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#### MISSION STATEMENT

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

#### On the Cover:

This photo was taken by Dave Speagle, IRWA Energy Efficiency Circuit Rider, in Taylorville, Illinois.

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#### by Roger Noe, IRWA Deputy Director

#### Past, Present, and Future

With my recent change in position at IRWA I wanted to reflect as a Circuit Rider in Southern Illinois. It has been almost eleven years since I started with IRWA. In that time, I have had the opportunity to meet many great people in the industry and made new friends. My goal as a Circuit Rider was to help in any way that I could from leak locating, certification reviews, instructing on sampling equipment, rate studies, attending board meetings, or any other technical assistance. Leak locating was one of the most satisfying tasks; it could be the most frustrating task. I never wanted to be wrong on a leak locate because I knew it would cause extra expenses from digging up roads or extra work for the employees. There were some towns in southern Illinois that for some reason I never had good luck in pinpointing leaks, but others I would be less than a foot off from the leak. I would always ask the operator to let me know how close I was to the leak if I would be off, and I always deliberated on what I could have done differently. In the eleven years of performing leak location, it was a learning experience every time. One of the best success stories on leak location was when I received a call from an operator that they were losing over 300,00 gallons of water and the leak was entering a storm drain. When I received the call, I was in the far western part of the state, and they were located on the east side of the state. Three hours later I showed up on-site and after surveying the area I was able to pinpoint the leak within one foot of the leak. Even though the workers did not believe me where I said the leak was, this time I was correct. I would tell everyone the better the system knows the location of water lines the better the leak location success is. To be honest sometimes a leak location is luck when pinpointing the leak.

Water certification reviews was one of thing that I really enjoyed as a Circuit Rider. To be able to sit down with a future operator to help them have success in passing an exam was extremely rewarding. I would always know who studied for the exam, because they would call me to tell me they passed the exam. The exam has gotten harder over the years, but at least they get the formula sheet now unlike I had when I took my exams.

I have been Deputy Director for two months now, and I am asked what my job duties now entail. The easy part is since we have such a great staff, I supervise the staff and oversee their programs. I travel all over the state, which does take me away from home quite often for extended time. The last two months I have attended several in person meetings and team meetings online. I am learning more of the business side of the

Association like the budget and other managerial duties. At the beginning of June, we were in Grand Rapids, Michigan for our annual in-service training and my meetings were in the Executive Director tract. The best session of the week was the



last one I had the opportunity to listen to other state Executive Directors on what they do with their state associations. I know for me to be successful I need to reach out to other people for guidance and direction. My position also consists of whatever Don Craig, our Executive Director, does not want to do he will have me do. I look forward to my new position with the Association.

The future for the Association could not be any better. When Frank retired from the Association, he had everything set up for success. The Board of Directors have set up future succession plans within the Association team to keep us strong and viable. We have a great staff that likes to help our members with any assistance. Our Circuit Riders will assist with leak location or any other technical assistance that is needed on the water system. The Wastewater Techs will help from sewer camera work, sludge surveys, or other technical assistance. Our Water and Wastewater Trainers conduct trainings throughout the state for training hours. We can also assist in energy assessments, rate studies, and help with source water plans. With the addition of a Compliance Specialist, we can assist in compliance resolution. Our Apprenticeship program continues to grow and offers training throughout the state. We are fortunate to have great office staff who keep everything running smoothly. We are thankful for our members who keep the Association strong.

We will continue to increase our social media presence to maintain our connections with members and to attract new prospects. Like us on Facebook to stay up to date with Association happenings. Contact us with your needs as we are here to help and assist.

#### NRWA In-Service Conference 2024

#### by Evan Jones, IRWA Director of Field Staff Programs (DFSP) & Circuit Rider #1

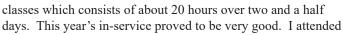
Well, it's that time of year again. Schools are out, sunburns are starting, and NRWA hosted their annual In-Service Training Conference. For those of you that don't know, every year, the National Rural Water Association hosts an In-Service training for all federally funded programs. That is several hundred rural water professional descending in one place from all 50 states and Puerto Rico, for three days of sessions and networking. That is a massive amount of knowledge and years of experience all in one place!

