

MOUNTAIN STATE WATER LINE

A Publication of the West Virginia Rural Water Association

Summer 2023

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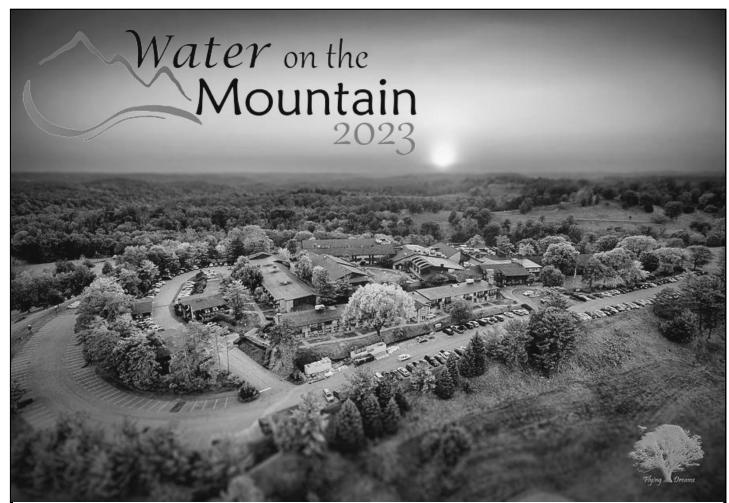
West Virginia Rural Water ASSOCIATION



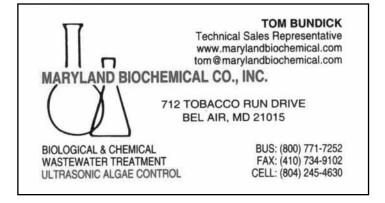
Summer 2023

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Cory Weese, Apprenticeship Coordinator Adam Conant, Energy Efficiency Technician		and wastewater systems. The mission or purpose of WVRWA is to	o provide					
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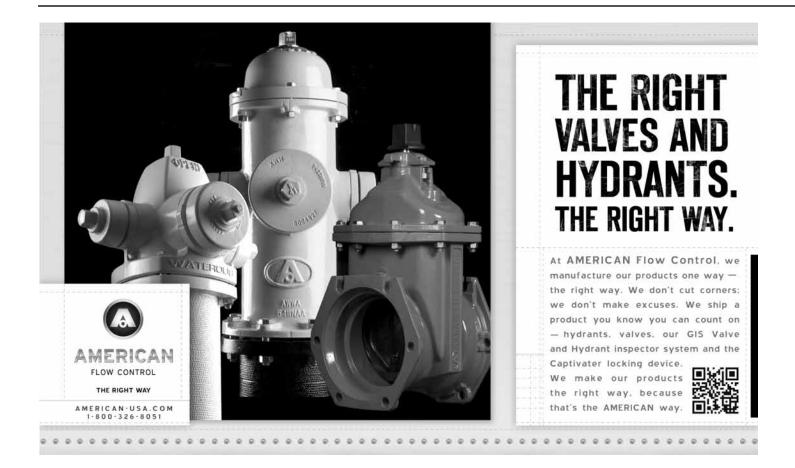
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S hortly before 9:00 PM on Feb-ruary 3, 2023, a Norfolk Southern train left the tracks near East Palestine, Ohio while traveling from Madison, Illinois to Conway, Pennsylvania. According to the National Transportation Safety Board, out of the 150 railcars, approximately 20 were transporting hazardous materials. Thirty-eight cars derailed, 11 of which were carrying hazardous materials. Twelve other cars were damaged in the incident. About half of the Town's 4,761 residents were initially told to evacuate, yet more than 500 chose to stay in their homes. A second evacuation order was issued on February 5 due to the possibility of an explosion when the temperature of five tankers filled with vinyl chloride began to rise. Authorities chose to breach those tankers and burn off the chemical. This released hydrogen chloride and phosgene into the air. One tank car lost its entire load of butyl acrylate. Residents in the area complained of health issues attributed to the chemicals. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources estimate that 3,500 fish were killed because of the spill. Contaminants from the spill reached Sulfur Run and Leslie Run, which eventually feed into the Ohio River. The bulk of the contamination staved in Sulfur Run and has been isolated. The East Palestine water system was not affected and monitoring wells have been placed between the water system's wells and the derailment sight. Households utilizing residential water wells have been instructed to not

East Palestine Train Derailment

drink their water until it is tested.

