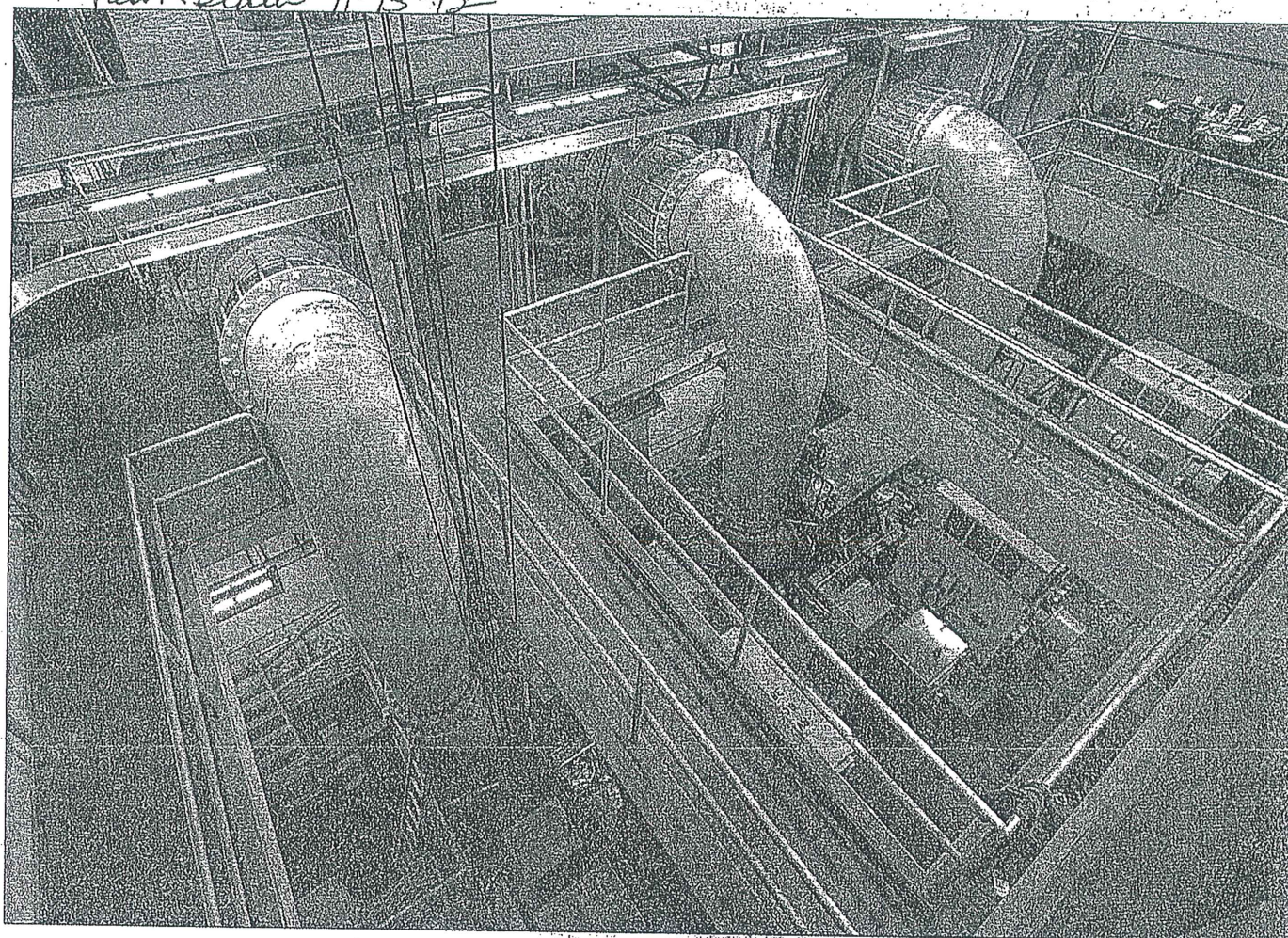


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LISA DEJONG / THE PLAIN DEALER

The Cleveland Water Department shut down the Garrett A. Morgan Treatment Plant on West 49th Street on Monday while work crews installed a new valve on a pump that sends raw lake water into the plant.

Cleveland water treatment plant being fixed

LEILA ATASSI
Plain Dealer Reporter

One of the Cleveland Water Department's four water treatment facilities has been shut down since Monday morning. If you are a customer and didn't notice, it probably means the city's back-up plan to deliver water to your tap was a success.

The Garrett A. Morgan Water Treatment Plant near West 49th Street will be offline for three days this week while a crew repairs a giant valve on the pump that sends raw Lake Erie water into the treatment facility. But department officials promise that the temporary closure will not affect water supply or quality.

The department credits its ability to ensure uninterrupted service to about \$1.6 billion in systemwide improvements during the past three decades and the strategic locations of other

facilities that can pick up the slack when one station is down.

The department draws its water from intake pipes in Lake Erie that go to four water treatment plants. One plant is on Clague Road in Westlake, and three are in Cleveland — near Edgewater Park, on St. Clair Avenue near the Euclid border, and on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

At all of the plants, water is treated and pumped to storage reservoirs at higher elevations. There, gravity helps dispense it to customers in lower-lying areas, while pumps send water to customers and water towers on higher ground. That method of moving water continues for another two tiers of elevation until the water reaches the highest point in the department's service area in Broadview Heights.

The Kirtland Pump Station on South Marginal Road, however, pumps raw lake water past the

lowest-lying areas to Baldwin Waterworks on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., which is at a higher elevation than the other treatment plants. Should any of the other facilities fail, the water department can redirect water from Baldwin to the areas in need and rely on gravity to power its movement through the subterranean system of pipes.

Water technicians did exactly that this week, said Interim Water Commissioner Alex Margevicius. With a few turns of a giant wrench, water began coursing from Baldwin through a main artery beneath Lakeside Avenue, on its way to the Garrett Morgan facility near Edgewater Park, which maintains the ability to pump the treated water to reservoirs throughout its service area.

Margevicius said Cleveland's water customers should feel confident that the system, backed by multiple water treatment facilities and a set of diesel-powered

generators, can handle virtually any threat to its operation.

"Not many cities have more than one water treatment plant," he said in a recent interview. "Post 9/11, it brings us great reassurance. Not all our eggs are in one basket."

Margevicius said that customers should experience no interruption in service. But those in Cleveland's Tremont or Ohio City neighborhoods might notice slight and harmless discoloration, as the increase in water velocity could churn up mineral sediments in the pipes. To minimize that effect, the department began ramping up the velocity last week.

Customers can report water quality problems or discoloration to the department's 24-hour emergency dispatch center at 216-664-3060.

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