This year's conference was in Grand Rapids Michigan. We were able to attend training sessions on numerous topics. Some of these topics I'm sure many of you will see in this

coming year at our Northern Conference in Rockford on October 23 & 24, as well as the Annual Conference that takes place in February of 2025 in Effingham.

Effingham.

I was able to attend the Circuit
Rider track of



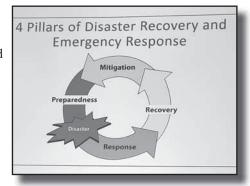
a class that I know everyone thinks is riveting for sure, that being Cybersecurity. It did surprise me; I found the instructor Cole Dutton who is a Cybersecurity Analyst for USEPA, very knowledgeable on the subject. He



was able to liven it up and give a very good class on security, and have us think outside the box. If you would have questions, I do have his contact information, so just let me know.

I was able to attend a few classes on the newly created

Disaster Relief Circuit Rider program. This position was created to assist relief effort for several rural disaster that have happened in the past. This program is going to have its own Circuit Riders



as well as trainings sessions all on its own. Stay tuned for more on this in our state.

Something that I was also able to see, was a presentation on HPDE pipe fusing. Now I'll be honest, we don't see this a lot in Illinois, but to watch these guys fuse pipe and explain how resilient this material is... just makes you say WOW! Those are just a few of the highlights of some of the classes I sat through.

Now, for some of the fun stuff from In-Service 2024! I had the opportunity to do two things that were great. Since





Grand Rapids is just a short drive at least for us Circuit Rider and Wastewater Techs that drive every day, I was able to take my son Carter and we did our little road trip North. We went out a day early and got to attend a Minor league baseball game played by the Whitecaps. We were able to set in the first row, right behind home plate which was cool. The one game we had tickets to, ended up being a double header due to a game getting rained out the day before. So, we got to watch 17 innings of baseball in no shade. I wont lie, it was warm! So just for a little fun, I decided to do a little research and a little bit of guessing on the water consumption that goes on at the LMCU ballpark.

So, I counted three men's bathrooms and three women's restrooms at this ball field. Two on first base line, 2 more on the third base line, and then two out in the outfield area. So, if the park is full that's 8,900 people. That's a bigger population than most systems I call on usually. Just think if everyone there just flushes one time! That's a lot of water, that doesn't even count workers or ball players and their team entourage. If you figure 1.28 to 1.6 gallons per flush, and everyone uses the facilities at least once, that comes out to an average of almost 13,000 gallons.

You could really figure that you can easily double that number, seeing how we were there for 17 innings. This doesn't even figure in the concession stands or water used on the field during the game. After being in this profession for as long as I have, baffles me how much water can be used in such a small geographical area in such a short time. I mean 26,000

continued on page 6



gallons is more than some small villages use in a day. This was just over several hours. That's a lot of water and wastewater flow. Think about the sewage this wastewater plant receives on game days, and how the plant must account for this flow only when the game is going on, and maybe even just during the 7th inning stretch! I for one tip my hat to the people operating the water and sewer facilities in these places and for the job well done.

Have a great summer and stay safe! **♦** 

#### New Beginning to a Bright Future

by Jason Cochran, IRWA Circuit Rider

I would like to introduce myself to everyone. My name is Jason Cochran, and I am from Edgewood, Illinois which is a small town about 15 miles south of Effingham on Interstate 57. I am the new Circuit Rider for the southern part of the state. I replaced Roger Noe, who has moved into the Deputy Director position for Illinois Rural Water Association.

I had worked for the Village of Edgewood for the past 15 years as their water and wastewater Operator. I also did everything else that was needed, from mowing, snow plowing, patching pot holes, and the list goes on as all you other operators and community system personnel know.

I was born and raised in Edgewood, and still reside there with my girlfriend and 3 kids. It's a great small town and a great place to live and raise your family. I had multiple discussions with my family about changing jobs, to make sure they were okay with it. So, with the encouragement from my family, I thought long and hard before applying for the Circuit Rider position. It was a big deal for me to take that step for a different job, since I had worked for so long with Edgewood, but in the end, it was the best decision for me.

