



BIG HELLO to all of our CUSTOMERS !



It is a pleasure to introduce you to YCUA's first newsletter, *The Main Stream*. Our goal is to pass along useful utility system and environmental information and advice to you, our valued customers.

Since 1974, the Authority has provided water to homes and businesses, and has collected and treated the wastewater generated. In 1997, we developed a mission statement to express our continued commitment to the communities we serve:

**It is our mission to provide
top-quality, cost-effective,
environmentally safe
water and wastewater
services to our
customers.**

This newsletter is one example of how we are striving to improve service, but many other exciting challenges lie ahead. For instance, in this issue we begin coverage of our new Composting Pilot project. Future issues will detail other important improvements, such as expanding water and sewer mains into developing areas and replacing outdated mains in older areas, so watch for your new issue each quarter.

I truly hope you find this newsletter interesting and valuable.

Larry R. Thomas, Director

YCUA Launches Composting Pilot

Composting is nature's way of recycling nutrients and organic matter. Now YCUA will evaluate composting as it tries to find a better way to manage its biosolids (sludge). After YCUA treats some 21 million gallons of wastewater each day, it must dispose of the remaining biosolids. YCUA currently dewateres and incinerates the biosolids before landfilling the remaining incinerator ash.

YCUA is planning a pilot composting project to evaluate operational, environmental and cost benefits before moving to a full-scale facility. Careful attention will be given to odor prevention and monitoring. Within approximately 50 days, the biosolids will be transformed into finished compost. Heat from the compost process destroys pathogens while maintaining the beneficial nutrients in the compost. The final compost product will be used in landscaping and other soil-enhancing applications. Watch this newsletter for updates as the compost project nears start-up!



Time To Fill Your Pool?

Summer is just around the corner, and for some families that means preparing the backyard swimming pool for the season. Depending on the size of your pool, or if you have a new pool, it may be more **cost-effective** to fill your pool through a commercial water-hauling company (listed in the yellow pages). If you are just "topping off" a partially drained pool, your household hose should be sufficient.





Psst . . . Revealing **Feedback** in the Customer Survey . . .

We asked and you responded! YCUA would like to say **THANK YOU** to its valued customers for taking the time to read and answer our first-ever Customer Survey. Of the 13,625 surveys mailed to non-commercial customers in the Charter Township of Ypsilanti and the City of Ypsilanti, we received back over 15%, well above the 10% norm for survey responses!

Not only did our customers rate us with great overall service, they wrote many favorable comments about the quality of work performed by our service crews and customer service clerks! Areas for improvement included switching to a sealed billing system to ensure privacy, and YCUA is currently exploring billing system options to respond to your concerns. All comments were appreciated, and we pledge that we will continue in our efforts to provide you with ever-improving, quality water and wastewater services!

ODOR CONTROL

YCUA is committed to an odor-free environment for the surrounding community, as well as its own work force. After conducting a comprehensive study of odor control options in 1997, work has begun on the first phase of improvements. This includes the design and installation of an odor scrubber and cover for the headworks area (where untreated sewage enters the plant). At other residentially located treatment plants in Michigan, this improvement alone has eliminated many complaints!

This long-term, phased solution allows the most odor-ridden areas to be tackled first. Because odors are subjective and quite costly to eliminate (an estimated \$7.6 million to get rid of all odors), it will be important to evaluate improvements in odor occurrences after each phase. This will minimize project cost, while also ensuring that the community is satisfied.



YCUA **Employees Care!**

The employees at YCUA have a history of giving back to the community. They pledged **\$10,798** of their wages to the 1998 United Way Campaign.

AFSCME Local #3451 (which includes about 100 YCUA employees) sponsored a "Toys for Tots" drive in December for the eighth time. They were able to donate approximately **\$1,800** worth of brand new toys to the Ypsilanti SOS Community Toy Chest. They also donated **\$500** to our local Salvation Army.

Questions? • Comments? • Concerns? • Kudos?
ALL WELCOME! Call YCUA at 734•484•4600