Experts previously said that a plume of contaminants was moving along the Ohio River; however, James Lee, a spokesperson for the Ohio EPA said that low levels of butyl acrylate made its way into the Ohio River through Little Beaver Creek. James Metcalf, a professor of biological sciences at Bowling Green State University in Ohio said that the water treatment systems and information from the Environmental Protection Agency indicate it is likely that these concentrations are not at a level of public health concern. The Ohio River Valley Sanitation Commission (ORSANCO) worked with federal, state and local partners to track the spill and provide sampling results to drinking water systems along the Ohio River. Water samples are continuing to be collected from 30 locations along the Ohio River from East Liverpool, Ohio to Cincinnati, Ohio. Sample results can be viewed at this website: https:// epa.ohio.gov/divisions-and-offices/ surface-water/reports-data/ep-surface-water-results. Fortunately, OR-SANCO has monitoring stations with very sophisticated equipment on the Ohio River that aided greatly in tracking this spill. Unfortunately, that is not the case with most surface water sources.

There are numerous learning opportunities presented by this disaster. For instance, it is very important to have an on-going working relationship with your local emergency management agency. It is vital that

your personnel are available and can be reached at a moment's notice when an emergency arises. Systems must have an understanding of the recharge area and protection area that feeds their water source. And one of the most important lessons from this incident is that it is vital to get accurate, up-to-date information out to the public. This spill was overrun with inaccurate information, and the public officials did not have viable answers when the public was afforded the opportunity to ask questions. People need to know the truth of the situation and how it affects them. Building public trust is a very difficult task and when that trust is lost, it is nearly impossible to regain it.

This incident proves the wisdom in developing and maintaining a source water protection plan. If your utility needs help to develop a new plan or update an existing plan, contact Jerry Dotson, Source Water Specialist at 304.483.3497 or jerrydotson@wvrwa.org.

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By Shane Altizer, Water Circuit Rider



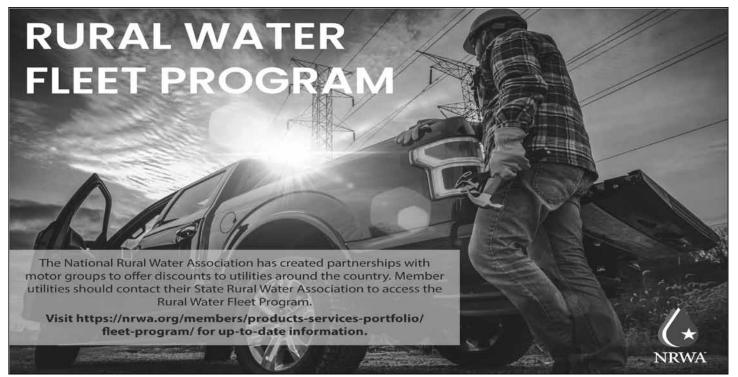
Lead Inventory Reminder

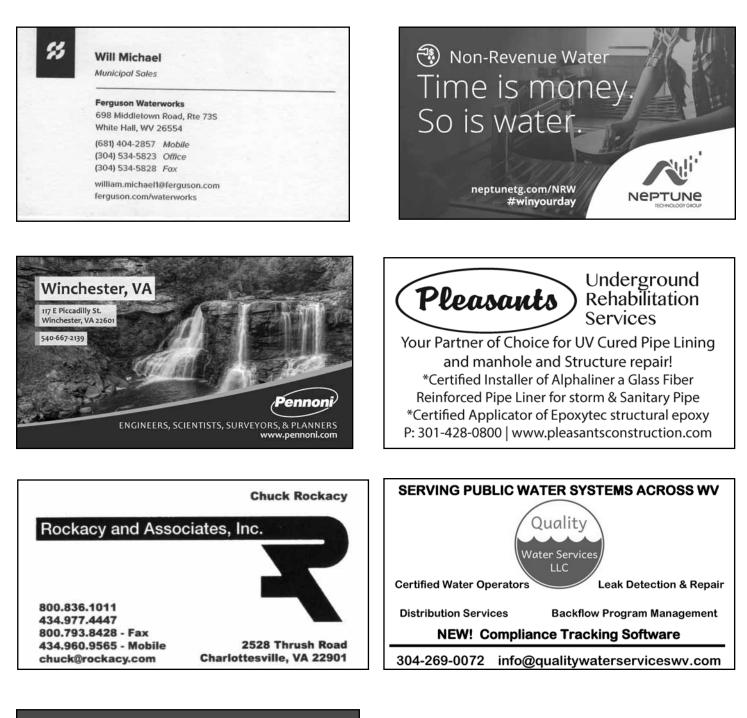
anuary 1, 2000, a date most of us all know as Y2K. People all over the world, maybe including you, feared the world was going to shut down. They stock piled food, water and other resources hoping to survive Armageddon. According to Slate.com, around 100 billion dollars were spent by the government and other American corporations hoping to survive the computer crash. Add to that amount all the people who built bunkers and spent thousands on nonperishable items. The Y2K Armageddon never happened, and a lot of money was wasted in preparation for it.

