



YEAR IN REVIEW 2009

Mission and vision have new significance

OUR 2009-2013 STRATEGIC PLAN identifies organizational priorities and values—such as customer satisfaction, accountability, and environmental awareness—for upcoming projects, and establishes a new mission and vision that will elevate the District to a regional leader in environmental work and economic innovation. **Here are some of 2009's biggest accomplishments as they relate to the six goals in our Strategic Plan.**

NEORS D strategic goals for 2009-2013

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GOAL NO. 1: Strive to understand, inform, and meet our customers' water quality expectations

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GOAL NO. 2: Expand services and service area based upon economic drivers and opportunities to enhance water quality and watershed protection

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GOAL NO. 3: Sustain our strong financial position, balancing our commitment to water quality and customer expectations

4

GOAL NO. 4: Cost effectively execute and manage our Capital Improvement Program

5

GOAL NO. 5: Align, build upon, and sustain our key assets, resources, people, and technology to meet our vision

6

GOAL NO. 6: Become an organization whose culture is progressive and embraces environmental sustainability

1

Once gray | now green: a celebration of progress

June 22, 2009

2

June marked the 40th anniversary of the 1969 Cuyahoga River fire, the event most closely linked with the creation of the District. This year, we partnered with local agencies who helped in the revitalization effort to coordinate a celebration at Settlers Landing in the Flats. Hundreds joined us, including political figures, musicians, and residents. The event was small, but the reason for celebrating and the accomplishments of our employees since 1972 is what made the day special.

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2

New program aims to promote small businesses, stimulate local economy

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Small Business Enterprise (SBE) program | June 2009

In June, the District began advertising contracts with new goals for small-business involvement. The SBE program is an effort to expand economic opportunities for small and disadvantaged businesses in Northeast Ohio. From advertising, to vendor education, to data and technology, the implementation has been extensive, and as of December, more than 520 businesses were certified as official SBEs with the District.

1 Stormwater Management Program: meetings, rate structure, billing methods, title draft

6 While our Stormwater Management Program planning has been underway for some time, 2009 was a big year: District reps met with officials from most of our 61 member communities, we identified and garnered support for our legal authority to undertake this new service, established a fee and billing structure, drafted the official Title V language, and held several public meetings to present the plan to our customers. And even more work was done to assess potential staffing needs, budget impacts, and technology requirements.

5 Westerly celebrates safety

In June, employees at the Westerly Wastewater Treatment Center proudly celebrated 1,500 days without a lost-time accident—*more than four whole years* of safety awareness and success.

1 Clean-water message delivered to employees

5 Goals / Plan / Strategy (GPS) employee meetings

Our goal: Present the highlights of our new 2009-2013 Strategic Plan to all employees. And make it memorable. And keep it fun. Based on the feedback we received, mission accomplished! More than 91% of our 650+ employees participated in half-day workshops, walking away with a better understanding of our mission and goals. More than 95% said the presentation was creative, memorable, and useful.

1 Capital Improvement Plan redesigned, online

4 June 4, 2009

The District has regularly prepared a detailed outline of upcoming capital construction projects), but the 2009 Capital Improvement Plan was released in PDF form online, with more information for our vendors. The intent was to help our SBE companies better prepare for future opportunities. (Over the CIP's five-year plan, we anticipate awarding more than \$1 billion in projects.) This CIP also included a more detailed reporting mechanism to better track contracts, change orders, and subcontractor involvement.

6 Southerly's "green" incinerator project

Southerly Renewable Energy Facility: Contract 28

This new incineration process will eliminate four outdated multiple-hearth incinerators with three new "fluidized bed" incinerators that use less resources, burn cleaner and more efficiently, and can help produce electricity by using their exhaust to power turbine generators. The entire project will not be completed for another three years, but a lot of work was designed, awarded, or completed in 2009, notably:

- Recently completed Contract 28G involved the purchase and staging of "H-piles," huge steel columns needed for the building's foundation. In total, 1,900 units (each 40 feet long) weighing 2,774 tons were delivered to Southerly.
- Contract 28F included demolition of unused digester tanks. Their concrete and more than 470 tons of structural steel were recycled.

