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Volume XXIII — Summer 2026



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reed@ilrwa.org • 217-561-8376

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RODNEY PHILLIPS

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lemrise@ilrwa.org • 217-820-0222

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mcmillan@ilrwa.org • 217-370-6485

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tozier@ilrwa.org • 585-314-3759

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mccready@ilrwa.org • 217-820-4754

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dakin@ilrwa.org • 217-820-5544

RICHMOND ADAMS

Source Water Protection Specialist

adams@ilrwa.org • 217-820-2037

DESTINY KISTLER

Apprenticeship Coordinator

kistler@ilrwa.org • 217-820-2220

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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 Heather McLeod, IRWA
Chief Membership Officer / Event Coordinator, in
Jerseyville, Illinois.**

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Water and Wastewater is Public Trust

by Roger Noe,
IRWA Deputy Director

Across the state of Illinois and United States, municipalities and utility districts are facing increasing financial pressures. Aging infrastructure, regulatory requirements, labor shortages, and rising operational costs have prompted some local governments to consider selling their water and wastewater systems to private companies. These proposals are often accompanied by promises of immediate cash payments, reduced administrative burdens, and professional management. While such offers may appear attractive in the short term, communities should carefully consider what they stand to lose. Water and wastewater systems are not ordinary assets. They are essential public services that directly impact public health, economic development, environmental protection, and quality of life. Once sold, these systems are often gone forever, taking with them local control and public accountability. Private water companies frequently approach municipalities with offers that include large upfront payments. For the elected officials facing budget constraints or infrastructure needs, these proposals can seem like a financial lifeline. However, the one-time infusion of cash often masks a long-term tradeoff. Community leaders may spend the proceeds within a few years, but the water system itself is a permanent asset that can generate value and provide critical services for generations. Selling a utility is like selling a family farm to pay current bills, it may solve today's problem while creating larger challenges for tomorrow.

Local Control Matters

Publicly owned utilities are governed by elected officials or locally appointed boards that are accountable to residents. Citizens can attend meetings, review budgets, voice concerns, and influence decisions through the democratic process. When ownership shifts to a private company, decision making authorities often move outside the community. Corporate executives and shareholders, **not local residents** become the primary stakeholders. While private operators comply with regulations and contractual obligations, their ultimate responsibility is to generate returns for investors. **Communities should ask a simple question: Who should control one of the most important resources in our community, the people who live here or a corporation headquartered elsewhere?**

One of the most common concerns and it will happen following privatization is that the customers will be paying higher rates. Public utilities operate on a cost-recovery basis. Revenue collected from customers is reinvested into operations,

maintenance, and capital improvements. Private companies, however, must cover the same costs while also producing profits for investors. This additional financial requirement will place upward on rates over time. Residents will ultimately pay more for the same service while having no influence over future decisions.



Water is unique among public services. Every home, business, school, hospital, and industry depends on a reliable supply of clean water and effective wastewater treatment. Water cannot be replaced by an alternative provider. Residents cannot simply switch companies if they are dissatisfied. Water systems are natural monopolies, making public oversight especially important. Water and wastewater systems often represent decades of public investment. Generations of residents have financed treatment plants, pipelines, pumping stations, storage facilities, and distribution networks through rates, grants, and public borrowing. Selling these assets transfers the benefits of those investments from the public to private ownership. Future generations may inherit higher costs and reduced local control over infrastructure that previous generations work hard to build. Rather than viewing water and wastewater systems as assets to liquidate, communities should recognize them as strategic resources that support future growth and economic development. Communities should retain the ability to determine what level of service, investments, and environmental protection best serves local needs.

- Alternative to selling water and wastewater systems:
- Low-interest public financing programs
- State and Federal infrastructure grants
- Revenue bonds
- Public – public partnerships
- Regional cooperation agreements
- Operational efficiency initiatives
- Asset management programs
- Strategic capital improvement planning

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These approaches can strengthen utility operations while preserving public ownership a local accountability. The decision to sell a water or wastewater system is the most consequential choice local leaders can make. Once ownership changes hands, communities will permanently lose control of an essential resource. Water is not merely infrastructure. It is the foundation of public health, economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and community independence. Municipalities and districts should approach privatization proposals with caution and recognize that the true value of public water systems extends far beyond their sale price. The question local leaders must answer is not how much a private company is willing to pay today. The real question is whether future generations will be better served by keeping these essential assets in public hands. The answer should be yes.

