

# IN THE PIPE

NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2013

60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

No. 2

## Who is the Washington County Service Authority?



Over the next few months, we will introduce you to the Washington County Service Authority (WCSA). We hope this and subsequent newsletters will help you learn more about who we serve, how we serve, and some of what is involved in providing these services. This by no means will be an exhaustive report but a general overview.

### Our History

WCSA is a public water and sewer utility serving Washington County, Virginia, as well as a few neighboring communities in Tennessee. WCSA was originally chartered in 1953 as the Goodson Kinderhook Water Authority; however, its roots go back to 1910, when the Abingdon Water Authority was established. A large portion of WCSA's distribution system was established in the 1930s through President Franklin Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration.

WCSA was formed in 1976 through the consolidation of the Goodson Kinderhook Water Authority, the Washington County Sanitation District #1, and the Manheim Water Company. Today, WCSA is the third largest waterworks in Southwest Virginia, serving almost 90 percent (20,900 connections) of the residents of Washington County with water and eight percent (2,000 connections) with sewer.



### Water Service

One difficulty with serving a rural community is the distance water must travel to reach the customer. WCSA's distribution system covers approximately 300 square miles, with 900 miles of pipeline. With more than 20,900 customers, WCSA must maintain almost 230 feet of pipeline per customer. Furthermore, a majority of the pipeline in WCSA's system was installed long ago in piecemeal fashion with inadequate planning or design for future growth.

Thus, we have a system with pipe sizes ranging from one-half inch to 24 inches in diameter and pipe materials of galvanized steel, cast iron, ductile iron, asbestos cement, PVC and stainless steel.

Another challenge with serving customers in a mountainous region is the change in elevation encountered within the service area. Washington County's lowest elevation point is 1,698 feet above sea level, and its highest is 5,520 feet above sea level – a vertical range of 3,822 feet. Within the water system itself, the elevation change from the lowest to highest point is 1,147 feet, which translates to 493 psi. The maximum normal operating system pressure is 250 psi. Therefore, WCSA must operate and maintain more than 20 pressure-reducing valves. Optimum operating pressures for household use is 50 psi. The distribution system has 26 water-pumping stations, 24 water storage tanks and more than 40 pressure zones.

The capacity of WCSA-owned water treatment facilities is 14 million gallons per day. WCSA owns and operates one membrane filtration plant, one conventional surface water treatment plant, one spring and one well. Additionally, WCSA purchases water

*Continued on Page 2*

## INSIDE

Employee Spotlight .....	2	Cross Connection Control and Back Flow Prevention Program .....	4
Meet Your Commissioners.....	2	New Online Billing, Pay-by-Phone .....	4
WCSA Projects .....	3	WCSA Calendar .....	4
Congratulations.....	3		

from two different utilities. In total, WCSA's average distribution of water for 2012 was approximately 7 million gallons per day.

Though extending public water to unserved communities is a top priority, WCSA has a mature water system that demands the majority of our resources. Without properly caring for the existing system, we would be unable to extend water service. Our motto is to provide the highest quality drinking water at the lowest possible cost.

### Sewer Service

The year 1993 marked the genesis of our current sewer system; however, much of our sewer system (through acquisition) dates back to the mid-1970s. We face a number of the same challenges with sewer service as we do with water. WCSA's collection system

covers approximately 25 square miles and is comprised of 68 miles of pipeline (gravity and force main). WCSA currently has more than 2,000 connections and therefore must maintain almost 180 feet of pipeline per customer. Elevation changes encountered within the service area require 26 pump stations.

For many reasons, sewer is more expensive than water. The capital cost for its installation is more because it must be installed on grade and often must be deeper than water lines. Collection systems requiring pump stations also require greater cost for electricity and telephone service (for monitoring purposes) and operator attendance to ensure there are no operational problems that could lead to overflows. Moreover, sewer pumps have

a shorter service life than water due to their operating environment. Finally, treatment is more expensive due to the product we are treating and the quality being returned to the environment.

WCSA-owned source capacity is 2.22 million gallons per day. WCSA owns and operates two extended, aeration-activated sludge (biological) treatment facilities. Additionally, WCSA maintains conveyance and treatment agreements with two different utilities. In total, WCSA's average collection of sewer for 2012 was approximately 0.45 million gallons per day. Our motto is to return the highest quality water to the environment at the lowest possible cost.

In the next issue, we will outline information about WCSA's revenues and expenses. 💧

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### Stephen Sproles

*Inspector, Engineering Department*

Stephen Sproles joined WCSA in December 1986 as a meter reader, later moving to a maintenance position. For the past nine-and-a-half years, he has



been an inspector in the engineering department, overseeing projects to assure proper and accurate construction according to WCSA guidelines. He is also responsible for ensuring pressure and water quality testing in new water and sewer lines.

A native of Bristol, Virginia, Steve graduated from John S. Battle High School and began his career in retail

management and the grocery store industry. He and his wife now reside in Bristol, Tennessee, where Steve serves as a youth director at his church. He and his wife, Patty, raised a daughter and three sons and now have seven grandchildren. In his spare time, Steve enjoys music, spending time with family and playing with his grandkids. 💧

## Meet Your Commissioners

Your WCSA Board of Commissioners works hard to help us provide the best water and sewer service at the lowest possible cost. We sincerely appreciate each member for their time and dedicated service.



**Joe Chase**  
Chairman  
Madison District



**D.L. Stout**  
Vice Chairman  
Taylor District



**Dwain Miller**  
Commissioner  
Tyler District



**Prince Coleman**  
Commissioner  
Monroe District



**Devere Hutchinson**  
Commissioner  
Wilson District



**Frank J. Stephon IV**  
Commissioner  
Harrison District



**Kenneth Taylor**  
Commissioner  
Jefferson District

# PROJECTS REPLACE WATER LINES, IMPROVE WATER SYSTEMS AND EXTEND WASTEWATER SERVICE

The following is a summary of WCSA projects currently under way, recently completed or expected to begin soon.