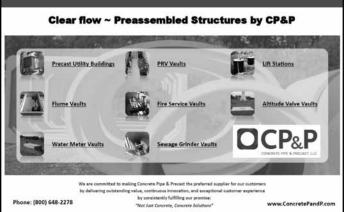
Unlike Y2K, the October 16, 2024 lead inventory list deadline is going to happen, and your preparation is required. In case you haven't heard of this, every system is required to inventory every line in their system from main lines to the customer's house. You might feel that doing an inventory on customer's lines is wrong because everything past the meter has always been the customer's responsibility, but, right or wrong, it must be done.

As of today, June 1, 2023, you have 503 days to complete your inventory. If you don't work weekends, you have 359 days minus holidays. If you have 1000 customers, you will have to inventory nearly 3 per day, every day until the due date to complete your list on time. October 16 will be here before you realize it, so don't wait. Maybe you are unsure where to begin or it seems too overwhelming, so you haven't done anything. If that is the case, start with a letter to your customers. Ask your local circuit rider for a copy of a sample letter we have. You can also start by looking at the tax map, https://www.mapwv.gov/par-cel/, and find houses built after 1986 when lead was outlawed. Check your maps and project contracts to see if they tell you what type of material was used when they installed the water lines.

This is a big task for most systems, but know that you don't have to do it alone. WVRWA is here to help and we have been helping systems with this since this law was passed. If you haven't started, now is the time. Our water operators and fields crews in WV are some of the best, hardest working men and women I've met. Using my best Rob Schneider interpretation from the Water Boy movie, "You can do it." ■











Our Friend: The Flushable Wipe

D o disposable wipes accumulate in your sewer system? As an operator, they could be called job security for sure. In all seriousness, disposable wipes are quite a problem in sewer systems all over the world. They often cause blockages to occur on the residential, commercial and the system side. In most systems, the sewer pipes are just not capable of handling this type of waste.

The disposable wipes are a great product and have a variety of different uses. They are easy to store and easy to carry with us. The biggest problem with disposable wipes, at least in our business, is that, many times, they are being labeled as "FLUSHABLE." Most of them will flush very easily. The problem is, many of them do not biodegrade. This causes them to remain in pipes and other process equipment and accumulate.

Nationally, the wipes market is a multibillion-dollar industry. It has been growing annually over the past several years. As stated earlier, they are a very good product; however, it is estimated that the problems they cause wastewater systems nationwide could be near the billion dollar a year mark. This is really hard on our industry. The wipe industry is getting better, but only about 7-10% of wipes are designed to be flushed. The others need to be put in the trash. The wipes industry has been taking steps to encourage wipes manufactures to better label their products as flushable or non-flushable. Most of these products just do not break down enough to safely pass through average sewer pipes or to prevent causing issues at the public sewer system.

The EPA actually urges Americans to not flush the wipes. They would like to see the only paper product that comes into the sewer to be toilet paper. Toilet paper breaks down in the sewer, most of these wipes do not.

One of the big problems is that many manufactures label any product that will make it through a home plumbing system as flushable. The wastewater industry labels flushable as being able to break down and disperse. Wastewater organizations are urging congress to actually come up with a legal definition of the word flushable. They would like this to include that product must be able to break down and disperse. Most wipes are made of plastic fibers, so, when one is flushed, you are adding a plastic product to the sewer system.

So, what can we do as wastewater professionals to help with this issue? The first step would be to try to educate the public. Things that do not break down such as wipes, cotton swabs, and toiletries should not be flushed. Encourage consumers to educate each other on what can be flushed and the cost it can cause to the utility if it is flushed and causes an issue. In the proper way, it is also good to let them know that the cost is always passed on to the customer. We can also encourage our political leaders to pass laws that would prohibit putting these products in the sewer. Although these laws would be hard to enforce, many people will follow the law. The system might try to put information about the problems flushable wipes cause them on their social media pages such as Facebook and Twitter. Have an article on your website or in your newsletter about how these wipes affect your system. I would mention the problems they could cause the homeowner, also. Just try to educate the public about these products and the problem putting them in the sewer can cause. They are great products. We just need to properly dispose of them.