Furthermore, this decision should be up to the public, not politically driven or communities forced into the decision to sale their systems. Illinois Rural Water Association (IRWA) understands that regionalization of systems may be necessary for the systems to operate, but we do not want to see systems sell to private entities. I have said this to many municipality and district boards, “you have to run your system like a business.” As a consumer I would rather pay higher rates for locally operated systems than higher rates for a private company. IRWA will assist and fight for systems to be controlled locally. Unfortunately, many local leaders will not listen to their qualified operators in this situation. I am more than willing to have a discussion with any leaders to help keep their system controlled locally. 💧

Rural Water’s Impact on Agriculture: Grazing Operations

*by Kaleb Kahl,
IRWA Board Member*

Where’s the beef? In the pasture with the other livestock thanks to the availability of Rural Water. Grazing operations rely on the availability of water to support their livestock. In many cases water is one of the biggest challenges when it comes to grazing a particular property. Rural Water enables farmers and ranchers to utilize acreage for grazing practices across the state and in this article, we will visit with some of these producers and learn a little more about their operations, and I will start with a little look at our farm.

Kahl Farm, Bunker Hill

Along with my wife Lindsey, and my brother Kenny, we run Beef cattle and Sheep on about 150 acres of pasture and crop land in Bunker Hill. About 10 years ago we utilized a USDA program to help cost share the installation of automatic waterers across our pastures. These waterers are fed by the City of Bunker Hill water system. With these waterers located across the property we can rotate the animals across the farm and move them to new fresh pastures whenever it is necessary. We have a well we can use in the winter when animals are up close to the farm, but the rest of the year the cattle are moved across the property. These are freeze-proof waterers so if we have pump issues or a freeze up,

we can let the animals have access to the waterers when needed.

Bauman Family Farms, Vienna

Grant and Casey Bauman live just outside Vienna and utilize rural water systems on two of

their grazing properties. The Bauman’s raise cattle, sheep, and hogs and market these animals as breeding stock as well as through on and off farm meat sales. One property is fed by the City of Vienna and the other is fed by Lake of Egypt Water District. Access to rural water makes life so much easier as Grant explains, “Pressurized water is a great tool to make sure livestock have water year-round. Ponds and creeks can be used and are when they are available but pressurized water really comes through when other water sources freeze up tight.” Grant



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Rural Water's Impact on Agriculture: Grazing Operations

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also states that access to rural water makes his life easier, "Some properties could be grazed without rural water, but it would be more difficult. Having the ability to pipe water where it is needed makes things much simpler."

Burnt Hill Cattle Co., Dahlgren

Logan and Jessa Karcher own and operate Burnt Hill Cattle Co. near the town of Dahlgren and are customers of Hamilton County Water District. Logan also manages Faraway Farms near Bluford. Faraway Farms has taps on both Northeast Mt. Vernon Water Co. and Village of Bluford water. Livestock from these operations are marketed as breeding stock, feeder animals, and as direct meat sales. Whereas some grazers use purchased water as a backup, Logans says it is the main source for them, "While we do have other sources of water on our property, we use rural water 85-90% of the time. We feel the benefits are worth the cost." There is obviously a cost associated with using rural water for livestock. There is the cost for meter installation and the ongoing costs of the water being billed but other options have their own costs. "Installing gravity fed lines from ponds or making ponds accessible to livestock via fencing and rock ramps all cost money" Logan states, and after these expenses you are still at the mercy of mother nature to supply ample rain to support the livestock. Plus, the cost of construction of a pond if one does not exist.

