs near floor drains, and keep shower doors/curtains closed.

YCUA crews, Tetra Tech engineers, and a televising contractor will be working in the study area neighborhoods now through November 2005. Workers may need to access your backyard, but at no time should they need to enter your home. Please be patient with any minor traffic delays. Please also complete and return the questionnaire that will be mailed to you this fall.

This information, along with a map of the areas being studied, can be downloaded from our website at www.ycua.org. Residents with questions or concerns are encouraged to contact YCUA Project Coordinator Rolland Sizemore at 484.4600, ext. 301.

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.