

## Managers' Corner

### What we do with the spent lime leftovers

By Jim Bode

In this issue of *The Pipeline* there are photos of our new spent lime tank being constructed. This tank will replace (in function at least) the old blue tank next to our Roselawn gate. These tanks are part of our process that deals with the leftovers of our softening and purification process.

Just like every home needs a way to get rid of garbage and waste, we also need a process to deal with approximately 300,000 gallons of spent lime slurry every day. This slurry is mainly comprised of calcium and magnesium solids removed from the water as part of our water softening process.

When the utility started softening the water for its customers in 1940, the slurry was pumped to the wetland north of Roselawn Avenue. Over the decades, the wetland filled up and dikes were built to contain the ever rising level of solids. The levels rose to a crisis level in the 1990s, so plans were made to build a process to handle the solids and truck the material off site. The dewatering building you see today was the result, where spent lime slurry is pressed into a large cake and hauled away to farm fields as ag lime.

There were various attempts to find alternate uses for the solids over the decades as well, including re-calcining the slurry into quicklime by thickening and cooking it in a large kiln located in the blue lime plant, attached to the south end of the dewatering building. That process met its demise when fuel prices rose in the 1970s and 1980s. Other potential outlets that failed to last included: mixing the spent lime with ash from the Pigs Eye sewage incinerator to be used as fertilizer and using the slurry to scrub gases from power plant exhaust stacks.

## New spent lime tank going up



**Top, workers from Magney Construction look over the new spent lime tank after the footings were poured on Oct. 12. Right, the new tank under construction in foreground, with the oldest tank in the far background. The old tank will be taken out of service after the new tank is up and running.**



## New VOIP phones installed

New Voice Over Internet Protocol phones were installed at SPRWS Oct. 23 - 25. The change from the previous system was needed as Ramsey County is no longer supporting the old system as of the end of the year. The new phones are tied into Skype for Business, and are referred to by the city as Skype phones. In order for the Skype phones to work with Skype for Business, IT staff have upgraded our Microsoft software from Office 2010 to Office 2016.

The Skype phones can provide voice and video calls, instant messaging, email voice messages and more.

If you would like more training on how to use your new phone, go to <https://stpaulmn.sharepoint.com/> technology and type Skype phone into the search bar.

If you are experiencing difficulty with your phone, call the OTC service desk at 266-6767.

## Fire drill empties buildings



*Members of the engineering department gather at their designated spot during a fire drill on Oct. 11. Will Menkhaus, in shorts, was working out when the drill was called, and promptly left his workout area without returning to his desk to get his coat. The wait for the all clear command was a bit chillier for Will than those who did get their coats before heading outside. But Will did exactly as the plan states, and did not return to the building—even for a coat.*

## Opt-in to get your tax forms online

Opt-in to get your W-2 and 1095-C to ensure you are able to get these documents online when you need them. Both documents are required to file your 2018 taxes.

Log in to employee/document self-service at <https://ess.stpaul.gov> and check your delivery settings.

Setup takes about two minutes and can be done from any computer with internet access.

If you require a hard copy of these documents because you did not opt-in and cannot locate your mailed hard copies, you will be charged \$9 for a new copy of either the W-2 or the 1095-C. Save your money. Opt-in.

### What's in it for you?

You get an email as soon as your tax documents are ready. (Sooner than getting them by mail.)

Your tax documents are available in your self-service account any time that you need them. This is the same place you pick up your pay statements.

(Under IRS & ACA regulations, these features are only available to those who opt-in.)

## Staff present at GIS conference

Adam Worm, water utility tech, and Renee Huset, GIS analyst, recently gave a presentation to their peers at the Minnesota GIS/LIS conference in Duluth Oct. 3-5. (GIS is a geographic information system and LIS is a land information system used for land mapping as part of GIS.)

Their talk was titled, “*Modernizing GNSS workflows at St. Paul Regional Water Services.*” GNSS stands for global navigation satellite system and includes GPS (Global Positioning System) for the location of facilities. Their talk discussed how we have evolved and progressed as a utility in how we capture GPS points, how we are using more advanced and more user friendly equipment in capturing data, and their involvement with staff training and some of the challenges we face with user acceptance. Generally speaking, the use of GIS allows us to capture much improved location accuracy for our buried infrastructure.

“Adam’s and Renee’s work has been outstanding in implementing advances in this area,” said Dave Wagner, engineering division manager. “I much appreciate the great work they do for us to progress the utility with advanced technology and the initiative they have shown by presenting to their peers.”

## Finding out about benefits



*Ben Feldman, engineer, talks with Alex Allen with MetLife insurance at the employee enrollment information session on Oct. 17. MetLife offers insurance coverage with various discounts for city employees. This home, auto, and other insurance offer is not limited to the enrollment period.*

*However, you must enroll by midnight tonight for city offered benefits, such as medical and dental insurance, life insurance, and disability insurance. These will roll over to your current coverage for 2019 if you make no selection. (Dental has changed, so the coverages are not the same in the 2019 policy as in 2018.) You must enroll in a flexible spending account if you want to put money aside for 2019, as that election does not roll over each year. You should also put in dependents and spouse coverage where appropriate and name beneficiaries where necessary.*