J N' J Cattle Company, Worden

Joe and Jessica Wieseman own and operate J N' J Cattle Company raising Beef Cattle and Sheep near Worden and are customers of Fosterburg Water District. J N' J markets their farm raised animals through their direct meat sales. While the farm has wells which provide water to much of the farm for most of the year, rural water is also available when times get tough. "In drought times when the well cannot support the livestock needs, we use rural water as a backup." Cattle are moved across the property, and watering tanks are filled with a transport tank on a



trailer. This trailer tank can be filled from either water source." Joe also uses rural water at times when grazing crop residue or planted forage crops on crop land. "When cattle are grazing on fields adjacent to parts of the farm with rural water, they can be watered with a tank fed by rural water. This lets us utilize more row crop ground acres for grazing."

While discussing this topic with all these producers there have been some common thoughts. Water bills can get into your pocket, but they prevent other issues. Ponds and creeks are not typically a source for constant clean water. Producers have had issues in the past with their natural water sources causing health issues with their herd. Ponds can provide drinking water and cooling for the animals but the animal traffic in the pond only worsens the water quality.

As producers who all raise animals which we consume ourselves, plus sell directly to friends and customers, we want the best options for animal health. When raising livestock, as with most things, there are multiple ways it can be done. This article allowed me to share a little look into grazing livestock and how rural water helps. Our farms have hosted tours for other people who are looking into options for grazing. If you are interested in learning more about our operations, please look us up, we would all be happy to share.

And, if you ate today, thank a farmer. 💧

Circuit Rider: An Introduction to a new Staff Member

***by Tyler Weber,
IRWA Circuit Rider***

As a Circuit Rider, my job description is pretty simple: travel the state and build meaningful connections with operators. As the newest Circuit Rider on the Illinois Rural Water Association (IRWA) team, I'm getting plenty of practice mastering the art of the handshake with new faces and swapping stories with a few old friends.

During a recent site visit, someone caught me completely off guard with a curveball question; "Where did you come from? And don't just say Newton."

It made me pause for a second, right before I realized, "Hey, that's my introductory article". So, who exactly is Tyler Weber, and how did he end up here?

My story starts in a tiny farm town tucked into the far northwest corner of Richland County. My family runs a generational farm, which means we specialize in raising cash crops, livestock,

a diverse garden, and children. After graduating Newton Community High School, I earned an Associate's Degree in Science from Olney Central College, then headed to Southern Illinois University

Edwardsville to complete a Bachelor's in Biology.

Degree in hand, I gained some brief retail experience at Menards before landing a gig with Monsanto in Muscatine, Iowa. It didn't take long to realize that spending my existence in a windowless facility was definitely not my calling. Turns out, I actually like seeing the sun, and I needed a career that let me work outdoors.

In late 2013, I officially dove into the water industry, starting at the absolute ground level as a meter reader for the City of Newton Water Department. I caught the water bug, put my head down, and earned my Class C license in 2014, followed by my Class B in 2015. By 2018, I was entrusted with the role of Superintendent—a leadership role I held until I happily joined the IRWA team this past April.

These days, you can find me living on the outskirts of Newton. I'm currently attempting to carry on those old family farming traditions, mostly while being kept on my toes by Miranda, my wife and our son, Caden.

If I haven't run into you out on the road yet, consider this my official warning—I'll see you at your system soon! 💧



End of an Era...A Grateful Farewell!

by Evan Jones,
Circuit Rider/Director of Field
Staff Programs

It truly is the end of an era! By the end of July 2026, Illinois Rural Water Association is going to lose some valued employees and true friends to rural water, due to retirement... even if it is a sort of “second retirement” for some. These individuals have shown us what real commitment to an industry and organization is truly about. The number of people these gentlemen have assisted and helped over their careers is insurmountable. These men have great experience and expertise in the industry, in all aspects of responsibilities...from operations to regulations. There isn't much these four haven't done.

David McMillan, worked 33 years with Illinois EPA, and then came on board with Illinois Rural Water Association shortly thereafter, working for the last 7 years in that new role. Dave has been a true friend and colleague in the industry since his time at the agency implementing regulations, and testifying to such guidelines...just to assure community systems had safe drinking water. Dave responded to the call for help after Katrina, and spent time there with assistance. He has held numerous training sessions, and provided technical assistance for IRWA, all over the state. Most would say, Dave was somewhat stern...but very fair while at the

agency. He will surely be missed by all in the water field. Thank you Dave for your years in the industry, making sure we all had safe clean drinking water. You will be missed, so please enjoy your retirement! I'm sure I'll have a few projects for you!



