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Volume 1, Issue 2

September 2006

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## **Packaged Membrane Reactor Technologies-First in Ohio**

The Rio Grande wastewater treatment facility in Concord Township was built in 1973. After 33 years of service the facility was in need of major upgrade or replacement and in 2002 an application was filed with the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) for funding under their Research and Development Grant Program. The County obtained 80% Grant Funding through the OWDA. We were excited about using new technology that would demonstrate improved treatment for existing and new treatment facilities. The new membrane bioreactor (MBR) is an activated sludge wastewater treatment process that utilizes a physical barrier (porous flat plate membrane) to filter contaminants from the wastewater. The MBR Package Plant is a complete and fully functional waste treatment facility consisting of a grease trap, distribution box, equalization tank, fine screen,

anoxic tank, pre-aeration tank and a tank with MBR cassettes (126 flat plate membranes). Included was a software package that operates the system and a SCADA system for remote monitoring of the facility's 24/7 operation. The new MBR technology simplifies facility

operation while increasing the level of treatment through biological nutrient removal. The overall goal of the project was to develop and document the design, construction, operation and maintenance requirements for this type of technology. The initial start up was December 16, 2004. For twelve months we collected data and documented daily operations. We successfully worked through start-up issues and achieved excellent treatment results on a consistent basis. The analytical results for the Rio Grande WWTP's effluent demonstrate a discharge well within state standards with many results below detection limits. Rio Grande was the first facility in operation in the state of Ohio using this type of technology. The success of this project demonstrated by exceptional operation and effluent quality at the facility should provide the OEPA with the data necessary to approve and recommend MBR's for future package plant upgrades and new construction projects.

***Submitted By: Gregory Widmer***

***Interested in Corporate  
Challenge?  
See page 3.***



## Executive Director's Notes

Many of the discussions these past few weeks have centered on how stressful life can be with all of the twists that nature has been throwing at our Department. Although flooding and Lake Erie events can be stressful, these events have shown that our Department is capable of demonstrating the very best in public service. This is not to say that I wish a continuum of natural disasters occur, but it was our chance to come out of the shadows of the public service arena and truly shine. I would like to use this article to note the tremendous role we play in the lives of the people of Lake County.

Recent events depict the devastating impact that inordinate amounts of water can have on communities (the people of New Orleans are still trying to recover). Water from heavy rains began infiltrating sanitary sewer collection systems at a rate well beyond volumes considered when these systems were designed. On Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup> around 3:00 pm, the City of Mentor contacted our offices and asked for help with rising water at the Route 306 underpass. Our employees stayed working through the event to insure that the effect of the storm on others would be minimal. By daybreak on Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup> another challenge began to surface. Traffic jams began to impede workers' ability to get to overloaded lift stations. This scenario played out countless times in the brief period and our dedicated team of employees were relentless in their efforts. There should be no doubt in any one's minds that our employees' exemplary performance prevented insurmountable losses to those we serve.

As a Department we demonstrated our cooperative nature. The Route 306 underpass is just one instance of our employees broadening the parameters of their public service. A coordinated effort by many county agencies and leaders focused on challenges presented and determined corrective actions with machine like precision. The LCDU Communications Center (in the third floor conference room) was initiated. Staff members from administrative, operations, financial, safety and engineering disciplines contacted remote facilities and the Lake County Emergency Operations Center for daily updates and to offer assistance as needed. This provided connectivity between our divisions and proved invaluable in its ability to move resources from one area to another.

The Commissioners wanted the landfill to be available to the public in need. Landfill hours were extended and employees from other areas within the utility assisted the landfill staff in dealing with water damage wastes that went from 400 tons to 1,600 tons overnight.

The following week, a series of events caused major disruption of the ecosystem in Lake Erie. Thursday afternoon August 3<sup>rd</sup> a yellow color and unpleasant odor was detected as the water entered the Aquarius Water Treatment Facility. It was soon determined that algae had begun to die off robbing the water of oxygen at unprecedented rates and high amounts of manganese (a mineral) caused water to discolor and further depleted available oxygen in the water. Treatment plant operators responded and by early Friday changes to the treatment plant began to take out the color and odor. The operations staff knew better than to stop there. Lab personnel continued to test water in 30 minute increments for over 72 hours and operators adjusted to the changing source water conditions. By Sunday the event began to subside. Distribution system operators flushed the system for the next week to insure that customers were getting the best product available.

As employees of the Lake County Department of Utilities YOU do all of this, and more.

