

The Mainstream

A semiannual newsletter dedicated to enhancing water and wastewater services brought to you by
The Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority



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From The Director

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate YCUA Director Larry R. Thomas on his recent retirement. Larry's 35 years of dedication and accomplishments will be appreciated for many years to come.

Larry Thomas was a patient and thoughtful leader and always exhibited sensitivity to and genuine care for our customers' needs. Larry's commitment to excellence and quality is a legacy we will continue to honor here at the Authority.

As YCUA's new Interim Director, I'm excited for the opportunity to work closer with the community and each department within the Authority in maintaining professional and compassionate communication with and service to our customers.

I look forward to providing leader-

ship and continuing to contribute to the success of YCUA. During this transitional time, we will continue to strive each and every day to fulfill our mission statement **"to provide top quality, cost effective, environmentally safe water and wastewater services to our customers."**

I encourage you to contact me at 484-4600 if you have any suggestions on how YCUA can continue to do its utmost to serve you.

I hope you will join me in wishing Larry Thomas and his family the very best wishes!

- YCUA Interim Director

YCUA Now On Facebook

YCUA is pleased to announce that customers can now follow us on Facebook. We plan to post important service updates, customer news, tips on how to save money on your water bills, and much more on our Facebook page. You can find us on Facebook at:

[facebook.com/ypsilanticommunityutilitiesauthority](https://www.facebook.com/ypsilanticommunityutilitiesauthority)

As always, we invite you to visit our website at **www.ycua.org** for more information on these and other topics.



DWSD Warns of Utility Bill Payment Scam

The Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) is warning consumers to be alert to a bill payment scam that is affecting utility customers across the country. The scammers are claiming that President Obama will pay customers' utility bills through a new federal program. That claim is false, and fraudulent.

According to the Better Business Bureau, utility customers have been contacted in person, through fliers, through social media, and via text messages with claims that President Obama can provide credits or apply payments to their bills. The scammers then direct the customers to send their Social Security and bank routing numbers. In return, customers are given a false bank routing number that will supposedly pay their utility bills.

In truth, there is no money in the "program," and customers believe they've paid their bills, when in fact, they have not.

DWSD has posted an alert on its website at www.dwsd.org, urging consumers not to participate in the scam. Moreover, DWSD officials advise customers not to provide any personal, confidential information to people who claim to be affiliated with a presidential program that pays utility bills. Consumers also should keep records of payment verification, and should never assume a pending payment has been accepted until the payment is verified with the customer account number.

For more information on the utility bill payment scam, visit the Better Business Bureau's website at www.bbb.org/us/article/president-obama-is-not-offering-to-pay-your-utility-bills-34928.

DWSD supplies high-quality drinking water to Detroit and 126 other communities in southeast Michigan, including customers of YCUA.

It's Time To Winterize!

The time to prepare your home for winter is before the freezing temperatures and snow arrive. Follow these tips to help prevent frozen pipes in your home:

1. Disconnect outdoor hoses and make sure hose bibs are not dripping.
2. Insulate pipes in unheated areas or seal off unheated areas.
3. Find your water meter shutoff so if a break does occur, you can turn off your water service quickly.
4. If you have an in-ground sprinkler system, contact your dealer about scheduling an appointment to have your system thoroughly winterized.
5. If your home's water will be turned off for winter, there should be heat to protect the meter as well as the plumbing.
6. YCUA recommends that customers winterize their homes just in case there is a complete power outage.

Annual Hydrant Inspections

This time each year, YCUA winterizes the over 3,000 hydrants in its system and checks their operation for fire protection. The procedure involves an employee completing an inspection of the internal workings of each fire hydrant, making repairs and getting water out of the hydrant barrels to prevent freezing. YCUA will also flush or run each fire hydrant to insure that it will operate properly during an emergency. As part of this process, each hydrant is tagged with ribbon to indicate that the winterization has been completed and, to make sure there is no confusion as to whether they were done, the color of the ribbon changes each year. This year, the color orange was chosen.

Area residents should be advised that as crews flush hydrants, there may be some discoloration of the water. If you experience rust-colored water, simply run the cold water tap for a few minutes to let the water clear. Please keep in mind, not to wash any light colored clothing until the water is running clear. The rust coloring is caused by a natural build up of minerals in the water system. Some natural mineral deposits are stirred up in the water pipes when fire hydrants are first turned on.

The fire hydrant inspection program helps insure that all our fire hydrants are ready in the event of an emergency. If you have any questions about the program, please contact YCUA Water System Supervisor Bob Fry at 484-4600 ext. 300.

YCUA Welcomes New Interim Director

On August 17, 2012 Jeff Castro assumed the position of Interim Director for YCUA. Mr. Castro is responsible for supervising the administration of the Authority, exercising supervision directly or indirectly of all Authority employees, and reporting to the YCUA Board of Commissioners. The YCUA Interim Director operates under the broad policy guidelines set forth by the Board.



Mr. Castro brings 27 years of experience at YCUA to the position. Mostly recently, he served as YCUA Director of Service Operations for three years. Previously, he held the position of Water System Supervisor from 2004 through 2009. Prior to this, he served as a Meter Service Technician and a Wastewater

Treatment Operator.

Mr. Castro has received management training at Washtenaw Community College and holds numerous professional water distribution certifications. He also holds a seat on the DWSD Technical Advisory Committee and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) Subject Matter Expert Committee.

YCUA Safety Program Receives Kudos

Several YCUA employees recently completed a confined space training course with a Midwest-based instruction firm, who shared the following words of praise:

"From the top down, it is clear that you have created an incredibly passionate work environment where there is a great deal of emphasis put on health and safety. Under the direction of Scott Robinson, your staff has put together a top-notch safety program that you and the Board should be proud of. It is quite evident that Mr. Robinson has taken every measure possible to ensure that your employees are given the best equipment and training available so that a safe working environment can be maintained at all times."

Congratulations and thanks to all YCUA employees, whose diligence each and every day has allowed the Authority to create and maintain an exemplary health and safety environment!