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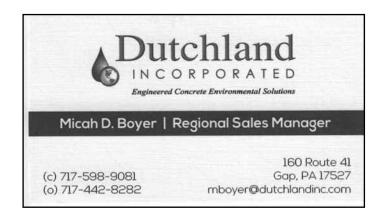
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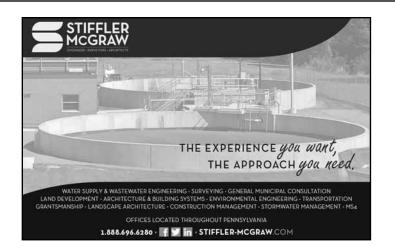
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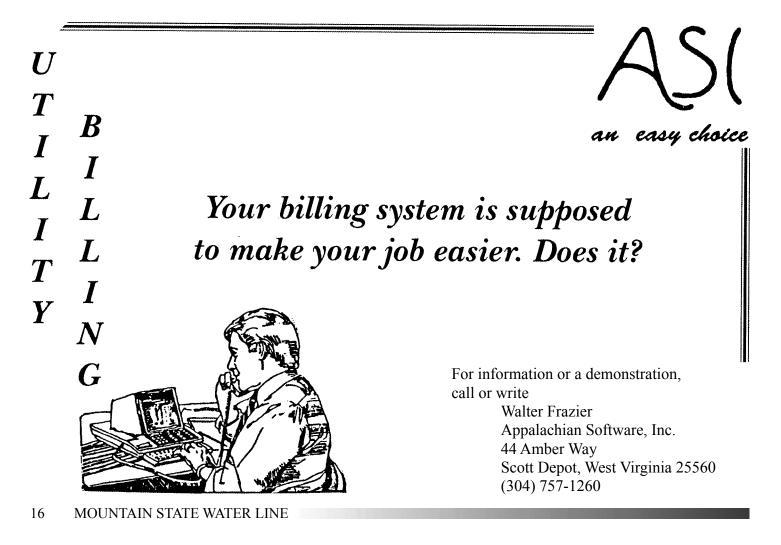












Are MBR's Becoming the Plant of the Future?

L lthough first introduced in 1969, the Membrane Bio Reactor plant has taken quite a few years to become feasible. Membrane Bio Reactors are becoming more popular when a small footprint in sensitive areas is needed. The MBR can allow for higher flows with increased treatment performance in a much smaller space. The systems are usually built in trains that run side by side with solids removal, aeration chamber, membrane chamber, on to the effluent and disinfection. Some use an anoxic chamber, as well, with the on/off rotation of the aeration, and an EQ Basin of some sort is usually part of the system.

Influent screening is a very important part of the process with normally a two-step process involved, including a 6-12 mm bar screen and then onto a 1-3mm fine screen. This process requires removing almost all of the screening before the flow continues into the basins.

The flow continues into the aeration chamber or anoxic chamber before entering the filtration basin. The wastewater flows across the filters and is then filtered or permeates through the filters, the permeate is then pumped onto effluent treatment, but the solids are retained in the tank for disposal. The two most common types of filters are the hollow fiber membranes and the plate membranes. The filters are set up to pump air back through the filters to help clean them of solids; however, scheduled filter cleaning is a must to ensure they are clean and have no tears. Filter warranties are usually anywhere from 5-10 years from the manufacturer; however, I'm sure they fluctuate with the different brand of filters that are in service. The filters are not cheap to replace, but up to a 10-year warranty doesn't seem bad.

A few interesting things that I have learned by visiting a couple plants is that the MBR plant have the ability maintain MLSS in the range of 10,000-50,000 mg/l. Because of the smaller footprint and being able to handle flows in their range and still have these kinds of MLSS is unusual from everything that most operators have been taught. Although the MBR can handle the average flows extremely well and up to 1.5-2 times their normal flow, I&I is not their friend and that's the reason that most have an EQ tank, pond, etc. But the most incredible thing that I have learned is that the filters can do such a great job of removing the bacteria in the water that disinfection, although it is required, may not be needed

The sensitive areas around the

state included discharges into protected streams and wetlands are good locations for the MBR plant. MBR plants are normally fully enclosed, and can be hard to find depending on the outside housing of the plant. These plants have a history of being for small to medium size plants, technology is being designed for much larger plants than in the past.

There are some disadvantages of this type of plant and you can expect a larger capital cost and maintenance cost due to the filter cleaning and replacement. Chemicals may also need to be used due to the possibility of decreased sludge settling rates. Operators of this type of plant must also obtain the Advanced Treatment license. Depending on the location, weather conditions, and the discharge, influent heating may also be a costly part with this type of plant.

Whether the MBR is the plant of the future is still yet to be seen, but the technology is here. Some things that you have learned working at a conventional plant don't apply to a MBR, which was strange to me while I was touring these plants, but the effluent doesn't lie. This type of plant under the right circumstances could possibly take your system well into the future. ■

MOUNTAIN STATE WATER LINE 17



NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT Get Started on Your Water Utility Construction Project

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- Pre-development (planning) costs for infrastructure projects
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Applications, information and forms can be downloaded from the NRWA website at nrwa.org or by scanning the QR Code above. For help, please call 1.800.332.8715 or email nrwarwlf@nrwa.org.