I have had the opportunity to work at all levels within our organization and this has given me an extreme appreciation for what all of you do. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you and leave you with this thought:

*As public employees, YOU have a tremendous responsibility. YOU have a tremendous record of performance. You represent exemplary public service.*

**Submitted By: Rick Martin**

### **What is a Boil Water Order?**

A Boil Water Order is issued by public health officials when there is a concern that a disaster or other event has the potential to contaminate the water supply. If you don't have bottled water, you should boil water to make it safe. Boiling water will kill most types of disease-causing organisms that may be present. If the water is cloudy, filter it through clean cloths or allow it to settle, and draw off the clear water for boiling. Boil the water for one minute, let it cool, and store it in clean containers with covers.

Source: <http://epa.gov/safewater/faq/emerg.html>



## Employee Spotlight

**Linda Millberg**

Billing



***We have all had our embarrassing moments as adults and as kids. What would you say is your most embarrassing moment?***

There are just too many to mention...like doing this newsletter.

***What would you say is your least favorite household chore?***

I dislike doing windows and dusting the most.

***Most everyone likes to escape by watching a movie once in a while. What would be a movie you would recommend to all your friends?***

I would recommend Meet the Parents to my friends and family. For an older film, Dances With Wolves. No army type of movies and plenty of chick flicks, and HGTV when I can get the remote.

***Do you like to collect anything?***

I collect Boyds Bears and Longaberger baskets.

***Do you have any hobbies or interest?***

I enjoy scrap booking and camping @ our seasonal place located on Chautauqua Lake in New York.

***If we were to go to your house right now, what would we find in your refrigerator?***

Yogurt, besides keeping the obvious milk and eggs.

***What do you like most about your job?***

My co-workers. With my past health issues, my co-workers have always had me in their thoughts and prayers, and have been very supportive. I would also include the satisfaction of doing my job well and working with customers.

***So how many years have you been with the Department?***

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2006 I will have been with the Department for 16 years.

***Do you have any family in the area?***

Yes. I have a brother in Geneva and a sister in Ashtabula. I have been married for 26 years to my husband Gary, who is employed by Avery Dennison. I also have two sons, Andy (24) and Steve (23).

***Where did you grow up and go to school?***

I grew up in Ashtabula and I attended Ashtabula High School. I also attended Ashtabula County Joint Vocational School.

## Get Healthy Lake County "B Fit 4 Life" Corporate Challenge

If there is enough interest, our Department will form a team to participate in the 5-month event involving the collaborative partners of Lake Metroparks, Lake County Health District and the YMCA of Lake County. The program will kick-off in January of 2007 and will continue through May 2007. Each month the challenge will feature different activities such as softball, basketball, bowling for employees to accumulate points for their team. Some of the benefits include:

- A pedometer and log sheet to track daily steps walked.
- Alternative fitness activities at the YMCA and Lake Metroparks.
- Free online access to a registered dietician to answer your nutritional questions.

Please contact Scott Cole (350-5706) by October 20th if you are interested in being on a Department team.

## Customer Service Group

As mentioned in our first newsletter, the Customer Service Group was created to identify ways to enhance customer service in the Department. Before we can begin to address the issue of how to enhance customer service, we need to ask ourselves who are our customers and what our customers' needs are.

Generally, we consider our customers to be the individuals and companies to whom we provide water, sanitary sewer and solid waste services. The majority of our customers would fall under this definition. This type of customer is referred to as an external customer. The second group of people (customers) is our internal customers. This group consists of our co-workers, not only those with whom we work side-by-side each day but also those throughout the Department.

Now take a moment and think about this question. What constitutes good customer service?

The Customer Service Group defines good customer service as *providing accurate information, resolving problems and contacting customers for follow up in a timely and professional manner*. This standard applies to both

our external customers and internal customers.

The foundation for good customer services begins with how well we respond to the needs of our internal customers, our co-workers.

How would you rate the quality of service you provide to your co-workers?

Let's use the standard noted above to help us answer.

Do you make an effort to research and understand the particulars so as to provide accurate information?

Keep in mind, the information we provide or fail to provide can affect the outcome.

Do you take ownership of your work assignments and follow through in a timely manner or does your co-worker have to remind you repeatedly? So, how is the quality of your service?

Would your co-workers agree with the rating you gave yourself? Can we do better? Yes, we can!

**Submitted By: Katie Sheffield**

## Where's Bobby?

Robert Brassell, known to us all as "Bobby" worked @ the East End Service Center for 21 ½ years as a Supervisor. He retired from the Department on March 31, 2005. Life after retirement for Bobby began with a few months of long overdue rest and relaxation. Of course all who know him know that he couldn't

be idle for too long. So he started working for Eye-Will Equipment, running heavy machinery. He worked with them for nearly a year until he switched employers and began working for Lassnick Excavating and is working there currently. When he is not working, he loves to tinker in the yard, fish in his

pond and hike through the woods with his dogs. Although he is retired he is still very busy but doesn't have the added day to day stress of being accountable for a work crew. He said to say hi to everyone and sends his best.

