



I've worked over 26 years within the Rural Water Association. And, except for just over the first two years, I've worked predominantly in management and administrative programs. However, in that first couple of years, I worked as the lone Circuit Rider for the Illinois Rural Water Association in its early beginnings, and covered the entire state of Illinois in doing so. As such, it has been many years since I worked directly with the technical and operational side of water and/or wastewater problems in the field with system personnel.

Recently, on an early Saturday evening, I received a telephone call from the Superintendent of Water from a member system of IRWA. He informed me, that they were incurring a high water loss, but had not been able to locate the leak to that point. To complicate matters, the water was not surfacing, but getting away in a field tile, and flooding the sub-level of a homeowner. They were able to keep a large pump running to handle the water at that time. But, needless to say, they were needing assistance as soon as possible.

Since staff personnel had prior conflicting matters making them unable to go to the community and because I lived relatively close to the town, I just took it upon myself to 'handle' the situation on my own the best way I could. I stayed in contact with the Superintendent that evening, and let him know, that I would pick up some of our equipment on Sunday morning, from one of our Circuit Riders, and then get there to help them out as much as I possibly could.

Honestly, I was somewhat nervous about attempting to help out, in a situation like this, due to the length of time of not having done so. When I was the Circuit Rider so many years before, it was just part of the job, and there was no thinking twice about it or even having concerns. But, the bottom line is, then and now, my thought process is to help the system and their personnel, any way I could and can.

So, on Sunday, after a little 'crash course' from Circuit Rider, Chuck Woodworth on the 'workings' of the leak location equipment when I was picking it up from him... I made my way back up north to the system in question. I had let the City Superintendent know that morning, that I was going down to pick up the equipment, and I called him again, on my way there as I was about an hour away.

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I arrived at the location about an hour after lunch, and met with the city personnel, and looked over the area they had been digging in, trying to locate the main line leak. The 4 inch line ran back through an alley, which dead-ended before the next street, and then it turned into just an easement behind the homes in the area. They had uncovered the main in about 4 different trenches, with three of those being basically dry, and the fourth at the north end, having water coming into it from a field tile, that was evidently receiving the 'leak water' at some other source.

Through trial and error, and some additional help on the operation of the equipment, from Chuck via my cell phone... I was able to finally pickup the loudest leak sounds on the line, from a couple holes farther south of the one getting the water in it from the field tile. Between those two holes, was a service line connection, that had not been uncovered. Anyway, it was my assumption, that the leak was coming from the main, or the service line at the main... between those two trenches. So, they tediously began digging, trying to dodge an old gas line, a gas service line, a new gas line, the water service line in question, and of course to uncover the 4 inch main line. So, it was extremely difficult for them to make head way, as they had to put up with all these utilities in the same area.

I have to say, that I was more than concerned, as the closer they got, the ground was still dry....but then, there was a little water surfacing, then more, and more... and well, you know how it went from there. We found the leak, that had caused two days of headache for the crew. The line was cracked, just far away enough from the corporation of the service line onto the main, that the crew was able clean it off and clamp the main line, stopping the leak.

It brought back a lot of memories for me of dealing with those situations, not only as a Circuit Rider with other systems, but also from the years even prior to that, working in my home town. And too, it reiterates the respect that I have for all operators, superintendents, public works directors, utility crews, and on and on. They all....you all....do a great service to the system and public you serve. It's just too bad, that many of those people never see and appreciate the work you do, and what you go through. Just as easily as they expect water from the tap or the toilet to keep flushing..... sadly, most people take it all for granted.

IRWA'S MISSION STATEMENT

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



You know, like the Penny Candy Counter...Party Lines...And that Mosquito Truck that would drive through your neighborhood on a hot summer evening and leave a cloud of white smoke in its wake?

