



Illinois Rural Water Association

Staff Members

Executive Director

Frank Dunmire (dunmire@ilrwa.org)

Deputy Director

Don Craig (craig@ilrwa.org)

Membership Services Assistant

Heather McLeod (ilrwahm@ilrwa.org)

Administrative/Program Assistant

Denise Burke (ilrwadb@ilrwa.org)

EPA Training Specialist

Wayne Nelson (ilrwawn@ilrwa.org)

Circuit Rider #1

Gale Moore (moore@ilrwa.org)

Circuit Rider #2

Patricia Gammill (gam@ilrwa.org)

Circuit Rider #3

Chuck Woodworth (ilrwacw@ilrwa.org)

Wastewater Technician #1

Bill Dowell (dowell@ilrwa.org)

Wastewater Technician #2

John Bell (ilrwajb@ilrwa.org)

USDA Source Water Protection Specialist

Mark Mitchell (mitchell@ilrwa.org)



Drought Response Task Force By: Frank Dunmire, Executive Director

During the past few weeks Illinois Rural Water Association field staff has been surveying a cross section of small systems throughout the state to gather information that was in turn used to create a report to the Governor's Drought Response Task Force. IEPA has been tracking surface water supplies very closely as the drought deepens but very little information was available on groundwater supplies and what affect the current drought conditions are having on their water supplies as well as the system's ability to keep up with customer demand. Well over 150 supplies were contacted and I thought I would share with you an edited version of our report to the task force.

few were experiencing difficulties in meeting the demands of its customers. Several of these systems were approaching or, in some cases, had reached their plant's capacity. They simply could not push any additional water into their distribution system without suffering a decline in water quality. With the inability to maintain tower levels those systems it became obvious that some sort of water conservation efforts needed to be put in place. In all of the cases where plant capacity had become an issue, conservation efforts – some voluntary – some mandatory – has improved the situation to a point where the reduced demands can now be provided long-term.

With the inability to maintain tower levels those systems it became obvious

Probably one of the worst facts that I had to report during the meeting was that of rural Illinoisans who, after conservation measures are put in place, were forced to find an alternate source for their water. As professionals in the water field you all know that I am referring to those bulk customers who live near your corporate boundaries but utilize a well for their domestic water needs. Often during the summer months you can see these people, with tanks in the back of their trucks, lining up at the local bulk water sales station. Unfortunately, this is usually one of the first things taken off line during water conservation measures and can cut those living in rural Illinois off from their nearest source for their domestic water. Many of the systems that were

It came as no surprise that every system contacted reported that water demands were up and depending on where you were in the state, the average increases were 30% - 50% above normal summertime usage with peak days being even higher. Even with these higher demands, almost all of the systems contacted were reporting their well levels are holding closer to normal than even they had anticipated. However, that being said, there was a handful of operators who reported their well levels were down slightly but not to a point where it had necessitated issuance of water conservation requests or orders.

Although the systems contacted had an adequate **supply** of water on hand a (continued on page 2)

Website: www.ilrwa.org

IRWA'S MISSION STATEMENT

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



visited recognized this fact and, either have or will, make exceptions allowing domestic water to be sold in a bulk fashion.

We recommended to other systems that a similar policy be adopted if it doesn't tax their ability to provide an adequate supply of water.

Our Circuit Riders have been extremely busy throughout the past few months dealing with one of the side effects of this extended drought – locating leaks. A majority of systems were reporting a huge jump in the number of main breaks for this time of year and are attributing this to the drying out and shifting of soils. Whether this is the

actual cause or whether it is due to the added stresses of pumping more water to their customers, it was very encouraging to see that the water professionals of small systems throughout the state were coping with the added pressures drought conditions have placed upon them. Job well done!



ELECTRICAL CONTROL PANEL TROUBLESHOOTING

By: John Bell, Wastewater Technician

I recently attended a training seminar in Springfield presented by the Illinois Rural Water Association, Training Division. The electrical control panel troubleshooting seminar was taught by Brian Gorniak associated with R.E. Pedrotti, Co., Inc. based out of Fenton, Missouri. Brian and Wayne Nelson, IRWA, were busy boys this week, in that they presented the troubleshooting seminar, in Champaign, Springfield and Caseyville over a three day period. I might add that they did a nice job and time seemed to just fly by during the presentation.

I wanted to attend this seminar to better understand control panels and how to troubleshoot them. I know what you're thinking, aren't I already suppose to know how to troubleshoot a panel board as part of my job duties? Yip! but learning is a full time, all the time thing. I always look forward to learning something new whenever I attend a training seminar.

