

GM Corner

Spring is here: 2017 construction season underway

By Steve Schneider

Here we go again! Spring is here and the trees and grass are getting green. That must mean one thing here at SPRWS; construction season is here!

We have many projects that are just beginning and some that continue to progress. Major improvements are on the way at the treatment plant and to the West Saint Paul pumping station. Most of the major electrical components at the treatment plant are being updated or replaced and we are adding an on-site emergency generator at the WSP pumping station. Kou Vang, civil engineer IV, will be overseeing these two important projects in addition to many others in production.

In distribution, this time of year always brings a lot of activity as we are bringing on new and returning seasonal staff and all the street reconstruction projects are kicking off. This year is no exception. Large projects this year include replacement of the water main in Ford Parkway down in Highland Park, the replacement of more than 100 lead water services on Smith Avenue south of downtown St. Paul and on the west side, and other water main replacements in St. Paul street reconstruction areas in addition to work in Maplewood, West Saint Paul and Mendota Heights. All totaled, we are planning more than 8 miles of water main replacement this season.

I know that all this work and the effort undertaken to support it is the result of many hours of preparation, construction, inspection, and restoration activities. All this work is critical to our continued success and I want to make sure that everyone knows that we recognize and appreciate the commitment you all show to SPRWS. I look forward to a productive and safe 2017 construction season!

Recarb chamber gets cleaning



Randy Barnes (foreground) and Corey Horvath, water plant workers, clean out the recarbonation chamber in the treatment plant on April 18. In the recarbonation chamber, fluoride and carbon dioxide are added. The carbon dioxide is used to adjust the pH of the water to optimize corrosion control in the distribution system. It is the only place in the plant that does not have a redundant system in place and can not be out of service for more than several hours. Staff moved quickly to remove as much lime build up as possible before putting it back into service the same day.

SPRWS to hire security supervisor

The utility has an opening for a new emergency planning and security supervisor.

This position provides supervisory and administrative work coordinating emergency plans and security monitoring for the department.

Candidates need two years of experience in planning, system design, safety, emergency management and four years of experience or a bachelor's degree and two years of experience in safety and security work. An emergency management certification is desirable. Must maintain a Minnesota class D driver's license or equivalent. Must apply online at stpaul.gov/jobs.

For more information go online or contact Sandy Kimbrough at jobs@stpaul.gov.

The deadline for application is 4:30 p.m. on May 3, 2017.

Celebrate drinking water week with SPRWS activities May 8 - 11

The utility is gearing up for a host of activities to take place during National Drinking Water Week, May 7 -13.

For more than 35 years the American Water Works Association and its members have celebrated Drinking Water Week as a unique opportunity for both water professionals and the communities we serve to join together in recognizing the vital role water plays in our daily lives.

For water utility staff in particular, water is at the center of everything we do. While everyone needs water to live, water is our livelihood as well. Even though it may feel mundane and ordinary some days, the work we do is paramount to the survival of our communities. We provide water for living, manufacturing, fire fighting, and more to 425,000 people. It is no small task and we do it well. Take some time to reflect during Drinking Water Week on the life-giving product we produce every day and take pride in the work we do to make that happen.

May 8: Employee Recognition and Plant Tours

We start our celebration on Monday, May 8, when employees with 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years of service will be recognized from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. in the cafeteria with light refreshments. Steve Schneider will hand out years of service pins to this year's recipients.

At 2 p.m. take a tour of the plant and find out how we treat our water to make it potable. If you have never been on a tour of the plant, now is a great time to take an hour out of your day to learn more about the facility where you work. Tours are limited to 20 participants. If interested, sign up in advance with Schneider or Jim Graupmann. You must have supervisor approval to participate.

May 9: Welcome Children

On Tuesday, May 9, we will welcome fourth graders from a local elementary school as they tour the plant and learn more about water.

May 10: Safety Picnic

A safety picnic to kick off our construction season will take place from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 10, in front of the treatment plant.

Bring your appetite and best bags throwing skills for a game of bags.

Learn the importance of returning safely to your family and friends at the end of your shift every day.

May 11: Open House and Tours

We welcome the public to our plant for tours on Thursday, May 11, starting at 2 p.m. Guests will have a chance to meet with employees in the lobby while waiting for their tour to start. Water quality specialists will give a glimpse into the process of making our water potable for customers. Please make our guests feel welcome during their visit.

Drinking Water Week is a chance to reflect on the vital role water plays in our lives and the vital role we play in the lives of those we serve.

Habitat for Humanity date set for June 30 in Saint Paul

SPRWS will be partnering with the department of safety and inspections and with human resources on Friday, June 30, 2017, to help one deserving family to move into the city of Saint Paul.

We will be helping build their new home through the Habitat for Humanity program. You can help by donating your time to this worthy cause. The Board of Water Commissioners will be providing lunch for all volunteers. You need to use vacation or comp time and have the approval of your supervisor to take the day to volunteer. No experience is necessary.

More information will become available as the work date approaches.

Utility hires new office assistant in meter operations office

Amber Ramnarine has been hired as a new office assistant II in the meter operations office.

She started work on April 17.

She reports to Gayle Moser.

Please welcome Amber to the water utility.



Amber Ramnarine

The PipelineExpress is published every two weeks by Saint Paul Regional Water Services. © 2017 Story ideas? Contact Jodi Wallin, 266-6308.