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Improve Your Facility

About the Program

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By Adam Conant, Energy Efficiency Technician

Lagoons: Problems and Solutions

hile traveling the state, I don't hear too many positive comments regarding lagoons. Lagoons seem to come with compliance issues, volume issues, sludge problems, short circuiting and the list goes on. In this article, I would like to look at some ways to deal with the problems lagoons have and some solutions to those problems. The question is can we keep our lagoons and still meet strict compliance now and in the future?

Before this research, I would have most likely been on the side of lagoons will probably not meet the future sampling requirements and it would be best to move on to a more updated wastewater treatment system. The phrase "knowledge is power" comes to my mind just because we don't know other options doesn't mean that there is not a better way to operate, or improve lagoons. This article is to shed some light on options for lagoons to stay in operation and still meet future sampling requirements. In this article I would like to cover 3 ways to improve lagoons

- Installation of Curtain/Baffles
- Aeration and Mixing
- Installation of Clarifiers and RAS to the influent

1. Installation of Curtain/Baffles: Baffles can have several valuable benefits when it comes to improving the treatment of a lagoon. The following can be benefits of using baffles according to IEC Covers. com:

- Improved retention time
- Improved settling time
- Direct water flow
- Preventing short-circuiting
- Better mixing
- Increased food to mass contact, improving wastewater treatment

Lagoon baffles can increase (HRT) hydraulic retention time which in return can eliminate short circuiting and improve BOD and TSS removal. Once installed properly and secured, baffles have no real continued maintance to keep up with. Another benefit of using baffles is to be able to make anaerobic and aerobic cells in the lagoon. I would consider this option first and it also is the most cost effective to start with if your lagoon is having issues meeting sampling requirements.

2. Aeration and mixing: Many lagoons have very little aeration or mixing going on in any of the lagoon cells. With the advancement in technology regarding wastewater treatment in lagoons, there are more efficient ways to aerate and mix than in times past. Benefits of proper aeration and mixing are:

- Better effluent quality
- Sludge reduction
- Algae control
- Odor control
- Increase hydraulic capacity with same footprint up to 10x with proper modifications

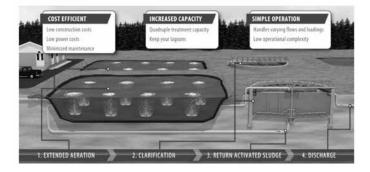
The below picture is an example of an **Ares aera-tion/mixing unit** that can be installed in lagoons. This system is provided TriplePoint Environment and is very cost effective compared to a different treatment system. It is possible even to eliminate the need for a different treatment system if installed properly. This unit combines fine bubble and course bubble with mixing to have an optimal mixing and aeration in the lagoon. By adding aeration and mixing to your lagoon, you will be able to extend the life of the lagoon along with better effluent quality, faster treatment and more quality control.

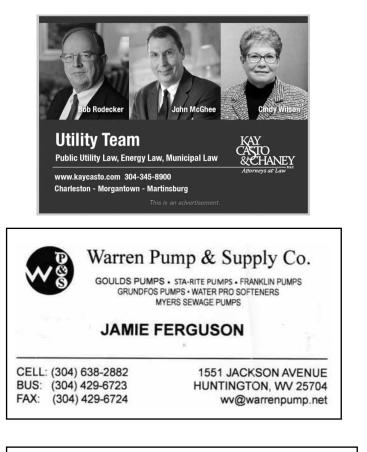
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3. Installation of Clarifiers and RAS: Yes, you heard it right, a clarifier and a lagoon being used in the same treatment system. I hadn't heard of this before and was skeptical at first, but after you learn about it and give it some thought, it does make sense. Clarifiers, along with a RAS, are typically used in

a conventional activated sludge system. Benefits of installation of a clarifier are:

- Returned Activated Sludge (RAS) *Higher MLSS
- Increase capacity of treatment
 *Better settling of solids





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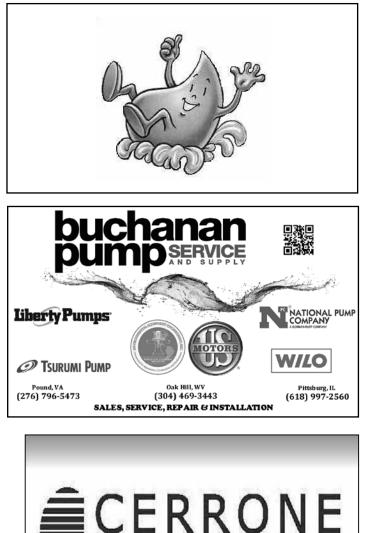
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- Sludge reduction
 *Phosphorus removal
- Waste activated sludge can go to polishing pond without having to use solids handling facility.