So, when I finally found out that I had got the Circuit Rider position, I was very excited; and my family was just as enthused for me, and has been so supportive in the whole process. For a guy like me, this has been a big adjustment going from a small town position, to a job that I travel every day, meet so many new and different people, and also work with computers, do many phone calls, and email daily. Basically, stuff I didn't do on a regular basis at my old job.

At times it's been very intimidating, but it also pushes me to learn new things, and makes me excited to be at work again. It challenges me to strive to be better at my new position, and do the best job I can for IRWA. Most importantly, doing the best job possible for the operators that I get to help now on a daily basis. And, it makes me want to do the best I can, to help out

with any situation. That can range from water leak location, to compliance issues, and natural disasters that will come along the way. I have always enjoyed helping others figure out problems, and what it takes to fix those. I am gaining new knowledge every day, and I enjoy learning from the other operators so I



can use their insight and experience to help with the other system personnel to fix their issues, when they arise. All this will make me be a better Circuit Rider for the municipalities, rural water districts, and other rural water systems and operators that I will be working with.

Coming from a small town, I never thought I would have a job like this in my life time. Which brings me to my new co-workers within Illinois Rural Water Association... they are all very friendly, very easy to get along with, and have been so helpful in assisting me learn how to do this job. They make it very easy to want to be here with IRWA. I couldn't ask for a better organization to work for.

I am anxiously looking ahead to my "New Beginning" with all the great people I work with at IRWA, meeting all the new operators, maintenance personnel, and all other rural water system members that I will get to work with... and the bright future ahead of me. Thanks for your time, and I look forward to seeing you all in the near future!

## Another Rural Development Funding Success Story



The City of Sullivan is a small rural community of 4,413 (2020 census population), located in Moultrie County, in central Illinois. Their potable water system serves 2,367 users, which includes residential and commercial customers, both in town and out of town. They also sell finished water to nearby Moultrie County Rural Water District.

Their old system was made up of a ground level water storage tank, water treatment plant and an elevated water tower. Portions of the treatment unit was over 40 years old, and in dire need of major repair. The City had made minor upgrades to temporarily sustain the plant to keep it functional over the years. The old building that housed their clarification process, needed extensive repairs to remain operational. This process facility, being the only clarification unit at the plant, had no redundancy and could not produce quality water if it was not continually in service.

Due to the overall age and condition of their treatment facility, the City received a non-compliance advisory by the state's regulatory agency, the Illinois EPA. As such, the City could no longer delay needed improvements. With requested technical assistance guidance and recommendations from the Illinois Rural Water Association (IRWA) field staff, including RD funded Circuit Riders, and other entities, the community's administration and operational staff were encouraged to seek and acquire possible federal funding through USDA's Illinois Rural Development (RD) regional office.

RD was contacted in 2019 for an application, and the steps were taken to be able to assist with this project through their WEP Direct Loan Program. Ultimately, the City was able to secure a total of \$11,500,000 in direct loan funding at a low poverty rate, and term of 40 years. Also, the community was able to contribute some of their own funds to this project, to keep user rates affordable.

The City constructed a new water treatment plant on their existing site, while the old plant stayed in operation. This resulted in a seamless transition to the new facility. The building process occurred in 2022 and into 2023. The new plant, completed in 2023, is designed to treat 1.5 million gallons per day, leaving 400,000 gallons for peak demand, and also allow for growth in the system.

This project alleviated all health and sanitary concerns, met IEPA requirements, and ensured safe potable water for all users. Also, with the advent of an entirely new treatment facility, with designed growth potential for residential and commercial customers, the City of Sullivan has placed itself in a good

position to benefit those they serve for many years to come. The proud IRWA member community is thankful for the availability of Rural Development's loan and grant program, and being able to attain the financial assistance they so desperately needed to fund the project.

The City of Sullivan is very gratified with their



new facility, as they should be; and encourages it's showcase to its customers and other interested rural communities seeking possible RD funding to improve their existing infrastructure, or even planning for totally new systems.

This is one of the great examples in Illinois, and across the nation, of how the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development WEP program is able to serve rural communities, especially with the increased demand for needed infrastructure renovation and growth.





