

The Main Stream

Volume II, Number 3
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a quarterly newsletter dedicated to enhancing water and wastewater services brought to you by the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority

Improvements for the New Millennium

YCUA is in the process of making final preparations for a change in our billing format from the current postcard-type bill to an invoice sent in an envelope. The new format will allow more information to be printed on the bill as well as being more private. In addition, The Main Stream newsletter will be mailed directly with your bill, rather than separately, to save on mailing costs. More information explaining the format will be forthcoming with your first new bill and in our local newspapers.

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In our last issue, we sought out a public participant for the YCUA Public Relations and Grant Acceptance Committee. Stacie Campbell was selected and appointed as our community representative at the YCUA Board meeting on August 18, 1999. She is one of seven local residents who submitted letters of interest. We welcome Stacie's input as we strive to continuously improve our customer service.

October marks YCUA's 25th Anniversary. In 1974 the City of Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township created the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority to own and operate the water and wastewater services for these and several surrounding communities. Our milestones our further detailed on the back of this issue.

As always, your questions or comments may be e-mailed to me at director@provide.net



Larry R. Thomas, Director

Did you know . . .

You can refill an 8 oz glass with YCUA water *more than 5,000 times* for the same cost as one container of bottled water?! In addition, the quality of YCUA's water is wonderful! (check out YCUA's recent report on water quality that was mailed to you)

Composting Project Finds Success!

As YCUA proceeds with its state-of-the-art sludge composting pilot project, preliminary results have been extremely promising. Early tests on the finished product indicate that levels of heavy metals and other potential contaminants are **well below required environmental quality standards**. At the same time, daily operations show that the enclosed system is running smoothly.



Each day, sludge is mixed with an amendment, such as wood chips, and placed in a long concrete bay where a mechanical turner mixes and aerates the piles. Within a few weeks, a beneficial, soil-like product emerges which can be used for landscaping, agriculture and other applications.

Biosolids, or sludge, are a by-product of the wastewater treatment process. YCUA produces some 20 tons per day of biosolids and has been seeking a more environmentally acceptable alternative to its current disposal method of incineration. For more information, contact YCUA's composting consultant, Resource Recycling Systems, at 734.996.1361.

Winter Preparation Checklist for Homeowners

Perform these tasks prior to November 15 or the first hard freeze:

- Disconnect and drain hoses.**
- Winterize sprinkling systems. This may require professional assistance.**
- Insulate pipes or faucets in unheated areas. Turn off water to outdoor spigots.**
- Seal off access doors, air vents, or cracks.**
- Locate master shutoff in case of emergency.**



your water and wastewater service providers

YCUA's



The Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority was formed in 1974 by the coming together of the City of Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Charter Township. The driving force behind the merger between the two water and sewer departments was a desire to minimize rising costs and to take advantage of federal funds available to help build a much-needed wastewater treatment plant and related facilities.

Through the years, the Authority has achieved its goal of providing services at a reasonable cost. Many water and sewer lines have been upgraded, and all facilities have been well maintained. YCUA has been an industry leader, winning awards for its operations, most notably the 1988 Award of Excellence for Outstanding Operation & Maintenance of a Water Pollution Control Facility from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

YCUA continues to seek cost-effective solutions in every facet of its operations, and strives to remain a helpful and useful part of the Ypsilanti Community throughout the new millennium!

Preparing for Y2K



YCUA is nearing completion of its Y2K compliance plan to minimize disruption when computers register the year 2000.

We have updated our equipment and are developing contingency plans in case other utilities fail to supply our necessary power and water service. Although we have been assured this is not likely, we have taken steps to maximize our independent capabilities for short-term operation. YCUA's equipment has passed Y2K tests and will be fully operational. Service will only be affected if we encounter long-term power and water delivery disruptions.

The Meter Service Department



The YCUA Meter Service Department handles customer services including final reads for real estate closings, turning water on/off for plumbing repairs, installing new meters, flushing customer lines, and checking for leaks in customers' plumbing systems in response to unusually high bills.

The Meter Service Department employs twelve staff members. Three meter technicians directly respond to customer concerns, which average about 500 calls for service each month. The remaining staff read approximately 20,000 meters bimonthly.

The Meter Service Department also oversees YCUA's "cross-connection" program mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency. This program requires the inspection of clean water lines that provide process water for boiler-style heating, sprinkling systems, etc. These process water lines must be equipped with prevention devices to avoid contamination of the clean water lines through backflow.

Your help is needed!

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated by the Meter Service Department, which at times must access your property to read your meter. Unlike utilities down south, we cannot place meters outside our customers' homes because of our cold winter temperatures.



For this reason, we have started a meter exchange program that allows us to read meters from the outside of your home. This results in less inconvenience for our customers and allows our employees to read more meters in less time. Our outside meters are either radio-remote (read from street) or touch pad (which requires the reader to touch the outside meter pad.) To take advantage of this meter exchange program, a YCUA Meter Service Department staff member will need to enter your home or business to replace the meter.

Safety First!

ALWAYS require proper identification from anyone claiming to be a YCUA employee. In addition, when meter readers need to enter your property or your home for any reason, it is important that **all** animals be restrained, even if they have no history of aggressive behavior.

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? CONCERNS? KUDOS?

ALL WELCOME! - Contact YCUA at
734.484.4600 or www.ycu.org



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