I know there's a lot of you out there that can relate...When I was a kid growing up we lived across the street from Halle's Market. By far the best Penny Candy Counter on the planet! We would spend hours looking for discarded soda bottles that we could take there and cash in for Yes...Candy! I can remember standing there staring through the glass counter looking at all those huge glass jars full of every kind of candy you could imagine. It took a really long time to decide how to spend that \$.05 or sometimes \$.10. It was a major decision for a kid to make. I wanted to make sure I got the most from my money. (Sometimes you could get 2 pieces for a penny). But the best day was when my mom would send my brother and me over to pay the bill for the month. You know like Sam Drucker's General Store...A lot of folks had a charge and paid at end of month. Well...that was the day Mrs. Halle would let us pick a Candy Bar from the... Yep!...The Five Cent Candy Counter! Yeah...The BIG BOYS... The CHOCOLATE BARS! Well we were in Heaven to say the least!

Ahhh...The Good Ole' Days!

Or... Ok...How bout the Party Lines? ...You pick up the phone to call your friends only to find someone else already talking on the line... And they don't even live in your house! No, it's some old lady... Talking to another old lady... About another old lady. Then your mom's all like...Don't be listening to other people's conversations...Yeah right!

But best of all...How bout that Mosquito Truck? ...And what did you do? Well we got on our bikes with the rest of the neighborhood kids and followed right behind, the whole time breathing in that big white cloud of smoke with a BIG SMILE on our face! Yea, all of us...Buddies, Friends and Pals...Together... Waiting anxiously for its arrival so our procession of bikes could follow till it left our boundaries. Man, we really thought we were somethin'! Makes me wonder now though...Where were our parents!

Ahhh...The Good Ole' Days!

Well, somehow we survived and evolved from all of that (Without any of us growing extra toes or mutant body parts). We grew up and have our own kids now...Who unlike us didn't have to cash in soda bottles for things they wanted...They certainly didn't have to share a phone line with anyone...No you

made sure they had their own phone line in their room, or now a cell phone. No...They will never know what it was like to get excited about a Penny piece of candy... Or to be patient enough to wait for someone else to get off the phone. But most of all...They will never know what it was like to feel the commradery with friends following that Mosquito Truck!

But even though some of you didn't experience MY Good Ole' Days...Remember... THESE are YOUR Good Ole' Days! Cherish 'Em and Remember 'Em...Someday you'll be telling the story. Hey, if I can remember mine after inhaling years of mosquito spray...I know you can do it!

So... I know you all are wondering why I'm rambling on about the Good Ole' Days? Well...It's a very quick changing world we live in. Let's face it...From my childhood till now look how we have progressed...Just the technology alone from my daughters childhood till now is unbelievable...And I can't even fathom what it will be like for my grandson's childhood (who's due this month). Yep, gonna be a Grandma!

Having said all that...Like most people in the world today I am concerned for our Natural Resources. We all wanted our kids to have more than we had growing up and we worked hard to give them things that weren't even invented yet when we were kids. But now what I really want...What we all want is to give them a clean, healthy environment to raise their kids in.

Yes...We Good Ole' Days folks made some mistakes and messed some stuff up, but we have learned and educated ourselves and now strive to make it better. Especially when it comes to our most precious resource...Water! So, now as water/wastewater operators we may have a heavy line to tow. But every day we spend at our profession we need to think of our kids and their kids and know that we are helping to provide safe, clean water for our families and future families to come. What better satisfaction can there be?

Because I want my kids to be able to tell their kids and their kids be able to tell their kids stories from...The Good Ole' Days!



The IRWA office will be closed on Friday, December 24 & Monday, December 27, 2010 for the Christmas holiday.

The IRWA Board & Staff wishes you a Happy Holiday Season & a Happy New Year!





Metering for Fun & Profit By: Bill Dowell, Wastewater Technician

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The basic concept of metering pumped well water has grown to be not only a great operations and maintenance aid, but a tremendous financial tool as well.

Metering allows for extremely precise, and therefore economical, chemical addition for water supplies. This precision provides for a level of protection to water supplies and the public of historical significance. By monitoring water production closely, energy savings can be maximized, and long-term maintenance planning correlated. The normal day-to-day meter readings allow operators to spot a leak in the system, and to determine changes in usage that may require operational changes or new equipment.