\*For more information about the importance and continued need for the funding capabilities of USDA Rural Development for small rural water, wastewater, and storm sewer systems... Don't hesitate to contact one of their regional offices across the state and/or contact one of IRWA's Circuit Riders and/or Wastewater Technicians. Also, take time to check out important information about their funding programs throughout Illinois and the nation, on our website under the "Rural Water Strong" link near the bottom of our homepage. We all need to continue to strongly support Rural Development and the work that they have done for decades....so that they can continue to provide funding for years to come!



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## What Does A FREE Energy Efficiency Audit Entail & Why Should I Get One?

## by Dave Speagle, IRWA Energy Efficiency Circuit Rider

Conducting an Energy Efficiency Audit of a water or wastewater facility is a critical step towards sustainable management. It allows for a comprehensive assessment of current energy use and practices, helping to identify inefficiencies and areas for improvement. Such audits can lead to significant cost savings, as energy typically represents one of the largest controllable expenses in these facilities. Moreover, reducing energy consumption not only lowers operating costs but also minimizes environmental impact by decreasing greenhouse gas emissions. Implementing energy efficiency measures can enhance the overall performance and extend the lifespan of the infrastructure, ensuring a reliable supply of clean water while promoting environmental stewardship.

#### What does a FREE audit consist of?

A walk around your facility which will entail the asking of questions and taking photos pertaining to the operation of the facility as well as questions pertaining to certain pieces of equipment. For example, how many HP is the motor, how long does it run on a cycle, how many cycles per day average? The time required is usually around an hour for each location.

#### • What is required from you?

An hour or two of your time, answering questions about your facility and at least one copy of your energy bill for each location.

#### • What do we include in the assessment?

We look at motors, pumps, blowers, electric panels, HVAC, building envelopes, process control, etc. And anything else you would like to be addressed; we will assess.

#### What does an assessment look like?

It will have specific recommendations for reducing consumption and will show projected cost versus savings and a time for payback listed alongside. Each recommendation will have a graph or similar display to show the projected cost savings.

#### Funding Sources.

In the assessment we include details concerning acquiring several funding sources, National Rural Water Association, IEPA State Revolving loan Fund, United States Dept. Agriculture Rural Development, Rural Water Financing Authority and financing/grants from your Energy providers. Currently there are numerous funding opportunities available and each has a benefit and each has criteria that can be detrimental to a facility. You must match

the funding source with the size and state of the facility.

### • Availability for Solar.

The laws concerning funding for solar is a changing landscape. As part of the Inflation reduction Act, elective pay or direct pay was added. For the first



time tax-exempt and governmental entities will for the first time be able to receive a payment equal to the full value of tax credits for building qualifying clean energy projects. With that being said there are still many options for solar from owning a system to signing a Power Purchase Agreement where the installer owns and operates the system and you receive partial savings.

#### • Understanding Energy Consumption

Water and wastewater treatment facilities are among the largest consumers of energy in municipal operations, often accounting for 30 to 40 percent of total energy usage. With such a substantial portion of energy dedicated to these facilities, it becomes imperative to understand and manage energy consumption effectively.

#### Financial Savings

One of the most compelling reasons to conduct an energy efficiency audit is the potential for cost savings. Energy typically represents one of the top three operational costs for water and wastewater services. By identifying and implementing energy-saving measures, facilities can reduce their operating costs significantly. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) suggests that incorporating energy efficiency practices can save 15 to 30 percent of energy costs, with payback periods ranging from a few months to a few years.

#### • Environmental Impact

The environmental implications of energy use in water and wastewater facilities are considerable. These facilities account for approximately 2 percent of energy use in the United States,

continued on page 17

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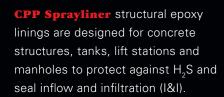
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## What Does A FREE Energy Efficiency Audit Entail & Why Should I Get One?

contributing over 45 million tons of greenhouse gases annually. An energy efficiency audit can help identify ways to reduce this carbon footprint, aligning with broader goals of sustainability and climate change mitigation.

#### Operational Efficiency and Reliability

Beyond financial and environmental benefits, energy efficiency audits can enhance the operational efficiency and reliability of water and wastewater facilities. By pinpointing areas where energy is wasted and suggesting improvements, audits can lead to more streamlined and effective operations. This can result in better service delivery and reduced risk of system failures or downtime.

