



NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE MWA

MWA awarded 'Collection System of the Year' by Georgia Association of Water Professionals *Authority named best system in the state for second time*

When asked what the Macon Water Authority (MWA) could do for an encore after being selected the state's best sewer collection system for the second time by the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP), Darryl Macy, MWA's sewer conveyance and water distribution manager, replied: "how about a three-peat?"

That's what the Authority will be shooting for the next time the utility enters this industry competition.

At its fall conference in Athens, GAWP officials awarded the MWA the 2007 "Collection System of the Year" honor in the medium system category. Critical to the Authority attaining the best sewerage system in the state is its highly acclaimed Capacity, Management, Operation & Maintenance (CMOM) program.

The CMOM program at the MWA reflects the proactive, problem solving philosophy of the Authority's board and management. The CMOM program has drastically reduced MWA incidents of overflows and spills by implementing proven methods for identifying potential threats to sewer conveyance operations. As a result, this "total system" approach to locating capacity issues helps determine where problem areas are and how the

Authority can address them promptly and cost effectively, saving time and money in the efforts to protect water quality and natural resources.

A utility CMOM program includes guidelines for operations and maintenance established by the state Environmental Protection Division (EPD). The MWA has been on the forefront of CMOM implementation in Georgia, even assisting EPD regulators with writing and establishing the current CMOM guidelines. In fact, the Authority has received word from the state that it should be entering into a consent decree – or a written performance agreement – with EPD, which states that the utility can and will follow the highest conveyance system standards in the industry, making it the first utility outside of the metro Atlanta "zero tolerance" zone to do so.

"We're extremely proud of being selected once again as the Collection System of the Year in Georgia," says Tony Rojas, executive director of the MWA. "This is yet another indicator of our board's commitment to investing in asset management and renewal and replacement of our infrastructure, as well as our employee's dedication and hard work to implement those improvements and continually manage and oversee our system properly and effectively."



The Macon Water Authority (MWA) was selected as the 2007 Collection System of the Year by the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP) at the industry's fall conference held recently in Athens. Roy Herwig (center), chairman of the GAWP Collection System Committee, congratulates Darryl Macy (left), sewer conveyance and water distribution manager for the MWA, and Heather Veal, CMOM coordinator for the MWA, accepting on behalf of the Authority.

MWA joins area sponsors for annual Ocmulgee Alive! river cleanup

It's no easy task protecting Georgia's water resources. Sometimes you have to roll up your sleeves, or even put on your boots and waders.

Such was the case recently when approximately 140 volunteers sacrificed one of their fall Saturdays to clean up more than 6 tons of trash on a 2.5 mile stretch of the Ocmulgee river that runs along the Heritage Trail.

As a result, Ocmulgee Alive! helps protect one of the region's most critical resources for drinking water production and outdoor recreation. The Ocmulgee River, in addition to Javors Lucas Lake, provides the Macon Water Authority (MWA) its valuable raw water supply for serving more than 54,000 customers.

"This event has grown over the past three years, from 30 people volunteering the first year to 140 people coming out this year," says Mark Wyzalek, laboratory



This young volunteer shows off some of the 6 tons of trash collected during the recent Ocmulgee Alive! event, which focused on cleaning a 2.5 mile stretch of the river that runs along the Heritage Trail.

manager for the MWA and an organizer of the Ocmulgee Alive! annual event. "Next year, we'd like to have over 200 people come help us clean even more of the Ocmulgee and promote continued environmental stewardship in our com-

munity."

Ocmulgee Alive! was held in conjunction with other, similar statewide river cleanups that are a part of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division's (EPD) "River's Alive" events.

The other co-sponsors of Ocmulgee Alive! this year – who joined the MWA, New Town Macon, and Keep Macon-Bibb Beautiful – included the Georgia Wilderness Society, City of Macon Public Works, the National Park Service, Mount de Sales Academy, the Wesleyan College Environmental Concerns Committee, the Mercer University Environmental Law Club, Macon State College, and YKK USA, which was the first ever "commercial" sponsor of the event, as many of the 900 Macon employees took part in this year's river cleanup.

