



# WATER SERVICES DIVISION



## WS Monthly Update

September 2021

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### **Water Services gets a new Interim Director**

On his first day on job (September 6) Andy Bertelsen was notified that a report came in regarding water bubbling out of the Basha's (Humphreys) parking lot. A pipe, estimated at over 100 years old, in the water main had broken. The Water Distribution crew went into action, demonstrating efficient, well-managed operations, and completing the repair work ahead of schedule. Water main breaks like this underscore the ongoing need for infrastructure maintenance and replacement. Thanks to Patrick O'Connor (Water Distribution Supervisor), Mark Richardson (Operations Section Director) and Distribution crew for a job well done!



### **Recruitments**

Erin is leading the effort for recruitment of the Engineering Section Director. This position will have oversight of the Stormwater section, as well as all capital projects in all four Enterprise funds. Interviews are scheduled for the end of the month.

### **Safety & Security**

There have been a lot of phishing emails received lately. Be aware and think before you open an odd email.

Covid measures are still in force in public buildings.

### **Accolades & Acknowledgements**

***Water – Wastewater – Reclaimed Water – Stormwater***

**Administration Offices**

2323 N. Walgreens St., Suite 1

Flagstaff, Arizona 86004

Water Services received top award in Visioning and Branding for our 2025 Strategic Plan from 3CMA, a national City-County Communications and Marketing Association during their annual conference on September 9 in St. Louis. The Strategic Plan was also given a second Excellence Award (3<sup>rd</sup> Place) under the Publications category. Staff was not able to attend, due to pandemic restrictions.



**City Council.** Staff had two presentations for the Council Retreat on September 30 for infrastructure needs in Wastewater and Stormwater.

**Water Commission** meeting was cancelled for September.

### **Section Updates** (alpha-betically)

#### **Admin – Budget & Communications**

- Communications and Lake Mary Water Treatment staff conducted tours and presentations on September 10 for 135 students in NAU’s Environmental Sustainability Class. Topics were stormwater and Frances Short Pond, water resources and Lake Mary Reservoir and the water treatment process.
- We said a fond farewell to two Communications powerhouses this month, Joelle Sawaya and Mary Samar, moving on to new phases in their careers.



#### **Customer Service/ Meter Services**

- Customer Service staff have been referring customers to utility assistance programs made available during the pandemic. To date, over \$70,000 of assistance has been extended on behalf of customers through our efforts, with disconnects slowing down to only 5 in September.
- We have a new meter technician! Welcome Cody McMaster on September 6, as you complete training with other meter techs.

#### **Engineering**

- Engineering/SCADA/Production staff are finishing up coordination to bring on McAllister Well to the production inventory.

- Design efforts for the 8” reclaim water line between Buffalo Tank and Ellen St. continue. Engineers are working with Stormwater on culvert crossings at Spruce Wash.
- Ft Tuthill Well #2 pump testing is underway. Flow information collected during testing will be incorporated into design for the pumphouse. Cleanup work in associated drainages at Ft. Tuthill Park has been completed.
- The Cameo Mobile Home Park, off Empire Ave., will be the next project in the Waterline Meter/Vault replacement program. Preliminary scoping and design efforts are the first step, coordinating with the Distribution crews.
- A feasibility study workshop on Red Gap Ranch was held at the Rio Atrium on September 23, with consultant reviewing pipeline options and looking for input from staff.



## Operations

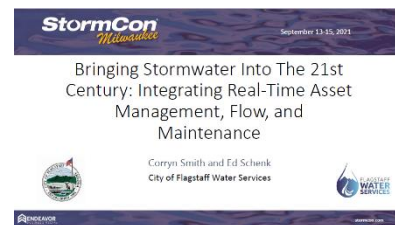
- Mark Richardson represented Water Services at the regional AWWA conference in Prescott. We learned supply chain issues are a national problem, with heaviest impact in chlorine and chlorine related products. Weather, fire and transportation bottlenecks are causing shortages nationwide.
- Cyber-security. There is a growing awareness of the need for vigilance to protect facilities. Examine emails before opening, which can let viruses in. Smaller facilities (nationally) have been targeted, with viruses able to breach into water systems operations.

## Regulatory Compliance

- Staff has submitted the annual Air Quality registration with ADEQ.
- Regulatory Compliance welcomes a new staff member to the team! Julia Connors will be working as a technician at the Wildcat Hill Water Reclamation Lab. We will go back out for another recruitment of the Lab Supervisor position.
- The annual Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) report will be submitted by the end of September. It's a detailed document of all MS4 compliance efforts in the city.
- Permits for Significant Industrial users are being updated, based on recent changes in local limits.

