



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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POINT MARION RESERVOIR RECEIVING UPGRADES

Uniontown, PA – For the first time in 30 years, the Point Marion Borough Water Treatment Plant will undergo upgrades to replace a leaky reservoir liner.

Chief Community Development Specialist Art Cappella of Fayette County's Office of Planning, Zoning and Community Development said the borough was recently awarded \$125,000 toward the project, thanks to joint grant-writing and other procurement efforts with the county.

"Water is also flowing under the liner and leaching through the bank," Cappella said. "There are slivers of liner floating around the perimeter of the reservoir. When you come right down to it, the leak is sizable and repairing said liner is equivalent to a Band-Aid fix."

He said that, as a result, the grant, which was awarded by the state Department of Community and Economic Development and the Community Development Initiatives Program, will be used to purchase and install brand new liners beneath the reservoir.

Borough personnel located the leak in 2018. Due to its emergency status, the project was fast-tracked and, now that grant funding has been secured, can be placed out for bid.

Cappella said, once awarded, the construction contract should be limited to four weeks with a heavy liquidated damage clause to protect the county.

"Although we have confidence in completing the project immediately, we recognize that with projects of this magnitude, they do not always advance without delays," he said.

Located along Walnut Street Extension, the borough's treatment plant consists of two connected reservoirs, which are used to collect water from the Cheat River, treat it, and provide a backwash for the plant.

That water is then stored in two tanks and distributed to customers through a series of distribution lines. The basins each have a 250,000 gallon capacity and are separated by 2-foot concrete walls.

Alpha Architects Engineering, who completed the project's initial assessment, recommended the new liner, as the potential for hill slippage and unnecessary runoff with simple repairs would lead to extra chemical treatment costs for the water plant and, ultimately, increased rates for Fayette County customers.

"We will drain water from the backwash basin and remove sediment to increase its usable storage, and use a sanitary sewage system during removal to avoid moving sediment," Cappella said, adding the water discharge will last about five days.

Following the practical removal of water and sediment, a direct supply line connection from the river to the backwash basin will be provided, Cappella added.

“Piping will be temporarily modified to provide input to the plant from the backwash basin,” he said. “We will then remove the liner from the freshwater basin and dispose of it, inspect and replace exposed piping, and install the new liner, including penetrations.”

The liners will be anchored, stone walkways replaced, and safety posts and ropes reinstalled. Once the basin is refilled, its piping will be reconnected. The process will then repeat at the other basin.

Cappella said the grant is “great news” for Point Marion because it’s a small borough with limited resources.

“Fixing the liner would allow the borough to provide a safe and efficient means of clean drinking water,” Cappella said. “The 100% state reimbursement is a tremendous help to the taxpayers.”

Fayette County Commissioner Chairman Vince Vicites said the project will have a significant impact on both Point Marion and the county as a whole.

“Good water is important to any local community. Infrastructure improvements are vital to the county’s future,” Vicites said. “This grant that our county grant writers prepared is extremely helpful and vital for the borough’s future.”

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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For more information, contact Kristi Rooker Kassimer, Public Relations Specialist, at 412-691-0262, kkassimer@fayettecountypa.info or Kaylie Moore, Journalist, at 724-317-6924, kmoore@fayettecountypa.info.