Many small wastewater systems still rely on water meter readings to determine influent flows. (Although this practice is rapidly changing to make wastewater facilities provide their own flow metering.) All the operational and maintenance benefits from metering are applicable to wastewater systems, too. Most small systems have the same operator for both water and wastewater, so the collected information is in one place. Larger systems with separate operators for those facilities should cross-communicate regularly to allow correlation of all

the collected flow information for basic O&M. This practice is important since both facilities rely on the water usage readings for their base revenues.

The financial monitoring aspect has become one of the most important to metered systems. There are still quite a number of systems that are not metered at all, and a significant number of systems that have only a few meters. Then there are a whole bunch that have allowed the meters they have to age beyond reasonable life-spans, or expire altogether. Most of these operations end up in a Catch-22 situation, where their rates have been kept so low they cannot provide enough revenue to repair the meters, or be able to afford installation of the needed additional units. Even most loan procedures will scrutinize the rate structures, and usually require significant and traumatizing changes to rates.

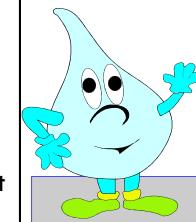
A simple, basic metering system allows fair and reasonable rates to be set for all users of the system. This rate structure should also provide the necessary revenues to sustain the system properly, in an efficient and business-like manner.



New IRWA Services! Video Inspection

Video inspection technology can help you identify and prioritize maintenance issues, while improving service and reducing emergency maintenance costs. IRWA is excited to announce our new video inspection service to our members. Fees for this service is \$250.00 plus an additional cost per foot of sewer inspected.

A contract must be signed in advance of the inspection. Upon completion, your system will be invoiced for the services and will also receive a detailed report including diagrams of the inspection features, and a DVD for your references. For more information, or to schedule an inspection of your system, please call our office at 217-287-2115 or visit our website: www.irwa.org.



Remember to check out our website, www.irwa.org, for the latest training sessions to register for!!

GPS/GIS Mapping Services

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



The printed maps can be large-scale wall maps, (44" wide), showing major features with the desired layers (aerial photos, streets, topography, etc.). The printed maps can also be generated into a map book format. The map book is a bound 18" by 24" book of high-detail maps printed at the best available scale.

The digital map file on a CD, can be viewed and printed with free software that IRWA will provide. The software allows you to click on a waterline with a leak and highlight which valves need to be closed to isolate the line. There are also tracing features to show the direction of water flow, and other useful features.

Payment for services is based on \$10 to \$15 per each point, based on type located. The cost of a map book is \$50 plus \$5 per page, and a wall map is billed at \$100 per map. More information is also posted on our website, or you may call our office.

Upcoming Training Sessions

Water

**1/6/2011— Water Works 101—
Virginia**

**1/12/2011—Workplace Safety—
Carterville**

2/24/2011—Workplace Safety—Springfield

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November 18, 2010

Mr Frank Dunmire
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Frank and the IRWA staff:

I want to take this opportunity to let you know what a great experience it has been for me and our student interns to work with IRWA over the last two years. I truly appreciate your efforts to assist us in getting SmallWaterSupply.org off the ground, as well as working together to provide training for the non-community operators of Illinois. The expertise of your training specialist, Wayne Nelson, has been instrumental in the success of the two non-community workshops, and his willingness to offer guidance on technical issues has been extremely helpful to me and my program.

By allowing my four University of Illinois interns to job-shadow your field staff this past summer, it gave them a completely different appreciation for the work they do here. There is no substitute for meeting with operators face-to-face, assisting communities with their issues, seeing what a water treatment system is, and how it runs. Your staff was great to work with and it was a positive experience for all.

I also want to thank you for your willingness to put us in touch with several of the small communities we have been able to work with this past year. They trust you and your staff, and that made it so much easier for us to develop a relationship and work with them.

I look forward to continuing our efforts to support small systems and in working with IRWA. Thanks again.

Sincerely,



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