Steve Vance, spent 28 years at the agency and then has worked the last 4 years with Illinois Rural Water Association...in such endeavors as conducting a sanitary survey with IEPA, or providing training and technical assistance for the Association. Steve's humor and some would say quick wit, while others might say not so quick...has always been at his forefront. Steve has done lots for the industry in his separate roles; and he will surely be missed, as well. Enjoy your retirement traveling and spending time with your family, Steve. I appreciate your friendship and your contribution to the industry. Thanks, from your “little buddy”.

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End of an Era...A Grateful Farewell!

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Jeff McCready spent most of his career at the Village of Woodhull. Jeff worked 26 years as their water and wastewater operator, as well as helping neighboring systems when they needed a contract operator. While at Woodhull, Jeff also served on the IRWA board before joining the staff 9 years ago. It is hard to guess how many systems and operators Jeff has assisted over his entire career. Thank you for the comradery and wisdom you have brought to my profession. Even when we didn't always see eye to eye, we still worked well together. And, a big thanks to you for your work in the industry. Enjoy the golf, Sandy and the grandkids. Thanks for everything Jeffery Dale!



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ILLINOIS RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION
23rd ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

The 23rd Annual Illinois Rural Water Association Golf Outing will be held on Friday, August 21, 2026 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 9:30 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 7, 2026 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.



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Single Golfers will be teamed with a foursome.

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OF GOLFERS

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(If Associate members are sponsoring the golf outing (please see next page), then the fee to participate will be \$75.00).

Total _____ = _____

(includes lunch, gift bag, green fees & golf 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**

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

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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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37 booth spaces will be available beginning in late July until sold out.

Attendee registration will open in mid-August. There will be 10.75 credit hours available. We are currently planning the agenda for the conference. While there will be no wastewater only sessions at this conference, some of these credits will be for dual credit.

Watch your mailboxes and our social media posts for announcements of the registration openings.



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**(Winners are limited to winning
one time per year)**

Full Circle in the Apprenticeship Program

by *Destiny Kistler,*
IRWA Apprenticeship Coordinator

In April 2022, Jeff Tumati welcomed Chad Kistler into the apprenticeship program. Over the next two years, Jeff and Chad built a strong friendship as they worked together throughout the program. They often met for lunch at a local restaurant in Tilton whenever Jeff was in the area and sometimes Chad's daughter, Destiny, would join them. If Jeff was in the area and it was on a Tuesday, Chad and Jeff would get the Meatloaf special. Before long, Jeff's wife had affectionately nicknamed Chad "The Meatloaf Man."

As the apprenticeship came to an end, Chad achieved his Class 2 Wastewater Operator certification and became the first wastewater apprentice to complete IRWA's apprenticeship program. Although he had finished the program, Chad and Jeff stayed in touch, regularly discussing work, life, and the day-to-day challenges of operating a wastewater treatment plant. Less than a year later, Chad found himself giving back by mentoring a new apprentice in the very same program that had helped launch his career.

A few months after that, during one of their conversations, Chad mentioned that his daughter, Destiny, was preparing to leave her teaching career. Jeff, who was planning to retire before the end of the year, immediately recognized her potential. He encouraged Chad to have Destiny apply for the Apprenticeship Coordinator position, believing she would be an excellent fit.

Destiny applied, interviewed, and was offered the position. She officially began her role on June 1st, with Jeff working alongside her to ensure a smooth transition into her new responsibilities as



Apprenticeship Coordinator.

When Jeff accepted Chad into the apprenticeship program in 2022, he never imagined that just a few years later the apprentice would become a trusted friend—and that friend's daughter would one day succeed him as the Apprenticeship Coordinator for the IRWA's apprenticeship program.

