

lechnical Assistance



Illinois: Phase 4 - Revitalization By: Frank Dunmire, Executive Director

September 2020 Newsletter

It seems like an eternity since Illinois' Governor issued his first Executive Order that essentially shutdown the State's economy. Since the shutdown in March, Illinois has seen a substantial decrease in the number of new cases as well as a reduction in hospitalizations due to the virus. Consequently, the number of deaths due to the virus fell to a more acceptable level (zero deaths would be perfect). On Friday, June 26, 2020 Illinois entered Phase 4 of the state's "Restore Illinois" reopening plan. In phase 4, restaurants and bars may reopen for indoor dining at a reduced capacity as long as IDPH guidelines are followed, and gathering sizes allowed went from 10 to 50 people.

Illinois Rural Water Association was forced to cancel conferences and inperson training sessions while still in Phase 3. Although gatherings of 50 people — up from 10 — is now allowed in Illinois, IRWA is cautiously re-entering the hosting of in-person training sessions. As I am writing this article, the first training session is being held in Oblong, Illinois and the next session will be held in Tremont next week. These training sessions

are learning experiences for the presenters and attendees alike.

The first thing that attendees will notice is that the class size is being limited to 20 people and registration is through an online portal. Registrations are being conducted in this manner so that when the maximum number of attendees is reached, the software will automatically not allow anyone else to register. If larger venues are located for future training sessions, then the maximum number of attendees will be increased accordingly.

Secondly, when arriving at a training session, attendees will be asked to wear a face covering when not seated and follow all other IDPH guidelines that might be in force at the time. IRWA will also be taking the temperature of everyone entering the room utilizing a touchless infrared thermometer, providing hand sanitizing stations as well as providing masks for those that may have forgotten theirs. During this transition period, all attendees will be asked to remain in their seats and maintain the proper social distancing when entering and leaving the room.

Currently, IRWA is scheduling training sessions in threehour time blocks in an effort to accommodate as many operators as possible. By keeping the training session duration to three hours, it allows for identical morning and afternoon sessions that can accommodate 20

attendees each. In between sessions, all tables and chairs will be sanitized before the afternoon attendees are allowed into the room. Please bear with us as we all become accustomed to the "new normal".

There currently is no timetable for moving from Phase 4 to Phase 5 – the final phase of the plan when Illinois' economy fully reopens. This fifth and final phase would allow for the resumption of con-

ventions, conferences, and other large events. Under current guidelines, Phase 5 cannot be considered until a coronavirus vaccine or "highly effective treatment" is readily available, or new cases of the virus are eliminated for a sustained period of time.

IRWA is continuing to plan for its annual conference under the assumption that Illinois will be in Phase 5 by February 2021. I, for one, am ready to get back to some sort of normalcy! Hope to see you all in Effingham at IRWA's 39th annual technical conference.

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IRWA'S MISSION STATEMENT

"Protecting and preserving the water and wastewater resources of Rural Illinois through education, representation and on-site technical assistance"



IT MUST BE A MONDAY Provided by: John Bell, Wastewater Technician

I was informed that my credit card was not working. Is today Monday? I have had this card for over fifty years and now I have a problem. I go directly to the source and call the credit card company. My problem was not resolved and in fact was just beginning. The credit card company has a robot-answering phone system. You get to press 1 to be upset, press 2 to be really upset and press 3 to be madder than hops. This answering system is so superior that you get on a loop that will get you back to the start. You begin it over again without ever being in contact with the human side of the call-in system. After several attempts and getting the same result, I stopped this madness and felt that I should try a different approach to solve the problem.

Speaking of Mondays and problems, I am reminded of a situation that was recently resolved by Dave McMillian. Dave, as you all know, is the training specialist for IRWA. Previously, he was with the IEPA as Division Manager for many years. On July 1, 2019, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) required wastewater operators to attend training sessions in order to keep their wastewater certification active. This requirement is familiar to all water certified operators who have been working under this requirement for several years. A problem arose with the two-hat operators. Two-hat referring to an operator who is both certified in water and wastewater. The main problem centered around where to post the credit for

attending a wastewater training session. A related problem was whether two-hat operators receive credit for water and wastewater while attending a training session that pertains to both water and wastewater. Dave set up a pow wow with IEPA to discuss these issues. It was immediately agreed upon that taking a training session that pertained to both water and waste water would be credited to both. The situation with how you will get credit for the wastewater side is being resolved. For now keep your paper records on the wastewater training sessions! The electronic submission of your credits for the water side will be updated to accept this information on waste water side at some time in the future. DO NOT attempt to electronically submit wastewater credit to this program at this time.

