



NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE MWA

Macon Water Authority makes waves at state industry conference

T

he Macon Water Authority (MWA) has been extremely busy this summer, managing drought conditions, pursuing capital improvements, and much more.

But the Authority did make time to participate in the 75th Anniversary Celebration of the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP) held in Savannah recently, even managing to bring home two industry awards in the process.

Highlighting the conference for the Authority was the induction of two employees into the Water Environment Federation (WEF) Quarter Century Operator's Club. Terry Forrest and Herman Wilburn both received this top national industry award, and they were the sole recipients from the state of Georgia to be recognized with the Quarter Century Club honor this year.

The WEF Quarter Century Membership Award recognizes operators of wastewater treatment facilities for their serv-

ice and dedication in a challenging and competitive profession, says Jack Dozier, executive director of the GAWP.

The Quarter Century Operators Club honors those individuals who have been a significant, full-time participant in the water environment industry for a period of 25 years, 10 of which must have been actively involved in the day-to-day collections, maintenance, operations, laboratory, or management of a wastewater transportation or treatment facility.

"The fact that we had not one but two inductees into the WEF Quarter Century Operators Club speaks volumes as to the kind of employees we have working for us at the Macon Water Authority," says Frank C. Amerson, Jr., chairman of the board for the MWA, who recently celebrated 31 years of public service himself, as an MWA board member. "Terry and Herman have been at this a long time and have both worked their way up the ranks of the Authority to become increasingly responsible for much of the operational success we've had through the years."



(Left to Right): Phil Feeney, Section Director for the Georgia Water Environment Federation (GWEF), presents the Quarter Century Membership Award to the Macon Water Authority's Herman Wilburn, while Dieter Franz, GWEF Section Chairman, likewise congratulates the MWA's Terry Forrest for the same honor. Wilburn and Forrest were awarded Quarter Century Membership by WEF for being significant, full-time participants in the water environment industry for 25 years, at least 10 of which having been actively involved in the day-to-day collections, maintenance, operations, laboratory, or management of a wastewater facility.

MWA a model utility for asset management

The MWA is setting a good example for other public water utilities to emulate when considering how to prepare and execute an asset management plan.

At the recent annual conference of the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP), Tony Rojas, executive director of the MWA, and Peter Oram, consultant with Metcalf & Eddy, hosted a seminar on "using asset management to justify a rate increase." The two men explained to fellow water utility managers and professionals that in order to provide outstanding levels of service at the lowest possible rates, a utility must have a better understanding of its infrastructure, both in terms of inventory and life expectancy.

"We outlined how we have completed a thorough inventory of our assets and developed a plan for how to finance capital improvements, as well as the renewal and replacement of those assets, all while still accounting for the everyday operational costs of the utility," says Rojas. "We feel as though it's best to reinvest in our infrastructure before problems occur. Once you justify the needs to your leadership and your customers, you can then pursue necessary projects with the full backing of your community."



Tony Rojas (right), executive director of the Macon Water Authority (MWA), and Peter Oram, consultant with Metcalf & Eddy, present a seminar on asset management and utility rate structure at the recent 75th anniversary and annual conference of the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP).

Rojas and Oram noted that the MWA governing board and managers began to educate themselves on the need for an asset management program more than two years ago, after attending several industry conferences on the national level. Then, the MWA staff and consulting engineers rolled up their sleeves to

begin the arduous task of completing the system inventory.

After compiling a system inventory of assets, the Authority then scripted both a short-term (10 years) and long-term (50 years) capital improvement program. While the capital improvements necessary at facilities are easier to identify, assessing the life expectancy of buried infrastructure, such as sewer lines and water mains, is a little more challenging. Some of these assets have been in the ground for more than 50 years, so making the best educated assumptions about their future serviceability will be critical to the success of the overall asset management program at the MWA, adds Rojas.

Now, the Authority is in high gear implementing the capital improvements and renewal and replacement of assets that are the highest priorities in terms of need. These projects are on the fast track, so the MWA can continue to deliver outstanding water and sewer services to its approximately 54,000 water and 41,000 sewer customers.

For more information on the capital improvement projects being pursued by the MWA, log onto the Authority's Web site at www.maconwater.org.

