

Moving temp mains



From left, Greg Sorenson, water system worker, and Pete Trooien and Travis Seidl, water utility workers, dig a trench to lay temporary water main in a driveway to allow cars to drive over it. The work was done along Larpenteur Ave. near English Street on June 30.

144 grants totaling \$25,826 given out WaterWorks provides water to customers in need

Every summer, the water utility asks its customers to contribute to *WaterWorks*, a program that assists needy residents with their water bills. *WaterWorks* is jointly administered between the water utility and the Community Action Partnership of Ramsey and Washington Counties (CAP).

Your contributions provided \$25,826 in grants to customers in need in 2016. This amounted to 144 grants, with the average amount of the grant being \$179.35. A grant assists the customer in need with paying the water and sewer bill to ensure that they continue to receive water services. This might be an

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Managers' Corner

By Jim Bode

Why does our water come from north of us? Gravity

While attending the AWWA annual conference in Philadelphia recently, it was pointed out to me that the Philadelphia Museum of Art, on whose steps Rocky Balboa famously ran on in the movie "Rocky", sits atop the site of Philadelphia's first drinking water reservoir. The Fairmount Reservoir was built in 1812 to receive and distribute river water to the growing city. Water had to be pumped from the nearby Schuylkill into the reservoir, and this was difficult to do because steam pumps were in their infancy at this time.

These challenges to supply water to early Philadelphia were not unlike that of early St. Paul. Though starting approximately 70 years later, the St. Paul Water Company tapped local surface waters and fed it, untreated, by pipe from Lake Phalen to downtown St. Paul. But one big advantage St. Paul had over Philadelphia was our ability to have a gravity-fed supply system. Our predecessors at the privately owned St. Paul Water Company dug ditches to supplement Phalen from our current system lakes to the north, namely Pleasant, Sucker and Vadnais. This system operated by gravity. When the city purchased the private water company, they commissioned an exhaustive survey of local water sources, reaching as far as Forest Lake to the north and the Cannon River to the south. All through the survey's plan and report was a fundamental desire to have a gravity-fed system.

Interestingly, the engineer who conducted the survey provided information on how the utility could pump water from the Mississippi River near St. Anthony falls. But electric power was scarce in the early 1880s and also privately owned. Therefore the decision was made to continue to pursue the gravity system and expand the Vadnais Lake supply. Even though they would later utilize pumping from the Mississippi, we still benefit from these early decisions to supply clean water as simply and reliably as possible.

Cleaning out water main



Alex Zinos, water utility worker, swabs out the water main with a chlorine solution prior to laying it at Atlantic Street near Idaho on June 30. Dustin Schluessler, water system worker, was the foreman on the job site with Sean Diesterhaft, water system worker, and Matt Schmidt, water utility worker, laying the main.

WaterWorks provides water to needy customers

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individual, a family or an adult with dependents. So, while 144 grants were provided, contributions kept many more people supplied with water than the number would indicate.

Applicants must meet certain criteria to receive the grants, which include water service termination or pending termination, financial crisis, and qualification under low-income guidelines. Grants have annual limits and are subject to availability of funds. CAP determines whether a customer qualifies under low-income guidelines established by the Minnesota Department of Commerce.

The program received \$25,916 in contributions last year, of which \$5,000 came from matching funds from SPRWS. The remainder of the funds came directly from customer contributions. One-time contributions totaled \$4,127 while on-going contributions totaled \$16,789.

If you are interested in contributing to *WaterWorks*, you can sign up at www.stpaul.gov/waterworks.

Lanigan, McLaughlin retire

Tom Lanigan and Brian McLaughlin recently retired from the water utility.

Lanigan started in 1986 as water utility worker and worked in that position until 1992, when he also took on the title heavy equipment operator.

He held both titles in until 2006, when he became solely a heavy equipment operator. This is the position from which he retired on June 30, 2017, after 31 years.

Brian McLaughlin started his career with the city working in public works as a park aide in 1979. The next year, he began in the same position in the water department. He became a water plant aide in 1984. In 1991, he became a water utility worker I. He held a few titles for a limited time, include service worker II accounting clerk I, and groundsworker, but returned to the water utility worker I title in 1998.

This is the position from which he retired on June 23, 2017, after 38 years of service.

Congratulations to both Tom and Brian on their retirements!



Tom Lanigan



Brian McLaughlin

Utility aides start at Vadnais

Ryan Travis and Ericka Allery started the week of June 19 at Vadnais.

They are both utility aides.

Please welcome them to the water utility.



Ryan Travis



Ericka Allery

Check your emails from anywhere

If you are out of the office, you can check your email from anywhere.

You can log in with your computer access name and password at <http://www.outlook.com/stpaul.gov>.