

## Managers' Corner

### Coming soon: Electronic billboards

By Patrick Shea

In today's fast-paced media environment, getting up-to-the-minute news and information is the norm. The printed morning newspaper or monthly periodical are out of date by the time it hits our doorstep or mailbox.

Better delivery of up-to-date information is on the horizon for SPRWS. The Business Improvement Unit has been working on a tool to enhance and improve overall communication. In the next few months, an electronic billboard system (EBB) will be installed around our facilities. The EBB system will provide a convenient method to share timely and relevant utility information, enhance departmental communication, and encourage staff engagement. Examples of content may include water quality statistics, project updates, strategic plan progress, training events, important water and city-wide dates, SPRWS current affairs, HR updates, etc.

Because the billboards can be updated frequently, the EBB is a convenient method to cultivate communication and enhance our common mission between workgroups and different work tasks. Currently, we use email to make announcements to large groups of employees. Some SPRWS staff don't regularly use or check email frequently, and all our email in boxes fill up fast. Important messages are lost in the shuffle or buried in an avalanche of spam. By putting this information front and center on a digital screen, positioned in a prominent location, the likelihood these announcements will be received will increase.

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## Lab staff do their part to help reduce Covid 19 spread



**Alexis Rossow and Jeremy Erickson, water quality specialists, measure out ingredients for making hand sanitizer in the plant laboratory on March 26.**

**The lab has also been making a chlorine mixture for use to sanitize surfaces around the facilities. These items have been made available to other city departments as needed during the pandemic.**



## Distribution crews work efforts lauded by resident

*Editor's note: Council member Dai Thao received this email from a constituent on April 6 about the great work our staff conducted on Hague Avenue.*

I wanted to take a minute and let you know how great the workers have been throughout a water main

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## Water utility welcomes new employees, seasonal staff

Even in the midst of the pandemic affecting us all, maintaining our infrastructure must continue.

To make sure we have the staff we need to continue our construction work this season, the utility has hired several new water utility workers who began on March 30.

Ericka Allery and Robert Metzler previously worked at the utility as seasonal temporary staff. New water utility workers include James Rodgers, Jonathan Rue, Raymond St. Germain, Alex Salinas, Wong Thao, Matthew Stephenson, and Donald Spears,

Michael Schiller-Feidt started work on March 30 as a vehicle technician (heavy truck & equipment).

Seasonal staff has also started to return. William Strouts has returned as a cement finisher.



*Ericka Allery*



*Robert Metzler*



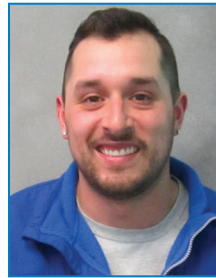
*James Rodgers*



*Jonathan Rue*



*Raymond St. Germain*



*Alex Salinas*



*Wong Thao*



*William Strouts*

Please welcome our new employees if you see them around campus or out in the field working.

Please note that photos for

Matthew Stephenson, Donald Spears, and Michael Schiller-Feidt were not available at press time.

## Electronic billboards coming to the water utility

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The EBB system will consist of a cloud-based player connected to monitors installed at various locations around the SPRWS campus and at Vadnais station. The system is designed to be easy to use as well as flexible. It can be expanded to meet our needs. Thanks to its versatility and convenience, we hope the EBB system will become an ideal method for maintaining and enhancing connections and communications within SPRWS.

The EBB system will be implemented in phases and expanded as needed, so not all locations will have monitors installed at once. Installation of the first monitors will begin after the stay at home order is rescinded. In the meantime, we are looking for information and ideas to share within the utility.

Please let me or the Martha Burckhardt with the BIU know if you have suggested content.

We are also available to answer your questions or take your comments.

With your input, the EBB system will be a success.

## Distribution crews work efforts lauded by resident

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and lead service replacement project over here in Ward 2.

Having elected to replace my service line, during the new shut-off valve installation, unbeknown to us the 106 year-old 6" clay sewer pipe was crushed accidentally by the backhoe during filling/tamping the excavation.

Weather was cold and snowy but the crew was very professional and personable. Later, after I began having drain problems, brief conversations with them put me in touch with SPRWS engineering; they offered to have M&B scope my drain (which I was about to pay to have done) at no cost, saving me \$200

Today these great workers came back and repaired everything during an unprecedented pandemic, so I wanted to express my appreciation to Public Services and Saint Paul Regional Water Services workers; getting it done!

Dai, I hope you will make some noise on behalf of these workers out in the field.