**Submitted By: Kristen Berg**

Small changes in your diet can reduce the amount of fat you eat. Try these small changes:

- Switch from whole milk to low-fat milk. If you drink two glasses of milk a day, you will save 800 calories a week.
- Skip the pepperoni, sausage or ham on a pizza, Save 50 - 100 calories per slice.
- Instead of sour cream, use a mixture of nonfat plain yogurt and low-fat cottage cheese on a baked potato.

Source: [www.co.oakland.mi.us/health](http://www.co.oakland.mi.us/health)

## Written Correspondence Committee Update

Over the last couple of months, the written correspondence committee focused on a solid waste letter for the intent to apply for a Permit to Install. The committee also provided input for the Department website. Seasonal interns Courtney Brenkus and Jessica Spuzzillo added their communication talents to the meetings. A sample before and after piece of communication will be enclosed in a future newsletter.

**Submitted By: Beth Hripko**



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## Asset Management

In the previous issue, Asset Management and its importance were explained. This issue will discuss the first step in implementing our Asset Management Plan - creating an inventory of existing assets through data gathering. The age, type of material and condition of the pipe or asset are all needed to determine when an asset may need to be replaced or rehabilitated.

Forms have been developed and are being used by the water department to document and determine the cause of water main breaks and the condition of the pipe. This information is entered into a data base. As more and more data is received and recorded, we will be better able to predict when a line may fail.

Forms have also been developed for the sanitary sewer department to make notes regarding the conditions of sanitary manholes. As we locate sanitary manholes with the GPS, we are opening each manhole and recording observations such as leaking walls or broken steps. In

addition, we are cleaning and televising every main line sewer in the Village of Fairport Harbor to determine exactly what needs to be done to improve the system.

It is very important to be observant any time work is done on a pipe or other asset. Make notes on the condition of the pipe inside and out. Try to determine the cause of the failure. Report anything out of the ordinary or unique for possible further action.

Gathering inventory and determining the condition of assets is an ongoing process. With more data we will be able to make better informed decisions regarding replacement and rehabilitation of our assets. With everyone's involvement, we will compile an accurate inventory of our systems.

***Submitted By: Randy Rothlisberger***

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## Upcoming Holidays

Columbus Day — October 9th

Veterans Day — November 10th

Thanksgiving Day — November 23rd

Christmas Day — December 25th



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## According To...

According to Randy Rothlisberger, the top five places to go for a hike in Lake County are:

1. Hogback Ridge North, Madison Twp – Enter off of SR 307 east of Bates Rd. Dirt path also used for mountain biking. Great view from 100 feet above the Grand River.
2. Hogback Ridge South, Madison Twp – Enter off Doty Rd. Take the stone path down to Mill Creek. Find a place to cross and there are acres to explore along the flood plain and on top of the ridge. You may have to share the park with the steelhead fishermen in the fall and spring
3. Chapin Forest, Kirtland – Enter off SR 306 and go to the turn around. Take the Lucky Stone Loop Trail. Pretty easy walking. Great view of Downtown Cleveland over an old quarry.
4. Girdled Rd Reservation, Concord – Enter off Girdled Rd. Take the Buckeye Trail down into the Big Creek Valley. Well maintained trail with lots of hills. Hike to the connector before turning around.
5. Hell Hollow, Leroy – Enter off Leroy Center Rd. Take the stairs down to the Paine Creek Valley. Hike downstream along the creek and you'll find several large and small waterfalls. Also a great place to look for fossils.

Please contact a member of the Newsletter Team if you are interested in submitting an "According To."

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## Rules and Regulations Committee

The Rules and Regulations Committee is hard at work making changes and revisions to the current rules and regulations. The committee meets every week on Wednesday at 9:00 am. Any changes or revisions will be submitted to the prosecutor's office for review the first week in October.