#### • Regulatory Compliance and Public Image

Regulations regarding energy use and greenhouse gas emissions are becoming increasingly stringent. Conducting an energy efficiency audit can help ensure compliance with these regulations, avoiding potential fines and legal issues. Additionally, demonstrating a commitment to energy efficiency can improve the public image of the facility, showcasing a dedication to responsible environmental stewardship.

#### Conclusion

The reasons for conducting an energy efficiency audit of your water or wastewater facility are clear and multifaceted. From cost savings and environmental responsibility to operational excellence and regulatory compliance, the benefits are undeniable. As energy issues continue to be a pressing concern, taking proactive steps through energy audits is not just beneficial—it's essential for the sustainable management of water and wastewater services.

For more information on how to conduct an energy efficiency audit and the tools available, you can contact David Speagle at Illinois Rural Water Association (217-820-1560) for your free assessment.



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## What are you looking for? - The ABC's of ilrwa.org

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

**Apprenticeship**—Resources > Apprenticeship

Becoming a Certified Water or Wastewater Operator—Resources > Becoming a Certified Operator in Illinois

Boil Order Notice—Resources > Downloads

**CCR**—Services > e-CCR Hosting

Certification Overview from IRWA—Training > Certification

Certified Water Operator Contract—Resources > Downloads

**CEU Forms from webinars or conferences**—Training > CEU Form Archives

**CEU's from CD training**—Training > CD's

Compliance Assistance—Services > Compliance Assistance

Cross Connection (manual, survey & ordinance) - Resources > Cross Connection

Current hot topics and upcoming events - Home

Energy Efficiency Assessment—Services > Energy Efficiency

For Sale/Wanted—Services > For Sale/Wanted

Forming a new water district—Resources > Downloads

GPS/GIS—Services > GPS/GIS Mapping

Industry Organizations—Resources > Links

Job Board—Resources > Job Board

**Lead Information** —Resources > Lead Information

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

Legislative Information - (Who is my rep?, Bills that IRWA is following)—Resources > Legislative

Mutual Aid—Resources > Downloads

Nitrification Action Plan Information—Resources > NAP

**NFP Tax Forms** — Resources > Downloads

NRWA Fleet - Membership > Benefits—click on the NRWA logo

Operator Groups—Resources > Links

PFAS-Home

Rate Study— Services > Rate Study

**Red Flag Act**—Resources > Downloads

**Speaker Request Form for Conference** — Training > Conferences

*Tracer Wire Specs*—Resources > Downloads

ERP/Contingency Plans—Resources > Emergency Preparedness Planning

Video Inspection Services—Services > Video Inspection

Wastewater CEU information—Training > Wastewater > under table

Water Loss Handouts—Resources > Downloads









# ILLINOIS RURAL WATER ASSOCIA 21st Annual Golf Outing

The Illinois Rural Water Association (IRWA) is hosting its 21st Annual Golf Outing. This event is sponsored as a way to have a fun IRWA member activity.

The location for this event is **Edgewood Golf Club in Auburn, Illinois**. The date for this four person scramble is Friday, August 23, 2024. The fee is \$75.00 which includes lunch, a gift bag, green fees and golf cart. Various prizes will be given away as well. As always, IRWA is trying to make this a funfilled and affordable golf scramble. Your participation will ensure that this year's event will be every bit as successful as past outings. This event gives the IRWA members an opportunity to have fun and enjoy a day of golf while networking with fellow industry professionals.

You are encouraged to submit your registration forms prior to the **Friday**, **August 9**, **2024** deadline. Please make checks are payable to Illinois Rural Water Association. You can also go online and sign up and pay by credit card at www.ilrwa.org.

This will be a four-person scramble with a 10:00 a.m. shotgun start. Participants are encouraged to be at Edgewood Golf Club and check in at the registration table no later than 9:45 a.m. Lunch will be served as you make your way by the club house while playing golf.