2009-2013 STRATEGIC GOALS:

1 Understand, inform, and meet our customers' expectations

2 Expand services and opportunities to enhance and protect water quality

3 Sustain our strong financial position

4 Effectively execute and manage our Capital Improvement Program

5 Align, build upon, and sustain assets, resources, people, and technology

6 Become a progressive organization that embraces environmental sustainability

5

Big HR changes in '09

In September, HR Director Douglas Dykes told *People & Progress* about some of the biggest projects planned or underway: the creation of a Performance Management System (to debut in 2010), completing a classification study for all employees, combining site service awards to a centralized location for employees and their families, and creating a Wellness Committee and pilot Wellness Program.

3

District manages finances responsibly

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The year ended on a positive note: the District ended 2009 under the projected rate study by approximately \$5 million. Total revenues for 2009 are projected to end slightly above the 2009 adopted budget, as operating expenses are expected to be below budget by approximately \$2 million. As required by the reserve policy adopted by the Board, the District maintained its cash reserves and was in compliance with all bond covenants.

1

Cleveland Water and District collaborate to present new bill

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September 2009

Several District departments spent months working with the Cleveland Division of Water on its new billing system. The resulting bill design combines Sewer District, Water, and local charges, with a system that can add new accounts and charges for stormwater fees when that program begins in 2010.

5

OED's Diversity & Inclusion survey

Diversity and Inclusion are key words in our Strategic Plan, and this spring, 73% of employees completed a survey that helped establish a baseline for future diversity-related efforts (one of the highest response rates our consultant had ever seen). Results were released in the fall, and a three-year D&I strategic plan was developed.

1

Positive plant performance (again!)

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Plants earn '08 honors, with one NPDES excursion through Oct. '09

As of October, our treatment plants had experienced only one National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit violation in 2009. They also received NACWA awards for exceptional 2008 performance.

1

International exhibit comes to Cleveland; Sewer District plays a part

6

Great Lakes Science Center | November 14, 2009-April 10, 2010

An exhibit of global proportions, *Water: H₂O=Life* has been touring the world, stopping at partner museums to show people how our water is used and why it is so important. It opened at the Great Lakes Science Center in November, thanks in part to the support and educational contributions of the District. Visit the exhibit (open through April 2010) and you'll see more than 500 square feet of displays the District designed to communicate our local story.

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1**Rare find in Cuyahoga***Presence of freshwater mussels show river's progress***6**

In August during a routine Cuyahoga River sample collection, one WQIS investigator withdrew from a river an historic find: a living freshwater mussel which, according to the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, was the first such discovery in more than 50 years, and a sign of the river's ongoing rebirth and improving water quality.

5**Employee Recognition Program debuts***Fall 2009*

OED worked with a cross-functional team to develop an employee recognition program. Some initiatives, including an Employee of the Month program (which debuted in November), are the beginning of creative efforts designed to thank employees for jobs well done. In early 2010, a permanent work team will be formed to continue developing ideas to ensure that all employees feel valued for their contributions.

1**Survey says: A clean lake is customers' top concern****6***Spring 2009*

We partnered with Baldwin-Wallace College to conduct a survey to find out what our customers know about the District and how they feel about water-related issues. More than 500 customers were interviewed, and 71% said that cleanliness of the lake was a primary concern. More than half of all respondents said they'd be willing to pay more for additional work to improve our water resources.

3**Stimulus funds promote infrastructure projects****4**

The District applied for and received \$10 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funds. The Train Avenue Relief Sewer (\$1.045 million), Mill Creek Interceptor Main Branch (\$3.955 million), and Southerly Lift Station (also an environmentally friendly project, \$5 million) will be constructed using a combination of these dollars and low-interest loans.

2**Accreditation and certification****6***Lab certificates bring recognition, potential source of revenue*

In addition to having its certification by the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference renewed for 2010, Analytical Services became certified by the Ohio EPA to analyze drinking water for metals and Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) chemistry. This certification will enable us to provide laboratory services to outside clients, which could become a revenue stream for the District.

6**Maintenance Services goes solar**

SSMO installed four solar-powered flow monitors at points along the Southwest and Big Creek interceptors, Jennings Pump Station, and the Mill Creek Tunnel. They also installed two windmills to supplement the solar panels. Small examples of energy conservation, these projects demonstrate our commitment to environmental sustainability.

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