***Submitted By: Tonya Reidy***

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## County-Wide Events

For more information and events visit <http://www.lakevisit.com/events.html>

### October:

7th-Autumn at the Lagoons Arts & Crafts show @ Mentor Lagoons

7th-8th-Corn & Pumpkin Harvest Festival @ Lake Farmpark

13th-14th, 20th-21st, 27th-28th-Halloween Hayrides @ Lake Farmpark

14th-18th-Indian Museum in Willoughby - 26th Anniversary

15th-17th Fall Bridal Gala @ the Mentor Comfort Inn

20th-21st-Magical WHooloween at Penitentiary Glen's Nature Center

28th-Hallowine Party at Debonne' Vineyards

28th-Ghosts of the White House @ Lawnfield

### November:

3rd, 17th-Country Western Square Dancing & Round Dancing in Kirtland

5th-Wildwood Quilters Guild Quilt Auction @ Mentor Senior Center

5th-Northeast Running Club Autumn Leaves 5-Mile Off Road Run

11th-Lake Catholic High School Annual Craft Fair

14th-Holiday Open Houses - Downtown Painesville

17th-Big Brothers & Big Sisters of Northeast Ohio 4th Annual Festival of Trees Gala @ Quail Hollow Resort

18th-Woodland Halle Days @ Penitentiary Glen

### December:

1st-Spirit of the Season Festival & Parade @ various locations in Painesville

1st-3rd, 8th-10th-Tannenbaum Trail @ various Lake and Ashtabula County wineries

1st-3rd, 7th-22nd-Country Lights @ Lake Farmpark

2nd-Marine Museum During Harbor Holidays

2nd-Holiday Victorian Tea @ Pine Ridge Country Club

3rd-26th Wildwood Holiday Craft Show

10th-Lawnfield Inn & Suites, Mentor Performing Arts Concert Series

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## So Who Won The Newsletter Title Contest?

Thank you for the numerous Newsletter Title Contest entries. We received a total of 54 suggestions. A blind voting system was used to determine the winner, with each team member rating each suggestion on a scale of 1 - 10 (10 being the favorite). The entry with the highest number won.

Congratulations to David Ivans, winner of the Newsletter Title Contest. David will receive a \$50.00 gift card for his entry, "Underground News."

Runners up were, "The Quarterly Pipeline" submitted by Brian Cook and "Tap-In News" by Grant Glazier.

A special thanks to Lucy McClung for her creative and artistic suggestions.

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## Save The Date - Holiday Party

Our Department holiday party will be held on Friday, **December 1st at Hellriegel's Inn** located at 1840 Mentor Avenue in Painesville Township. The party will start at 6:30 pm and end at 11:00 pm.

Dinner will be a buffet of roast beef, chicken marsala, tossed salad, penne pasta, mixed vegetables, Hellriegel's signature sticky buns and dessert. A disc jockey will be provided for dancing and entertainment.

The cost for the event is \$25.00 per person. Please make checks payable to Diane Hine no later than November 17th.

More information and communications to follow.



## Safety News

As we near completion in developing our Department's hearing conservation program you will start to see some of the following improvements:

- Signs will be posted in high noise exposure areas or on high noise equipment.
- Employees with frequent high noise exposures (WESC, EESC and Solid Waste) will be entered into a hearing conservation program. This program requires the use of hearing protection during specific tasks. Each employee in the program will have their hearing tested annually at Lake Hospital. These designated employees will receive a review of their audiogram compared to the initial (baseline) audiogram annually.
- New sound maps will be posted at each facility designating noise levels in each area of the site.
- Hearing conservation training will be provided for all Department employees.

Please contact your site safety representative or Scott Cole for further information.

**Submitted By: Scott Cole**



## Happy Birthday

### OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS:

Frank Zalek	10/5
Jim Binns	10/6
Jeff Urban	10/7
Kerry Troy	10/16
Tom Rigby	10/16
Doug Breach	10/17
Rich Hazen	10/17
Al Saari	10/18
Mark Rhoades	10/19
John Diemert	10/21
Tiffany Ducksworth	10/22
Chris Hodges	10/23
Ron Hakli	10/23
Roger Barbian	10/26
Kristen Berg	10/29
Connie Strickland	10/30

### NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Beth Hripko	11/1
Mike Shack	11/2
Scott McGlothin	11/4
Hollie Bartone	11/5
Joe Elmore	11/7
Missy Weiss	11/7
Brian Rihtar	11/10
Nick Iarocci	11/14
Barney Slovinsky	11/15
Nancy Videtic	11/15
Richard Miklaucic	11/19
Steve Seaman	11/19
William Simone	11/19
Buddy Scoville	11/25
Joe Misosky	11/27
Sam Rice	11/27

### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Greg Widmer	12/2
Maryhelen Gilkey	12/4
Dave Baum	12/6
Mike Melnyk	12/6
John Zak	12/8
Ken Overbaugh	12/9
Skip Rigby	12/13
Tom Moviel	12/13
Carrol Chase	12/14
Nancy Perkins	12/15
Jason Emming	12/17
Lucy McClung	12/18
Lori Ross	12/21
John Spuzzillo	12/21
Tom Hanes	12/22
Jim Adams	12/24
Frank Brundula	12/27
Pat Bush	12/30

***Please contact a member of the Newsletter Team if you wish to have your name removed from birthday announcements.***