It is IRWA's hope that you will be able to attend this event. Please feel free to contact **Denise Burke** at 1-217-287-2115 with any questions you may have. We look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,



Board of Directors & Staff

WHAT: 21st Annual IRWA Golf Outing

WHO: Water & Wastewater Operators, Board Members, Mayors, Vendors, Others

> WHEN: Friday, August 23, 2024

WHERE: Edgewood Golf Club - Auburn, IL

FEE: \$75.00 for operators (includes lunch, gift bag, green fees & golf cart)

### ILLINOIS RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION 21st ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

The 21st Annual Illinois Rural Water Association Golf Outing will be held on Friday, August 23, 2024 at Edgewood Golf Club located in Auburn, Illinois. Directions to the course are located on the last page. The golf format will be a shotgun start at 10:00 a.m. Please check in at the registration table no later than 9:45 a.m. Please fill out the registration form below and send it along with your check to the address listed below. You may also pay by credit card online at www.ilrwa.org. Registration must be received and paid by Friday, August 9, 2024 in order to reserve your spot. We are limited to 144 golfers for this event.

#### **Course Rules:**

- Dress must be in good taste keeping with golf tradition.
- Only non metal spikes are allowed.



## Edgewood Golf Club - 16497 Kennedy Road — AUBURN, ILLINOIS

217-438-3221

www.golfedgewood.com

RAC	iietr	ation	Form
1166	II S LI	auvi	

Friday, August 23, 2024 - 10:00 a.m. (Shotgun start—4 person scramble)

	Single Golfers will be teamed with a foursome.			
NAME(S):		<del>_</del>		
SYSTEM NAME:				
ADDRESS:				
PHONE:				
# OF GOLFERS Operators / City Officials /	Guests	@ \$75.00	=	
Associate Members / Vene (If Associate members are participate will be \$75.00).	e sponsoring the g			page), then the fee to
Total (includes lunch, gift bag,	green fees & golf c	= cart)		

Please make all checks payable to Illinois Rural Water Association. Return your completed registration and payment to: Illinois Rural Water Association—P.O. Box 49—Taylorville, Illinois 62568

You may also pay by credit card online at www.ilrwa.org.

If you have any questions, please contact **Denise** at Illinois Rural Water Association at 217-287-2115 or email her at: <a href="mailto:ilrwadb@ilrwa.org">ilrwadb@ilrwa.org</a>.

**Sponsorship Form** \$500.00 (limited to 3 sponsors) **Lunch Sponsorship Beverage Cart Sponsorship** \$500.00 (limited to 2 sponsors) Hole Sponsorship \$150.00 (limited to 18 sponsors) Hole in One Sponsorship (\$5,000 cash) \$275.00 (2 Airplane Tickets- any destination in \$300.00 continental United States) \$250.00 (Golf Clubs) \$250.00 (\$500.00 golf shop credit) Gift Bag & Prize Sponsorship -**SEE BELOW** 

<u>LUNCH SPONSORSHIP:</u> Lunch sponsors will have their sponsorship sign posted where lunch will be served reaching all of the golfers and two free registrations to participate in the golf outing.

**BEVERAGE CART SPONSORSHIP:** Beverage cart sponsors will have their sponsorship sign on the courtesy carts that will be on the golf course driving around with bottled water, beer and soda compliments of your company. They will also receive two free registrations to participate in the golf outing.

<u>HOLE SPONSORSHIP:</u> Hole sponsors will have their sponsorship sign **off the tee**. This is a great opportunity for visibility.

<u>HOLE IN ONE SPONSORSHIP:</u> Hole in one sponsors will have their sponsorship sign displayed off the tee and will be recognized prior to the shotgun start of the outing.

GIFT BAG OR PRIZE SPONSORSHIP: If your company wishes to provide an item for each gift bag (approximately 144) or would like to bring a door prize to donate, please contact Denise to discuss.

If your company would like to set up a game at one of the holes, etc, please contact Denise to discuss this option.

	Sponsorship Registration Form				
Company Name:				_	
Contact Name:				_	
Address:				_	
City:		State	Zip Code	_	
Sponsorship Level:		Amount Encl	osed:		

Please complete and return the Sponsorship registration form and payment to:

Illinois Rural Water Association—P.O. Box 49—Taylorville, IL 62568

If you plan on participating in the golf outing, please fill out the registration form on the previous page and return with this form with your payment. If you plan to attend but not golf in the outing, please let us know on this form.