The credit card situation was resolved by calling the bank and getting in contact with Miss Brown. Miss Brown (the bank's Dave McMillan) bypassed the robot-calling system and was able to go directly to the source. Credit card matter resolved. Thank you Dave and thank you Miss Brown. Things are great and it feels like it must be a Friday. If you find yourself with a "Monday" problem, please contact IRWA. Let us help you get right to that "Friday" feeling.

The 17th Annual IRWA Golf Outing was held on Friday, August 28, 2020 with 96 golfers in attendance. Thank you to the following Associate Members for sponsoring this years outing:

Brenntag Mid-South, Inc.

Brotcke Well & Pump, Inc.
Chemstream, Inc.
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Ford Meter Box
G.A. Rich & Sons, Inc.
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IMCO Utility Supply
IRWA Board
JULIE, Inc.
Midwest Meter, Inc.
Municipal Equipment Company, Inc.
Sensus USA
SRL Consulting, Inc.
Tnemec (Taylor Coating Sales)
Woody's Municipal Supply





What are you looking for?

The ABC's of ilrwa.org

Advertising in Water Ways information (Ad agreement and links) - Publications/Advertising Information

Becoming a Certified Water or Wastewater Operator—Training/Sidebar links

Boil Order Notice-Resources/Downloads

Certification Overview from IRWA—Training/Sidebar link

Certified Water Operator Contract—Resources/Downloads

CEU Forms from past conferences—Resources

CEU's from CD training-Training/Sidebar link

Cross Connection (manual, survey & ordinance) - Resources

Current hot topics and upcoming events - Home

E-CCR—Services

Energy Efficiency Assessment—Services

For Sale/Wanted-Resources/Sidebar link

Forming a new water district—Resources/Downloads

GPS/GIS—Services

Industry Organizations—Resources

Lead Testing—Downloads/Sidebar

Leak checklist and how much am I losing flyers—Resources/Downloads

Legislative Information - Who is my rep?, House and Senate bills that IRWA is following -Resources

Mutual Aid—Resources/Downloads

NFP Tax Forms — Resources/Downloads

NRWA Fleet - Membership (click on the NRWA logo);

Operator Groups-Resources

PFAS-Home

Rate Study -- Services

Red Flag Act—Resources/Downloads

Revolving Loan Fund—Services

Smoke Testing forms—Resources/Downloads

Speaker Request Form for Conference —Training/Conferences

Tracer Wire Specs-Resources/Downloads

VA/ERP/Contingency Plans—Resources/Sidebar link

Video Inspection Services—Services

Wastewater CEU information-Home

Water Loss Handouts-Resources/Downloads

Water University—Training/Sidebar link





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GPS/GIS MAPPING SERVICES

Through the implementation of GPS & GIS technology, IRWA can effectively produce hard copy and digital maps. With this service available from IRWA, utilities can attain new and accurate maps to better manage their water, wastewater, and storm sewer assets.

The printed maps can be large-scale wall maps up to 36"x48" showing utility features with the desired layers (aerial photos, streets, topography, etc.).



The digital map files on a CD, can be viewed and printed with free software that IRWA will provide and install on a utility computer. The software allows you to view and click on a system feature (such as a valve, hydrant, meter pit, curb stop, manhole, lift station, treatment facility, etc.), and pull up attribute data about each...as well as several other capabilities such as printing, zooming, etc.

Also, IRWA has a working relationship, with DiamondMaps.com, to put your IRWA project maps, on their server, for mobile viewing with a smartphone or cellular capable tablet...including editing capability. This is at no extra charge to the system for the first year's subscription. Continuance of the Diamond Maps service after the first year, is at the utility's discretion.

Payment for GIS services, is a set charge per feature, with IRWA members receiving an automatic 30% discount, and even more of a reduction with bigger projects. More information is also posted on our website at: www.ilrwa.org, or you may call our office at 217-287-2115.