SECOND FRONT

MWA adjusts administrative fee schedule

Also beginning in January, no final notices will be sent to MWA customers

Beginning Jan. 1, 2008, the Macon Water Authority (MWA) will be adjusting its administrative fee schedule – and subsequent notification process – in hopes customers will be better able to prevent the disruption of their water and/or sewer services each month.

Under the new policy, passed by the MWA board of directors at its November 2007 meeting, customers will still be charged an administrative fee of \$20 for delayed payment, but only after 30 days from the date their bill is mailed, rather

than 25 days after the mailing date, as had been the case previously. Thus, the \$20 administrative fee (which in essence is a fee charged to cover the cost of reconnection, if it is necessary) now will be applied to customer bills 30 days after the mailing date, to coincide with the day service may be disconnected.

Finally, customers will no longer receive a final notice of when their payment for water/sewer services is due. Rather, the MWA will send out one notification – the customer's original bill – that will inform

customers of when their bill is due, as well as what date administrative fees and potential disconnection, or other penalties, apply. The MWA is following an industry trend that shows most utilities no longer issue late payment reminders to customers because they are not timely or cost effective.

For more information on customer bills, late charges or administrative fees, disconnection or re-connection of services, or any other customer service inquiry, contact the MWA at 478-464-5600.

MWA honors retirees for years of dedicated service

Four men attained nearly 150 years of combined experience at the Authority

In a business world where employees rarely stay with a company for more than a few years, it's refreshing to see those committed to an organization and a community for more than thirty, even forty years.

Mark Potts, Ricky NeSmith, Chester Stewart, and Joel Tapley, have all retired from the MWA within the last few months, leaving behind nearly 150 years of combined professional experience among them at the Authority. It's rare that a public water utility can boast such a collection of experienced veterans.

Mark Potts, a Macon native, spent his career in the Authority's Engineering Department, where he mapped and located utility lines. As a result of his work, the Authority has been able to more accurately reference and access water and sewer lines for maintenance and upgrades.

Ricky NeSmith began working for the MWA in August of 1976 as a pipe fitter, though he eventually took on more responsibilities through positions such as equipment operator, crew leader, supervisor, and distribution assistant manager. He retired as Manager of Distribution after 31 years of service to the Authority and its customers.

Stewart started out working in the Authority's old Riverside Drive Water Treatment Plant boiler room, before moving over to maintenance, where he thrived because of his love for "hands on" work



Ricky NeSmith, pictured above right with plaque, is one of four recent retirees who had more than 30 years of service during his career at the MWA, joining Mark Potts (34 years), Chester Stewart (37 years), and most recently, Joel Tapley (46 years), pictured above left with MWA Board Members Dot Black (left) and Javors Lucas (right). Congratulating NeSmith for his retirement after 31 years are (L to R): MWA board members Steve Rickman, District 3, Dot Black, District 1, Bert Bivins, III, Bibb County Representative, Frank C. Amerson, Jr. (with plaque), chairman, Javors J. Lucas, vice chairman, Ed DeFore, City of Macon Representative, and Frank Patterson, District 4.



experience. Though he made his career in maintenance, Stewart obtained all three classifications of certification as a water treatment plant operator.

Joel Tapley started working for the MWA in 1961, as a maintenance mechanic at the Lower Poplar Street wastewater treatment plant. He has a Class II Wastewater License and retired this past October as a Maintenance Mechanic Supervisor. Tapley has been recognized in the industry for his outstanding achievement and service in the field, including the training he has provided through the years to fellow professionals.

With such an impressive group of employees retiring at the MWA, the Authority will be hard pressed to replace their collective skills and cumulative expertise.

"We're in a period of transition for sure at the Authority, when you lose such a distinguished group of employees, right around the same time," adds Rojas. "But the good news is these guys are leaving their respective positions in such fine shape that others following them will undoubtedly benefit from the positive impact they've had on our entire organization."

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