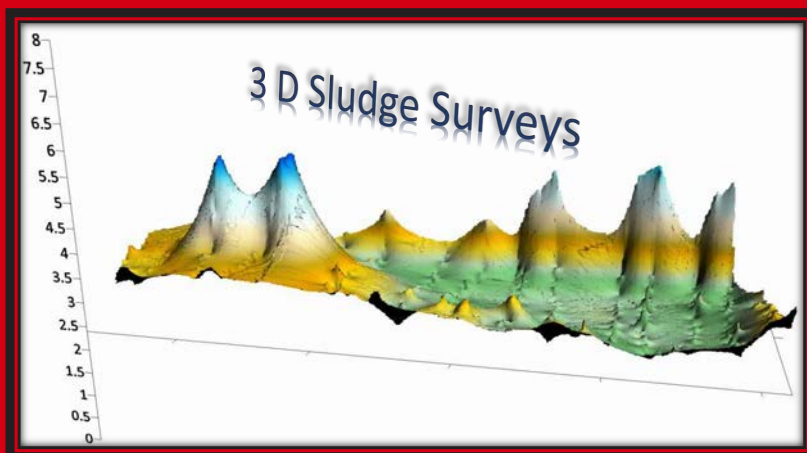
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PFAS Cost Recovery Program

Phase 2

In partnership with the National Rural Water Association and Napoli Shkolnik PLLC, we are sharing this call to action with you concerning the Phase 2 Settlement Deadline for the PFAS Cost Recovery Program.

Is this supported by our Association?

Yes, this program was initiated in 2018 when National Rural Water Association engaged the law firm of Napoli Law to file litigation on behalf of its members and all public water supplies. We encourage your system to register into the settlement to lessen the financial burden on your system and rate payers.

Act Now to Access Funding

Gain access to \$15.4 Billion Dollar Settlement for PFAS Detections and Contamination. Systems must register to receive this funding. There is zero cost to register into the program.

Who is Eligible?

Any public water system that has tested and found detections of ANY PFAS chemical, at any level, is eligible to receive an award from this settlement based on level of detection and maximum daily flows. This includes all 29 PFAS compounds included in the UCMR5 monitoring rule.

Deadlines and Urgency

3M/DuPont Settlements

- Phase 1 of the 3M/Dupont settlement has ended.
- Phase 2 of the settlement is now open for systems that tested after June 22, 2023. The deadline to register in the program to be eligible for the settlement is **July 12, 2026**.

Additional Settlements

- Twelve other companies are in the settlement process with no set deadlines yet. Napoli Law will ensure your system is included in all applicable settlements.



Contingent Cost

There is no cost to register into the cost recovery program. Your utility will have no costs unless Napoli Law recovers funds for your system.



How much will my utility receive?

The amount will depend on the level of detection, the compound detected, and maximum daily flows.



Unrestricted Funds

There are no strings attached to the funding your system receives; the decision to utilize funds is at the discretion of the utility. There are no approvals or reporting requirements.



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VIDEO INSPECTION SERVICE WITH



Video inspection technology for wastewater and storm sewer systems can help you identify and prioritize maintenance issues, while improving service and reducing emergency maintenance costs.

IRWA incorporates both a “Set Minimum Maintenance Fee” and a “Maintenance Fee per Foot Charge”. The sole purpose of each is to operate, and maintain the IRWA Sewer Video Inspection Van and equipment used.

IRWA is glad to provide this Sewer Video Inspection Service to our members, and non-members (at a higher fee). As of March 1, 2024, the IRWA voting members “set minimum maintenance fee” for this service is \$500.00 for projects that do not exceed 500 feet (Non-IRWA voting member utilities pay \$750).

Larger projects requiring more time and inspection coverage, will be based on the set minimum maintenance fee up to 500 feet. Then a maintenance per foot charge of \$1.00, will be assessed for footage above the minimum allowance. IRWA member utilities receive an automatic discount on the “per foot” charge, as well as the reduced set minimum maintenance fee, for each of these types of projects. Non-IRWA member systems will pay the increased set minimum maintenance fee of \$750, plus a charge of \$1.50 per foot, above the initial 500 feet allowed in the minimum.

(Note: Due to staffing varied work demands and logistics, IRWA will not undertake video inspection jobs exceeding 5,000 feet maximum per project.)

A proposal (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 graphic diagrams of the inspection features, and a correlating digital video file for visual reference.

For more information, or to schedule an inspection of your system, email Roger Noe at: noe@ilrwa.org, or you can call him at 217-820-1564.