Before we go forward with new treatment facilities, we should consider our lagoons and ways to improve them to deal with the issues they may have. There are many new technologies and knowledge out there that can help improve our lagoons treatment system. Remember, "knowledge is power." If you are having problems with your lagoon and would like to know more about solutions, contact me and I would be glad to get you more resources. Reference: www.lagoons.com.



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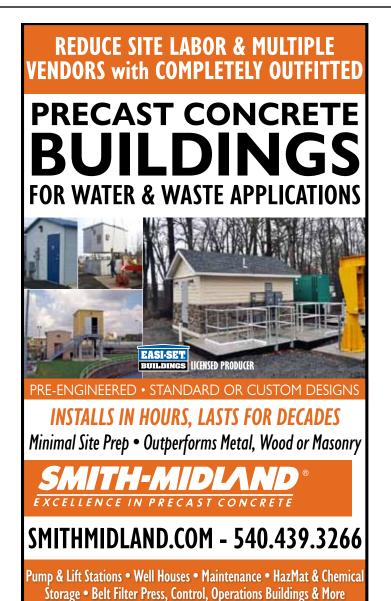


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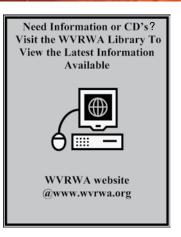
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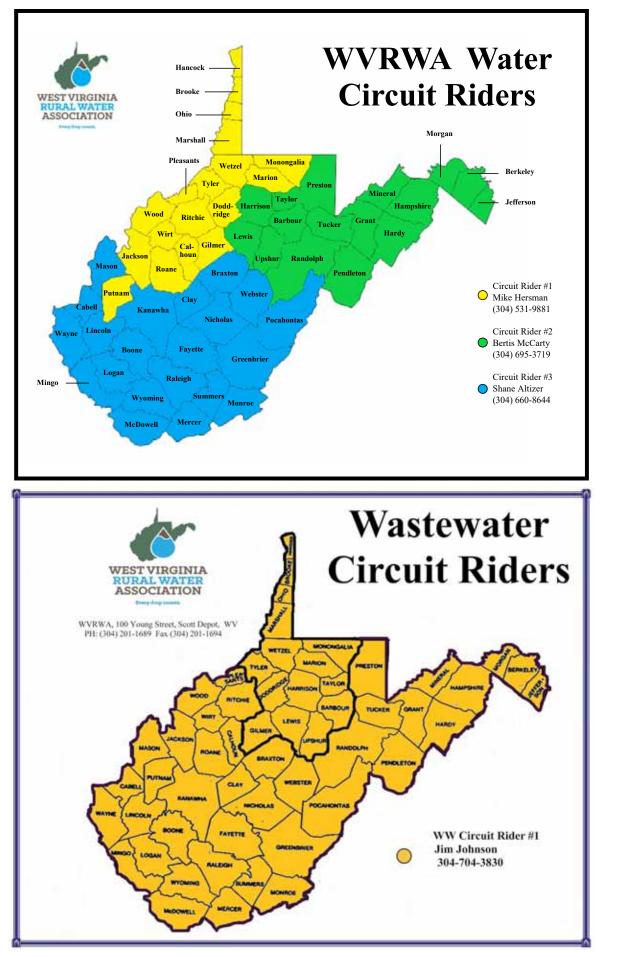














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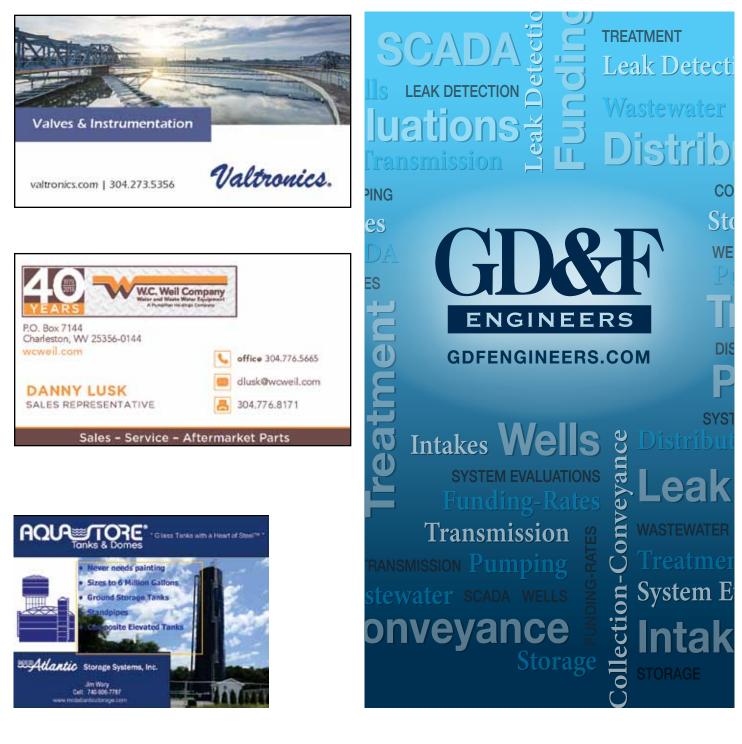
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By Daniel Vestal, ARC Specialist



