

PIPELINE

From the organization assuring clean water for a Greater Cleveland
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STORMWATER

Are we approaching our next frontier?

With the deluge of recent flooding in northeast Ohio, stormwater and the District's possible role in its management have become hot news topics.

Stormwater management, however, is definitely not a new topic to us.

Addressing stormwater issues has always been the District's intention, so our focus — which since 1972 has been sewage treatment and related construction and improvements — may be expanding.

Though it is encouraging that the media and several of our member communities have

identified the District as best equipped to manage stormwater, there are a lot of issues to consider before we take the plunge:

- **Why is stormwater being portrayed as a regional issue?**

Streams, drainage ditches, and flooding problems associated with stormwater frequently cross community boundaries. And when they do, a regional agency can help to unify efforts and minimize conflicts while allowing stakeholders to address community-specific concerns.

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Story by Kim Jones and John Gonzalez

MAKING CONNECTIONS

On June 28, Cleveland City Council officials took their questions underground when they met with the District to discuss the agency's current business, including combined sewer overflows (CSOs).

The District provided officials with a tour of both the Mill Creek Tunnel and Westerly Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The tour, which began at the Mill Creek Tunnel 300 feet



underground, was coordinated and accompanied by Environmental Education Specialist Linda Mayer-Mack and Director of Communications & Community Relations Constance

Haqq. Much of the discussion surrounded CSOs and the size and extensive engineering of the tunnel itself.

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New Board officers will face stormwater, combined sewer discussions in '06-'07

Former Mayors Sulik, Boldt, businesswoman Kelly elected new Board officers

Ronald Sulik, a 12-year Trustee, assumed the role of Board President July 20 after the Board's annual election of officers.

Darnell Brown had served as President since last July.

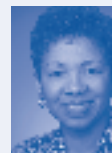
Sheila Kelly was also elected Vice President and Gerald Boldt Secretary. All elected officers serve through July of 2007.

Some of the issues expected to be brought to the Sewer District Board of Trustees in 2006-2007 include stormwater management discussions, combined sewer overflow control projects, and our Leadership Sustainability Program.

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Ronald Sulik



Sheila Kelly



Gerald Boldt

In This Issue

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Dominak awarded for contributions to biosolids handbook

Residuals and Air Emissions Manager **Robert Dominak** was honored with the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) President's Award for his work on *Biosolids Management: Options, Opportunities and Challenges: A NACWA Handbook*.

This publication will serve as a tool for public agency managers to record the knowledge that currently exists in the field.

Dominak thanks his fellow District staff members who helped with data compilation.

The manual will be published in August.

Ohio award honors Linn for industry efforts

Environmental Specialist **Keith Linn** has been honored with the Ohio Water Environment Association (OWEA)'s F.H. Waring Award, presented to individuals demonstrating significant contributions to the field of industrial waste treatment by the organization and administration of an industrial program.

Hatvani welcomed into honorary state society

Supervising Chemist **Eva Hatvani** was inducted into the 5S Society at the June 2006 OWEA Annual Conference held in Columbus, Ohio.

By Jamie Marie Danelishen

Watershed education at the heart of new District, Metroparks partnership

The Sewer District and the Cleveland Metroparks will negotiate a long-term partnership agreement to support construction, staff and programming for a unique watershed-education center.

The District's Board approved the partnership negotiation on July 20 for the District and Metroparks to continue work on the development of the West Creek Watershed Stewardship Center.

"The center will be a significant regional resource for watershed restoration, regeneration, and conservation activities," said Environmental Education Specialist Linda Mayer-Mack presenting to the

Group will explore design, programming for Stewardship Center at West Creek Reservation in Parma

Board July 20.

Mayer-Mack has represented the District in conversations with the Metroparks since 2004 when discussions regarding potential facility and program collaboration — to be centered on the West Creek Reservation in Parma — began.

"A Stewardship Center is intended to be a place to cultivate and build capacity for a holistic approach to improve the functions of our urban watersheds," Mayer-Mack explained.

"Exhibits will be designed

to educate and inspire action, [it will be] a place to learn how to become active stewards of our watersheds; where visitors can come to discover the watersheds in their own backyard."

The Cleveland Metroparks, the District and the West Creek Preservation Committee are currently assessing preliminary center design concepts, but the structure will be inspired by the joint programs these groups hope to advance. These concepts will focus information on ecological, educational, and experiential programs regarding watersheds and watershed restoration.

The West Creek Reservation site has a significant District connection: Through the Water Resources and Restoration Sponsorship Program, the District is implementing a \$3.5 million West Creek Restoration Plan.

A center at this location also supports future Sewer District investments in storm-water management and related community education.



"[A stewardship center should] educate and inspire action, [be] a place to learn how to become active stewards of our watersheds."

BOARD *continued from page 1*

The former Mayor of Newburgh Heights, Sulik is serving his second term as Trustee; he was first appointed in 1985 and served until 1994 before being reappointed by the Suburban Council of Governments in 2002.

Sheila Kelly, Vice President of Villa Realty Company since 1982, was appointed by the Mayor of Cleveland in 1994.

Gerald Boldt is formerly Mayor of Parma, and has served the District since his appointment by the County Commissioners in 1997.

Other current Board members are Brown; Anthony Liberatore, Jr.; Mayor Thomas Longo and Mayor Gary Starr.