## SCADA Information Systems

- SCADA is working with IT security to review new policies in change control management and incident control management. The first draft is out for review, with an SOP to follow.
- Operations Technology assessment identified a gap in operations of how components communicate to one another. We are moving to create protocols that standardize assets and communications methods. We're slowly moving away from our IT legacy network to protect system integrity. It's a slow, manual process.
- There was a public meeting on the radio tower at Public Works. This is an important component to get the network off the mountain, especially for winter maintenance.
- Corryn Smith (Info Systems) and Ed Schenk (Stormwater) gave two presentations at StormCom conference, on asset management and the work order system. Our programs are the *poster child* in asset management.



## Stormwater

- CD is managing Spruce Wash channel – Paradise improvements project, as well as the Cedar at Dortha channel improvements.
- Doug Slover is managing development reviews for Water Services, until the Plan Reviewer position is filled.
- Our Watershed Specialist had addressed nearly 60 drainage complaints weekly, responding to inquiries through the County flood database.
- The FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) audit is completed. This helps to keep residents' insurance rates low.
- A community meeting on 9/15 on solutions to flooding issues along Paradise. Gary Miller is stepping up to mitigate. Stormwater staff will be responding to citizen petition questions submitted by the Museum Flood Coalition.
- The Stormwater mini-dozer is up and running, for culvert cleaning!



## Wastewater Collections

- All combo tucks are up and running; crews provided three new 4" sewer taps.

- Crews rehabbed 11 manholes, with vendor, Advanced Enviro Cure, using their cure-in-place technology. *See before/after photos at right.*



### Water Distribution



- The waterline break at Basha's ran a full pipe length, over 17 feet deep. Eagle Mountain repaired, backfilled and paved by Wednesday at 4:30, with the break reported at 9:30 am on Tuesday, Sept 7. Needed safety equipment from Phoenix delayed the work. The complex did not have water during that time.
- Additional waterline breaks: two 6" pipes on Canyon Terrace and a 2" break on Whipple in Coconino Estates, where Phase 2 construction is underway.

### Water Production

- A power outage on labor-day took out the Lake Mary wellfield and surface water production.
- After power was restored at the LMWTP, the town pump building was having issues with pumps acting erratically. Lee Williams, Operations Supervisor, stepped up and worked a graveyard shift that night to monitor the pumps and make-up lost surface water production until a level sensor (causing the pump issue) was replaced the following day.
- Tank inspections and cleanings are underway, with the contractor conducting diving operations in the 1.2 million gallon clear well at the Lake Mary Water Treatment Plant, the 240,000 gallon North Reservoir clear well, a 60,000 gallon Woody Mtn Forebay and the 156,000 gallon Kinlani storage tank.
- Continental Well Upgrades Project has been delayed, waiting on supply-chain issues from variable frequency drive and pump/motor manufacturers.
- Water Production is working with SCADA Team on alarms and fail safes to bring McAllister Well online.
- Crews and contractors getting ready for aquifer testing Tuthill #2 well in mid-October.
- Lake Mary Treatment Plant sedimentation basins are hopefully going back out for bid, replacing infrastructure that has been in continuous use since the 1960's and is in dire need of attention.

## Water Reclamation Plants

- Water Reclamation Plants are on Covid schedule. Flagstaff Festival of Science tours at the WRP's were cancelled this year, as a health safety measure.
- Jim Huchel, Reclamation Plant Manager, has been putting together the Wastewater Story, for a presentation to City Council on infrastructure needs.
- A plant safety project at Rio de Flag WRP is in progress, installing fall protection on all four Clarifiers and in the Bar Screen Room.
- Periodic dredging operations of the sludge ponds are a bit behind schedule, due to wet weather, but we are working on catching up.

## Water Resources and Conservation

- Water Resource Manager, Erin Young, is still providing Engineer's approval for construction projects. "We don't want to miss anything."
- Water Resources will work on aquifer testing and Ft. Tuthill #2 well testing.
- Water Conservation staff provided a complete audit of all water-using fixtures at the Cedar campus of Flagstaff Junior Academy. They will be eligible to receive funds to improve their fixture efficiency as part of the School Retrofit program.
- Enforcement is winding down at the end of September.
- Conservation Aide, Emily Melhorn, was promoted to Conservation Specialist.
- Conservation conducted a Rainwater Harvesting workshop on 9/12.
- Staff presented to a class at Sinagua High for Flagstaff Festival of Science and provided promotional materials at the Science in the Park event.
- The annual 4<sup>th</sup> grade Water Festival for was September 28<sup>th</sup> at Foxglenn Park. Approximately 20 local classes attended.



Respectfully submitted,

*Lisa Deem*

Management Analyst  
Flagstaff Water Services