hen we think of annual updates, there are a few that will come to mind for most everyone. On the wastewater side, you have your Annual Sludge Report, and on the drinking water side, you have your Large Quantity Water User Report. These two reports are most certainly important and your compliance agency will certainly remind you if you have forgotten or are late with them. One annual update that is regularly forgotten is your Asset Management Annual Update.

In recent years, systems that have applied for various loans from USDA/RUS, State Revolving Funds, and various lending agencies for upgrades, line extensions, and/ or just about anything to make your system perform better has insisted that the system start and continually maintain an Asset Management Plan program (AMP). If you are not familiar with AMPs, there are several free ones out there, such the Check-Up Program for as Small Systems (CUPSS), which is designed for small drinking water and wastewater systems.

Let's Not Forget Annual Updates

EPA's Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water developed CUPSS with the help of a workgroup that included representatives from state agencies, technical assistance organizations, EPA Regional offices, and small wastewater and drinking water utilities. While still available for use, it is no longer being updated and may not be compatible with the latest computer operating systems. Although, I work with a few systems that still use it and like it, but keep it on older computers which still have the Windows XP operating system. There are several systems that have WVDHHR's Basic Asset Management Plan that is really simple to set up and work with, and the annual updates for it are also easy to maintain. That is really the only two that I have assisted systems with, in getting started and as a go to once a year to assist with their annual update. There are some other AMPs online that you can pay for and a few templates, also.

While thinking about the above title, I had Asset Management in

mind. First, let me mention that when you start your AMP, do not list small priced items, such as anything below \$500. You don't want to have to keep up with small items that you can purchase locally, such as nuts and bolts, spigots, water hoses, etc. You have too many higher priced items and equipment that you will replace and have major repairs on throughout the year to keep up with. Your loan agency will want an annual update report for your AMP, so during the year, someone must keep up with the changing assets of your business. Any time your system changes out a motor, blower, buys a new vehicle, replaces a vehicle, etc., keep a record somewhere. Now, you can update your AMP as you go along, or keep a list and update on a slow day.

The main idea is that you DO NOT FORGET your annual update for your Asset Management Plan because it is required by your lending agency.

Thank You for reading my article! Until next time, Have a Blessed Year!! ■



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	2						4	
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	4		7		3	8	5	
1		9	8					
	3	7						
	9	8	1		6	4	2	
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				2			8	9

The aim of the canonical puzzle is to enter a numerical digit from 1 through 9 in each cell starting with various digits given in some cells (the "givens"). Each row, column, and region must contain only one instance of each numerical. Completing the puzzle requires patience and logical ability.

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Answers can be found on page 38.

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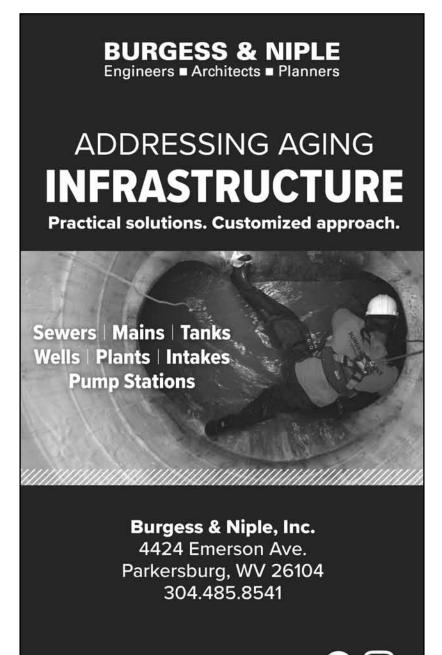
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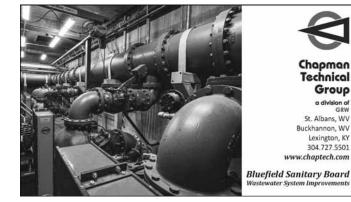
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Answers to Soduko Puzzle

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1	5	9	8	6	4	7	3	2
8	3	7	2	5	1	9	6	4
5	9	8	1	7	6	4	2	3
3	6	2	9	4	8	5	1	7
4	7	1	3	2	5	6	8	9







By Bertis M. McCarty, Water Circuit Rider



Water Rules 150-07

ew WV PSC Water Utility Rules went into effect on 3/25/2023.