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

The digital map files, can be accessed through a working relationship that IRWA has with DiamondMaps.com, to put your IRWA project maps, on their server, for mobile viewing with a smartphone or cellular capable tablet, as well as access on your computer over the internet; and will give users full editing capability. The program allows you to view, print, and click on system features (such as a valve, hydrant, meter pit, curb stop, manhole, lift station, treatment facility, etc.) on various base maps such as aerial and road view; and pull up attribute data about each, which you can edit and add data to.

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. Also, the system will receive a digital copy of all initial GPS and GIS processed mapping files; and IRWA will keep a copy as well.

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.

E-mail Don Craig at: craig@ilrwa.org, or call him at 217-561-1061 for additional information.

Water Loss, Not From Main Breaks

by **Chuck Woodworth,**
IRWA Circuit Rider

Several years ago, I had a small water system contact me about the unaccountable water loss, which was at 65%. After a “search listening” for the potential leak at each fire hydrant, and almost every meter set, no leak sounds were heard, anywhere. Without finding any leakage noises, this brought on more questions.

This system had been purchasing finished drinking water from a nearby town for several years. What they had been purchasing was close to the same amount for each month. Looking back at each month for 4 years, it was clear that no “leak” was ongoing. Next thing that was looked at, was the amount billed. This had been trending in a downward fashion for several months. I asked, “How old are your meters?” The utility personnel responded, “Somewhere between 30 to 35 years, I would guess.” I asked another question, “Have you changed any of the meters?” “Yes, when they stop reading any usage”, was the reply.

I suggested that they replace all 135 meters within the system. I gave them the names to various different meter companies in order to get bids. About a year later, I got another call from this same system telling me that they had purchased new meters with a drive by readers, had hired a contractor to install all the new meters, and could read all meters, with bills printed and ready for the mail, in about 2.5 hours with just two people instead of three people taking four days. AND, the water loss had gone from 65%, down to 8%.

In another example, a system kept calling me about a big water loss, and each time I went there, I could not find a leak in the distribution system, anywhere. I asked about the meters, when had they been replaced or updated. They told me, that they had replaced all the meters and installed a new billing program a few months before they started noticing the unaccountable loss increase. It was found, that the decimal in the multiplier was in the wrong location on several accounts...almost giving them free water. This error was located during a comprehensive rate study. Over the many years that I have been a Circuit Rider, I have found several actual leaks; but I wish I would have kept track of what towns. And also, I found several non-leaking water loss issues.

About 9 years ago, a water district clerk contacted me about a possible leak. I went there, and being a “water district”, I decided to go to each meter to listen. After a couple of hours, I found a

section of pipe where the meter should have been. The meter had been removed and replaced with the pipe. I took a picture of it, along with a picture of the house address. I continued on looking for the leak, and I did find a leak after more searching.

As such, I went back to the office to report in with the clerk. I told her first about the leak, where it was, and how I had marked it. I then told her about the pipe and how the homeowners were getting totally free water. When she asked for and saw the address, she had a blank look on her face. She then said, “That is the house where our meter reader lives, but he is turning in a reading for his meter each month.” I told her that I bet it is nowhere near what he is actually using. Then I advised her to ask him to take a picture of the meter and bring it to you, so you can match the serial number on his account. I don’t recall how that one turned out.

Most meter manufactures would agree with me, that meters should be replaced somewhere between 15 to 20 years. If they are older than 20 years, most likely they are not reading the total amount going through it, especially the low-flow amounts.

Other non-leaking water loss situations that I have found over the years, was a hotel owner had made his own tap on the fire line coming into the hotel. The water operator was out checking the inspection tags on backflow preventors and noticed this tap on the fire line. He contacted me for a second opinion. The line off the tap ran through the wall into the next room. It was found that the line was connected to the hotel side of the metered line that feed the washing machines. I felt, in my opinion, that it could be considered a cross connection, and most importantly an act of theft. After a visit from the city’s plumbing inspector, the line was removed, and a fine was issued to the owner.