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Finance Team History: 1,200+ loans for \$3.7 billion

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- BABAA, AIS, Davis-Bacon do not apply to this Program

Finance Team History: 300+ loans for \$500 million

#### About Us

The Rural Water Financing Agency is a public agency designed to allow borrowers to join together for the purposes of financing governmental projects.

The Agency can lend to governmental entity borrowers in all 50 states.

Visit <u>www.ruralwaterfinance.com</u> for contact information and to fill out your application.

#### **Dedicated Team of Professionals**



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ILLINOIS RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION





#### Rural Water's Impact on Agriculture

#### by Kaleb Kahl, IRWA Board Member – District 5

Folks driving into Bunker Hill from the South often have the same question. What are all those white buildings on the South end of town, and why do they look crooked? I've been asked that more than a few times. I've even had people guess, a factory, greenhouse, even an airport! The real answer is Jarden Dairy farm. Jarden Farms was started in the 1940's by Richard and Lillian Jarden. As years went by, both the farm and the family grew. The farm is now operated by many of the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Richard and Lillian, as well as several employees from the surrounding communities. Jarden Dairy farm or Jarden's as the locals call it, is the first tap on the City of Bunker Hill water system. The City's Ground storage tank and booster station are in the corner of one of the farm's fields. Not only are they the first, but they are by far the largest water customer for the City of Bunker Hill, using just over 20% of all water pumped.

Though a large amount of water is purchased, it gets used in multiple ways and in some cases, multiple times. Potable water is plumbed to all parts of the farm for everyday human use, watering of livestock, cleaning buildings, washing equipment, and loading sprayers for crop spraying. One unique use for water is the cooling of the milk produced by the dairy cows. Milk that is fresh from the cow is 102 degrees. A short trip through piping cools it to about 98 degrees. It then goes through a plate cooler that is fed by city water. This drops the milk temp to about 75-80 degrees. Then the milk continues through another plate cooler of glycol water which drops it the rest of the way to a storage temperature of 35 degrees.



The city water used in the plate cooler then goes to a 17,000-gallon storage tank that the water is then pumped from as needed. That water is used to water the cows, wash the barn, and feed the sprinkler system in the summer. All that water either turns into milk or ends up in the manure system. The

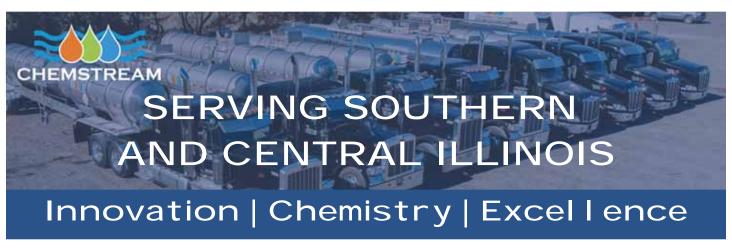


manure system settles solids out, removes undigested organic matter by use of a drum screen, and produces "clean" water for the cleaning of the barns.

Remember how I mentioned the barns looking crooked? They are. The barns slope from one end to the other for the flushing system to work. The high end of the barn has hinged manhole covers that are forced open at scheduled times by a flood of water used to flush the floor of the barn clean. All this then returns to the manure system and the cycle starts again. What's the final use for the water from the manure system? Excess wastewater is used to irrigate fields providing both water and nutrients. Depending on the nutrient levels of the water, 10,000 to 20,000 gallons per acre are applied to optimize growing forage to be fed to the dairy cows.

The farm averages about 2.5 million gallons of water per month. Keep in mind this is only on the farm with the milk cows on it. Jarden's also retain all their calves each year to either grow into future milk cows or feed them out for market ready animals. These animals are at separate locations, some of which are also fed city water by the Village of Dorchester and Fosterburg Water District.

This is one example of how Rural Water serves agriculture and helps to produce the food we all need. Water is essential in all aspects and enterprises of Agriculture. If you are reading this and you ate today, thank a farmer.



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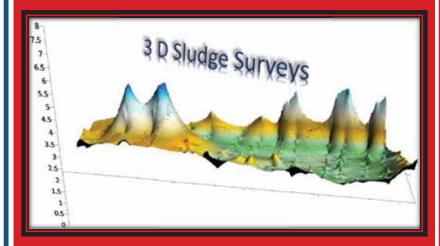
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