I haven't read all of them, yet, but I'm sure I will get to experience a few of them with some of the systems out there in the field.

In helping with a LOW PRESSURE WAIVER for a system, I found that the old rule 5.8 no longer exists. I had to reference Rule 7.8.4 in the document. With this in mind, I would suggest a review of all written agreements and forms that have any PSC Rule references. If the changes aren't made, you may be referencing some rules that don't exist anymore.

One of the interesting rules I read was 6.1.7.m. It states that the customer with a structure using a private fire service line shall notify the utility of a system test so they can be present if desired. Might have to do a little informative communication on that one, because I'm sure none of the businesses know it.

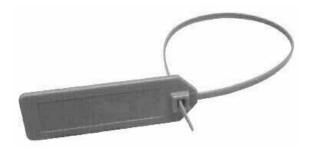


Rule 7.2.3 states that the system will specify the size, kind, quality, and location of all materials used in the utility service pipe. I know of a few people

that do this and inspect the connection before the customer buries it. Good customer communication is key!

Rule 5.2.2 states that when a group of meters are together, every meter shall be tagged to indicate the particular customer served by it.

I have seen many situations where this would be a great idea, Hope everyone follows this rule.



Rule 6.1.7 and all of its many subparts are about Private Fire Service and should be read in their entirety. The information in this rule could make changes in the system's application for private fire service. The "Private Fire Service" part of systems is largely overlooked and I would recommend every system to update their thoughts and policies toward it. From the way to test for leaks on the private line and being present when the fire service is being tested yearly.

I'm sure you will find more interesting new rules as you do your daily work and experience them.

John Maxwell said it best: "The truth is that teamwork is at the heart of great achievement"

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Attention Boards and Managers: Here is What Operators Want You to know

or two years, I have taught classes in over thirty communities in West Virginia and have had the privilege to meet Operators from all over the state. Some of these Operators are new to the business, some have treated water longer than I have been on the planet. Some Operators have worked at several small systems in the state with limited resources, some Operators are employed by large municipalities and can easily get what they need. Despite the differences, there is a common theme I hear from Operators: there is a disconnect between the Operators that run Water and Wastewater Plants and the people that govern them. Regardless of how a utility is structured, whether if run by a Board of Directors, a Mayor and a Council, or a manager of some type, there seems to be a breakdown between what the governing body expects and what the Operators actually do.

Hearing these conversations over and over, I started to directly ask Operators in class, "What do you want these Boards to know" and here are several recurring themes. These are in my own words, but paraphrased from multiple Operators, from every part of this great state.

"BEING A CERTIFIED OP-ERATOR IS A LIFESTYLE, NOT JUST A JOB"

Most Operators are always on call. Usually this is not in an official capacity where they are earning a wage. Operators have to respond to leaks and emergencies. They get phone calls when there are fires, if a vehicle hits a hydrant or to address unforeseen water quality issues. They also hear complaints from friends and neighbors when they are attending their child's ball games or picking up groceries at the store. Again, most of these things are happening regularly with no compensation. Operators with telemetry enabled on their phones habitually check on the water system even on their days off. This level of dedication comes from a high level of commitment to protecting the health of their communities. Operators aren't doing this for fame or fortune. Most of them will continue to serve without the pay or acknowledgment they deserve. This is important to remember when Operators request tools, safety equipment, or other things vital to their job. Most plants operate 365 days a year to meet never-ending demand. There are few other careers when an employee always feels "on" and rarely gets to physically and mentally check out and get the time away they deserve.

"THIS IS A PROFESSION, NOT JUST A JOB"

To become a Class II Water or Wastewater Operator in the state, an Operator: provides proof they have graduated high school or earned a GED, attends a certification class, passes an exam created by a committee of Class IV Oper-

ators, provides proof of two years of verified experience as an Operator (unless they are able to substitute one year of experience with education), and has their Chief Operator vouch for their readiness to earn a license. Once the state verifies all of the requirements are met, the Operator is granted a Class II license, they must continue honing their skills as an Operator and earn continuing education classes by attending training that is certified by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health. This regimen of testing, experience, and continuing education is similar to that of accountants, attornevs, pilots and doctors. Certified Operators of all different level of classes are not replaceable.

"WE DON'T WEAR CAPES, BUT WE ARE HEROES"

Ok, there is actually no Operator that is going to say that about themselves - which is why I am going to say it: Operators are invisible superheroes. They work behind the scenes and provide services that are essential to everyday life. Their occupation requires a high level of trust and autonomy. Rarely does an Operator need hand holding and reminders to do their job to the highest standard. They work weekends and holidays and in emergencies. Lots of other occupations get credit for being essential, but not one of those can happen without dutiful Operators keeping the waters safe!

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