## (1) Green Springs Road Water Line Replacement



The Green Springs Road Water Line Replacement Project includes the construction and replacement of approximately 4,250 linear feet of eight-inch and smaller water line along Pecan Street and Green Springs Road. The project will replace an existing, problematic six-inch water line. Construction began in spring 2013.

## (2) Galvanized Water Line Replacement



WCSA's distribution system consists of approximately 200 miles of two-inch and smaller galvanized line. Approximately 40 percent of our existing customers are connected to this line, which has the tendency to corrode from the outside,

causing frequent leaks and water quality complaints. WCSA is in the process of a three-phase project that will replace the galvanized water line in its system. Phase 1 is complete, and construction of Phase 2 is expected to begin in summer 2013.

## (3) Mendota Community Water System Improvements

The Mendota community is currently served by a well that contains iron and manganese. While these two minerals do not directly pose a health risk, they do cause the water to have an unpleasant odor, a cloudy red appearance and undesirable taste, and cause stains on water fixtures and clothing. This project will replace the current source for the Mendota community by connecting the system to the Scott County Public Service Authority. Construction began in spring 2013.

## (4) Whites Mill Area Water System Improvements



This project included the replacement and construction of approximately 38,000 linear feet of eight-inch and smaller water lines, a pump station and a water storage tank. The project replaced six substandard booster pump stations, improved pressures for existing WCSA water customers and provided fire protection to many areas that did not have it before. Construction of this project is complete.

## (5) Exit 13 Phase 1 Sewer Project and Force Main Project



This project will provide wastewater service to a high-density residential area along Old Jonesboro Road, including portions of Westwood and Westwood View subdivisions. When construction of this project is complete in spring 2013, wastewater service will have been added to 255 existing homes. 💧

## Congratulations!

**Eugene Rolén** has successfully completed requirements for the Class I Wastewater Operator License. Eugene also holds a Class 3 Water Operator License and has been employed with WCSA since December 2006.

**Jeff Alexander** was promoted to the position of Meter Reader, effective March 4. Jeff joined WCSA in April 2010 as a temporary Meter Maintenance Technician in our Meter Department and was promoted to a Crew Member in our Maintenance Department in August 2010.

# Cross Connection Control and Back Flow Prevention Program


We all expect that the water we purchase is safe for use, especially for drinking purposes. In addition to this expectation, the Federal Environmental Protection Agency and the Virginia Department of Health require that all public water purveyors protect drinking water from potential contamination. As part of our commitment to provide our customers with safe, high-quality drinking water, WCSA has instituted a Cross Connection Control and Back Flow Prevention Program (CCC & BFP). There are two aspects of this program: (1) the CCC & BFP Policy and (2) implementation of the CCC & BFP Policy.

The program is designed to protect WCSA's drinking water from any unwanted reversal of flow from residential, commercial, industrial or institutional plumbing systems via cross connection or backflow. The protection of WCSA's drinking water from cross contamination is regulated by the requirements set forth in WCSA's CCC &

BFP Policy, which WCSA has already implemented with new customers. WCSA intends to begin implementation with existing customers in September 2013, beginning with all publically owned facilities and then with those that are considered "high hazard."

This policy requires all water system customers to have an adequately functioning and approved backflow prevention device, assembly or backflow prevention method installed in the approved configuration where applicable.

WCSA's goal with this program is to establish and administer guidelines for safeguarding cross connections and implementing means to ensure the enforcement of these guidelines so that public drinking water will be protected from any and all potential cross contaminations.

For more information regarding WCSA's CCC & BFP Program, please visit [www.wcsawater.com](http://www.wcsawater.com) or contact Wayne Smith at 276-676-6760. 

## WCSA Introduces New Online Billing and Automated Pay-by-Phone


As we continue our efforts to make it as easy as possible for our customers to conduct business with WCSA, we are rolling out exciting new customer services related to billing and payments.

Here is some important information about our new online billing system and secure automated pay-by-phone 24/7 option:

- You will see a new pay screen when logging on to make a payment.
- You can create your own user name and password without contacting our office.
- You can review your account, including payments made, payments due and due dates.

- You can update personal information, phone number and email address.

For the automated credit card or pay-by-phone option:

- You can make payments 24/7 with the new secure automated phone system.
- You do not have to make a long-distance call to make a payment if you are out of the area.
- Toll free number is 877-939-6011.
- You may still contact our office to make a payment or be transferred to the secure automated phone system. 



## WCSA Calendar

Memorial Day	May 27
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	Sept. 2
Columbus Day	Oct. 14
Thanksgiving	Nov. 28-29
Christmas	Dec. 24-25
New Year's	Dec. 31 - Jan. 1



## Board Meetings

Regular meetings of the WCSA Board of Commissioners for the remainder of this fiscal year:

**May 20 June 24**

Annual Meeting - July 22, 2013

*The WCSA Board of Commissioners meets at 7 p.m. in the E.W. Potts Board Room at WCSA, 25122 Regal Drive, Abingdon, Va. The public is welcome to attend.*

## REMINDER

**AVOID THE TIME AND EXPENSE OF MAILING AND POSTAGE WITH WCSA'S AUTO-DRAFT.**

**CALL OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE DEPARTMENT AT 276-628-7151 FOR DETAILS.**

WCSA  
25122 Regal Drive  
Abingdon, VA 24211  
P: 276-628-7151  
F: 276-628-3594

Email: [inquiry@wcsawater.com](mailto:inquiry@wcsawater.com)  
[www.wcsa-water.com](http://www.wcsa-water.com)