For more information on our current Board members, visit **About Us** at www.neorsd.org.

Tours connect City Council with complexity of Sewer District's clean-water business

COUNCIL *continued from page 1*

Ward 1 Councilwoman Nina Turner said after the tour, "It was very enlightening. There is nothing like being down there." The Mill Creek Tunnel is located in Turner's ward.

After the tunnel tour, the group was taken to Westerly where the District's Executive Director Erwin Odeal and City Council Public Utilities Committee Chair Councilman Matthew Zone headed a discussion aimed at educating the public about District business, including factors behind future increases in usage rates primarily caused by CSO and stormwater.

After the conversation, Westerly management provided the group with a tour of the treatment plant.

Considering the positive response from Council leaders after both the tunnel and plant tours, it was apparent that the tours' educational components were a success. Plans for another District-related Council tour are already underway and may be conducted later this fall.

Story by Jamie Marie Danelishen

Is stormwater our next frontier? Strategy to be considered

STORMWATER *continued from page 1*

• Is the District the appropriate agency to assume stormwater management?

On July 20, the Sewer District hired engineering firm AMEC to help develop a stormwater management strategy and implementation plan. AMEC has helped more than 200 agencies across the country develop successful stormwater management plans, and will help us over the next year to determine potential responsibilities and options in this area.

• What role is the District authorized to play?

Our 1972 court order charged us with the responsibility to provide wastewater treatment, construct and maintain interceptor sewers, provide combined sewer overflow control for member communities, and study regional stormwater issues. Entering the stormwater arena would require modifications to that court order to allow us authority to address regional flooding issues and charge customers accordingly.

• Will communities commit to a regional approach?

The costs for customers and communities will be a central concern. Cleveland print and television media in July largely supported a regional stormwater management approach, and the Sewer District will continue its community relations efforts to get this message to our customers.

Once a plan is developed, the Sewer District will approach its member communities to determine not only if it is feasible, but if it is a service for which customers are willing to pay.

Executive Director Erwin Odeal explained, "The last thing we want to do is to mislead people into thinking that if we take over stormwater, all flooding will come to an end. Certainly flooding resulting from inadequate intercommunity streams, channels and culverts would be reduced, but there are a lot of other factors involved over which we have no control. We want to act on factors we *can* control and anticipate or be proactive with those we *cannot* control."

Once a plan is developed, we will approach member communities to determine if it is feasible, and if it is a service for which customers are willing to pay.

Control plan under review, tunnel work continues

COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW CONTROL PROGRAM UPDATE: News as of August 2006

The District advocates a 30-year schedule to implement our \$1.6 billion combined sewer overflow (CSO) control program, which lessens ratepayers' financial burden by spreading the cost over a longer period of time.

We believe 30 years is the most financially and logistically realistic time-frame, and we continue to discuss the CSO program with the US EPA in hopes of working out a reasonable agreement in a timely fashion. In the interim, we have accomplished the following:

District still advocating proposed 30-year schedule as most financially, logistically realistic

• Mill Creek Tunnel nears completion

The third and final leg of the Mill Creek Tunnel is nearly complete.

• Plant's CSO facilities design complete

The District has completed design for its Westerly treatment plant's CSO treatment facilities; however, the Ohio EPA has denied a permit-to-install. We are currently appealing this denial.

• EPA to receive east-side tunnel design

Design of the Dugway East Relief Sewer on Cleveland's east side has also been completed, and will soon be submitted to the Ohio EPA for approval.

• Euclid Creek tunnel design delayed?

The Euclid Creek CSO tunnel is currently in design, however completion of the design may be delayed due to ongoing review by the EPA.

The District remains committed to assuring clean water for a Greater Cleveland and will keep the public updated as we progress.

Story by Kim Jones

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Robotics program presents unique opportunity for students, Cleveland school and Sewer District

June 6 was the culmination of a groundbreaking robotics program focused on enhancing middle-school students' math, science, and critical thinking skills.

Aquabots — a pilot program and competition created for Cleveland's Carl and Louis Stokes Central Academy by Paragon TEC and supported by the Sewer District — was designed to expose students to robotics, wastewater treatment, and the importance of maintaining clean water for health and safety.

Congressman Louis Stokes, District Director Erwin Odeal, and Councilwoman Phyllis Cleveland attended the team



Members of Central Academy's winning Aquabots team, the Lake Raiders

championship.

Robotics specialists Paragon TEC approached Principal Donna Baynes who desired math and science proficiency improvements among seventh-grade students. The District helped design a unique six-week pilot program that taught students to program robots to

perform tasks that simulate the type of work that assures clean water for families and businesses in our region.

The program included a tour of the District's Westerly Wastewater Treatment Plant and a presentation by sewer maintenance workers who use robots to inspect sewers.

"It's not often you get to show students how engineering [is] applied to real life."

Employees also served as referees during the competition. Said District Engineer Lita Laven, "It's not often you get a chance to show students how engineering can actually be applied to real-life situations."

Of the four competing teams, the Lake Raiders, whose robot completed the most tasks, won the overall competition. All 75 students earned certificates of completion.

Odeal looks forward to improving this program in the future. "We would really like to figure out ways to challenge other companies around town to help grow this program [and encourage it in] other schools around town."