SECOND FRONT

Protecting your water, sewer system against inflow and infiltration

How do you become recognized throughout the state of Georgia as a leader in the delivery of water and sewer services, including selection as the Collection System of the Year in 2006, as awarded by the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP)?

Macon Water Authority (MWA) officials would say you have to renew and replace aging infrastructure, eliminate emergency spills and overflows, and even more specifically, address the industry wide issue of inflow and infiltration.

In order to share insights on advances made to address this latter issue, the MWA presented technical information at the recent GAWP annual conference on how its Capacity, Management, Operations, and Maintenance (CMOM) program has helped to reduce inflow and infiltration in its wastewater collection system.

The Authority began its CMOM program in 2003. Just two years later, the MWA had a full-time CMOM coordinator, was contracting for flow monitoring of its collection system, and was pursuing several other initiatives to help reduce and eliminate inflow and infiltration in its collection system.

Inflow is water that enters into sanitary sewer systems at points of direct connection to parts of the system, often caused by downspouts, sump pumps, and surface water. Infiltration is groundwa-



Daryl Macy (center), sewer conveyance and water distribution manager for the MWA, and Heather Veal, CMOM Coordinator for the MWA, presented a technical session at the recent GAWP annual conference, which addressed the Authority's experience in eliminating inflow and infiltration in its sanitary sewer system.

ter that enters sanitary sewer systems through cracks and/or leaks in sewer lines. Together, "I and I" reduces the capacity of a collection system, increases overflows and spills, places stress on wastewater treatment plants, and drives up the overall cost of wastewater treatment.

The keys to eliminating inflow and infiltration are: (1) finding these trouble spots in the system, (2) prioritizing them according to severity and need, (3) fixing the problems cost effectively, and (4) monitoring these incidents to assure they do not return, says Daryl Macy, sewer conveyance and water distribution manager for the MWA.

The Authority locates "I and I" by applying flow monitoring models, inspecting the system with crews on a continuous walk-through, televising the interior of sewer lines with its CCTV technology, conducting smoke and die

tests, and other diagnostic methods.

Once identified, incidents of "I and I" are corrected by replacing manhole covers, raising manholes above the floodplain, encouraging customers to fix their lateral sewer lines, and rehabilitating the system's deteriorating joints and sewer mains.

For more information on renewal and replacement projects, check out the Authority's Web site at www.maconwater.org.

MWA encouraging 'waterSmart' use of home irrigation systems

You can save money on your monthly water bill, as well as conserve valuable drinking water resources, by following a few simple initiatives provided by the Macon Water Authority (MWA) and the statewide "waterSmart" water conservation educational program.

When properly installed and managed, home irrigation systems require less labor and time to operate, while using less water than manual watering methods. Properly programmed and operating irrigation systems also keep lawns hydrated while more easily adhering to the outdoor water use schedule in Georgia.

The waterSmart program offers some things to keep in mind when considering the efficiency of your home irrigation system. First, try to group vegetation with



www.ConserveWaterGeorgia.net

similar watering needs together, so programming your irrigation to dispense the right amount of water is made easier. In addition, look for native plants that are more suitable to the natural climate and require less supplemental watering. Also, consider the size and shape of the area that needs supplemental watering in order to have a water-efficient healthy lawn. If you do not take into account the proper dimensions, you may end up having an

irrigation system that reaches too far or falls too short of its ideal coverage area.

Sprinkler systems with spray heads, rather than rotating sprinklers, are the most efficient types of irrigation systems. In addition, drip irrigation systems utilize devices called "emitters" to supply a steady, yet slow flow of water to plants. The drip method is suitable for many landscapes, but it is not best for those with shallow rooted plants, such as grass and ground covers. Finally, to easily prevent running sprinklers while it is raining, install a rain sensor shut-off device or automatic shut-off switch.

For more insights on waterSmart, you can visit www.ConserveWaterGeorgia.net or www.waterSmart.net. Information is also available at www.maconwater.org

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Tony Rojas
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478.464.5622



790 Second Street
P.O. Box 108
Macon, Ga., 31202-0108

478.464.5620 (M-F)
478.464.5656
(After Hours)
478.750.2007 (Fax)