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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/Wastewater Operator—Resources > Becoming a Certified Operator in Illinois

Boil Order Notice—Resources > Downloads

CCR—Services > CCR's

Certification Overview from IRWA—Training > Certification

Certified Water/Wastewater Operator Contract—Resources > Downloads

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

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

ERP/Contingency Plans—Resources > Emergency Preparedness Planning

For Sale/Wanted—Resources > Classifieds (to submit something—e-mail Heather: ilrwahm@ilrwa.org)

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 > Nitrification Act

NFP Tax Forms — Resources > Downloads

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

Operator Groups—Resources > Links

PFAS—Home > Hot Topics

Rate Study— Services > Rate Study

Red Flag Act—Resources > Downloads

Speaker Request Form for Conference —Training > Conferences

Tracer Wire Specs—Resources > Downloads

Video Inspection Services—Services > Video Inspection

Water Loss Handouts—Resources > Downloads



End of an Era...A Grateful Farewell!

continued from page 9

Jeff Tumati has spent much of his career in the industry at the Village of Stonington, as the Public Works Director. Jeff spent 35 years with that utility. He too served on the IRWA board, before joining the staff...where he has bestowed his years of knowledge upon us. Jeff has been an IRWA employee for the last 6 years. Jeff started our new apprenticeship program within Illinois, and has grown it to what it is today. He has now handed the reigns to a new staff person, Destiny Kistler...to keep it growing. Jeff has also assisted many communities throughout his career, including responding to the call of help after Hurricane Katrina. Jeff has been a very valuable asset to the industry and IRWA, from Stonington to Washington D.C., in making sure Rural Water had what they needed to provide safe clean drinking water and safe effluents into our waterways. We thank you for your time and commitment to the industry. You will be missed Papa Smurf!

I have truly learned a lot from these four individuals. Each one of them has brought something completely different and individual to the industry. Sometimes it's the quiet one, and sometimes it is the one that will speak up and ask the hard questions. It takes many different roles to make the industry work. Again, gentlemen



we thank you for the commitment to the water and wastewater industry, and what it stands for. You will be missed. Enjoy your retirement and the next chapter of your lives...you have earned it.💧

Water Loss, Not From Main Breaks

continued from page 24

Another instance occurred, when an operator told me that he had made arrangements with a customer to replace his meter (in the basement), and found a refrigerator supply line installed on the service line on the city side of the meter. While the curb stop was shut off, the operator moved the refrigerator line to the customer's side of the meter.

And, during a leak locate, I have found the set screw on the reader has been removed and the reader was just sitting on the meter. My leak locator bumped into the reader and it just fell off the meter; no set screw could be found.

Finally, this one was the most impressive one yet. I had just stopped in at an undisclosed town, and the operator was telling me about the meter pit leaking water out the pit lid. We went over there and turned the service off, and a leak sound was still heard...indicating that the leak was on the city side of the yoke. A couple of days later, the operator called to tell me what they had

found. A lawn irrigation system was installed, hopefully by the previous home owner, and not by a plumber or the lawn irrigation company. The current owner claimed to know nothing about it. The irrigation system was connected directly to the service line before the meter yoke. The irrigation feed line was then run up near the house where the irrigation system controller was located. A leak developed inside the meter pit apparently from the poorly installed fitting, they had no idea how long this was installed.

These are some of the ways that water loss can take place and be found. As a wise man once said, it's the little things that get "ya". Be careful out there. 💧

**NEW
WEEK!**

Crowne Plaza - Springfield IL September 9-11, 2026

IRWA will again be assisting us with this event. Please join us in Springfield this Fall for the 94th Annual Conference.

- 71 Exhibitors (spots still available!) Exhibitor registration will be open until August 14, 2026.
- Attendee registration is open
- IPWSOA Fall golf outing will be at the Rail Golf Course on Tuesday, September 8th
- 14.5 Water Credit Hours Available/6.25 Wastewater Credit Hours Available.
- IEPA Drinking Water Exams will be given Thursday September 10th. You MUST register ahead of time and bring a letter of Admission
- For more information and registration visit the IRWA homepage under the upcoming events.

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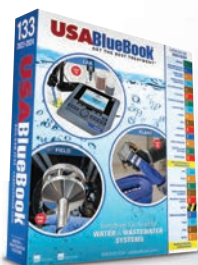
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