Brian did a nice job of instructing and the hands-on experience with a panel board was very helpful. Brian started the seminar with a "be careful" what you touch and have

an updated, readable schematic of the electrical panel. Very sound advice and can't be repeated too often. Brian also stated that we all should get a "smart" phone, a "get on the wave of the future" suggestion and upgrade to a digital volt-meter. Slow down coach your going too fast!!! Please, back up to that part where you said get rid of the old needle type testing meter and get with the new program and get a digital voltmeter. I've had a AMPROBE needle amp, ohm, volt meter since my babies were in diapers. My babies are now in their forties. I might add I'm not crazy about smart phones either, but I might try one. The AMPROBE meter is an entirely different matter. The AMPROBE is a Made in the USA product, tough, reliable and a piece of equipment that I know and understand. With that said, I want to leap forward to something that is coming your way in electrical panel boards. That is the use of digital controllers. I've recently seen them in lift stations to control pumps and in treatment plants with aerated lagoons to control when aerators can be cycled off and on.

Back to the basics, have a reliable supplier of the digital controllers and have a good local electrician. A \$1000 to \$1500 piece of equipment has just been put in your electrical control panel that only factory reps can repair at considerable expense. Yes, you can trouble shoot the in and out of the digital controller, but if it's found to be defective, the normal solution is just get a new one because it is cheaper. If by chance, you are going to have digital controllers in your system make sure that you are given sufficient training to at least troubleshoot the equipment prior to calling the people who are going to help you find the problem. It will save you time, trouble and a considerable amount of money. Brian suggested the "smart phone" so that you could take a picture of the panel board controls and a picture of the schematic for the panel and troubleshoot your electrical panel over the phone.

Thinking things over, next time we have a phone upgrade at the office I believe I will get a smart phone.

BIG CHANGES COMING TO CONTRACTUAL WATER SYSTEM OPERATION

By: Wayne Nelson, IRWA Training Specialist



In this article, I want to cover the major changes in contractual operations of Illinois public water supplies by certified operators. Although these changes went into effect on August 1, 2012 **do not panic**. The IEPA is currently fine-tuning the process and will be notifying systems and operators that utilize the contractual format.

For years the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency has allowed public water supplies that do not employ a full-time certified operator to contract the services of an independent certified water operator. This allowed the system to be in compliance with the certified operator regulation.

In the past, water system officials and the independent certified operator merely had to complete and sign a form that was submitted to the IEPA. This form contained contact information of the two parties, the classification of the certified operator, if the operator covered the treatment plant, the distribution system, or both, the signatures of both parties (system and operator), and not much else.

Under the new regulation, a document will need to be submitted to the IEPA for approval within 30

days after an agreement is signed by the two parties. This document will need to include the duties and responsibilities of both the public water system and the contractual certified operator. This may sound familiar to the wastewater operators out there that do contractual operations of wastewater treatment plants in Illinois. Much of this information will reflect what has been in the contractual wastewater agreement for years.

The IEPA's Compliance Assurance Section (CAS) is currently working on the procedures that will need to be followed for contractual operations. While the CAS will be the entity that will handle the program, it is seeking the input of others, including IEPA regional offices that best know the actual type of operations at each plant. It is likely that the regional offices' determination of how many visits or on-site hours is needed for a particular plant will be a major factor in the CAS determination.

After final approval, the new procedures will be included in the Sample Collectors Handbook that can be found on the IEPA's website.

By requiring this information, the duties and responsibilities of each party (system and operator) will be spelled out to help eliminate the

accusations of "I'm not responsible for that; you are!"

If you are an operator currently signing off for water systems, or one that may choose to get into the contractual operations business, it is important to keep one thing in mind. Know how many visits the IEPA will expect you to make to a system before negotiating a cost for your services. If you don't have this information before you lock in your service fees, you may end up making a lot of trips for not enough money. I expect that the more complicated a system is the more on-site visits will be expected of you.

In a perfect world every public water supply would have its own full-time properly certified water operator. However, we know nothing's perfect. With the coming exodus of certified operators from our industry due to retirements and the lack of new operators taking their place, I anticipate that the need for contractual operators will rapidly increase in the coming years.

We are following the progress of this new regulation and hope to have an approved contract template on our website for download as soon as possible.

Welcome New Members

Voting

Camden-Littleton Water Commission
City of Gilman
Village of Pingree Grove
Village of Sparland
Village of Victoria
Millpoint Park

SOUP

Gregory Jeffers

Associate

Cloudpoint Geographics, Inc.
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Pax Water Technologies
Quality Chemical Co. Midwest



Illinois Rural Water Association
 3305 Kennedy Road
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CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

Tuesday, October 23rd

WATER		WASTEWATER	
9:30	Emor		How to Read a Pump Curve
11:00	Cleaning Water Mains with Ice Pigging		IEPA Update
1:00	IEPA Update		Wastewater Certification Review Update
2:30	Leak Detection		Activated Sludge Operation
3:30	New Source Water Protection Rules & Regs		Wastewater Basic Math

Wednesday, October 24th

9:00	Emergency Preparedness/Response for Utilities (both water & ww)	
11:00	Working with (not for) Your Engineer	Lagoon Operation
1:00	GIS & GPS Mapping/Line Locating	Solving Real Life WW Problems in Illinois Communities
2:00	Energy Savings for Public Utilities	Manhole Rehabilitation
3:15	Pressure Filter Care & Troubleshooting	Lagoon Sludge Judging

Agendas should be in your mailbox soon - or go to www.ilrwa.org to print one out or pay by credit card!