



# Illinois Rural Water Association

## Staff Members

### **Executive Director**

Frank Dunmire (dunmire@ilrwa.org)

### **Deputy Director**

Don Craig (craig@ilrwa.org)

### **Membership Services Assistant**

Heather McLeod (ilrwahm@ilrwa.org)

### **Administrative/Program Assistant**

Denise Burke (ilrwadb@ilrwa.org)

### **EPA Training Specialist**

Wayne Nelson (ilrwawn@ilrwa.org)

### **Circuit Rider #1**

Gale Moore (moore@ilrwa.org)

### **Circuit Rider #2**

Patricia Gammill (gam@ilrwa.org)

### **Circuit Rider #3**

Chuck Woodworth (ilrwacw@ilrwa.org)

### **Wastewater Technician #1**

Bill Dowell (dowell@ilrwa.org)

### **Wastewater Technician #2**

John Bell (ilrwajb@ilrwa.org)

### **USDA Source Water Protection Specialist**

Mark Mitchell (mitchell@ilrwa.org)

### **USEPA Source Water Protection Specialist**

Kathy Rodgers (Rodgers@ilrwa.org)



## **IRWA Completes Major Sewer Video Project**

**By: Don Craig, Deputy Director**

Recently, our Wastewater Tech, John Bell and I completed a sanitary sewer video inspection for the Village of Schram City, an IRWA member utility located in Montgomery County. Our state of the art inspection equipment and mobile van were used to conduct and complete the project. And, although IRWA has conducted many one-day inspections of various utilities across the state during the course of the last year...this is the first rural facility that had a complete wastewater system go through the process. In all, nearly 27,000 linear feet of line was viewed, recorded, and data acquired with our Aries motorized video camera unit.

videos, and also, graphic hardcopy files. We were able to note areas of high concern, with evident and potential deficiencies in the system; which definitely are contributing or may contribute, to the overall high influx of extra water into the Village sewer lines. Also, the town will now have recorded and logged locations of the laterals connected to the main lines of the system, as well as more definitive distances between manholes.

We had very good cooperation with Village personnel, in seeing the project to an end... especially from brothers, Bob and Steve Hefley, both of which were a great asset in helping out each day. They not only provided physical assistance at each step of the way to complete the process, but added valuable information about the system to aid in the overall recording and reporting procedure of the inspection. John and I both, truly appreciate the both of them being onsite, every work day we were there.

IRWA continues to receive several inquires and scheduling of sewer line inspections, whether sanitary or storm lines. We have some larger projects in the works and many one-day projects as well. And, of course, we give our member utilities first priority, and a discount on pricing to complete projects. Check our website out for more information or give me a call directly to discuss potential work in your system.

The Village Board requested our assistance, last year, to develop a proposal to complete the project, as they have been incurring high infiltration into the system. The town pipes their sewage to a neighboring community for treatment, and of course, pays a metered fee to do so. As such, there is an urgent need to lower the overall amount of flow into the other wastewater system; thus saving the Village of Schram City money in the long run, and influent overload to the receiving treatment plant, as well. This initial process, and the data acquired, will be used by the utility's engineering firm, to help the board develop a strategy to resolve issues noted during the course of the inspection.

The unit and software used, proved to work very well and produce good reports, both digitally in high quality

**Website: [www.ilrwa.org](http://www.ilrwa.org)**

## **IRWA'S MISSION STATEMENT**

"Protecting and preserving the water and wastewater resources of Rural Illinois through education, representation and on-site technical assistance"

The IRWA Office will be closed the following upcoming holidays:

Wednesday, July 4, 2012

Monday, September 3, 2012



## Benefit Yourself.....Benefit Others!!! By: Patricia Gammill, Circuit Rider

As you all know February 29<sup>th</sup> 2012 an EF4 tornado, the second strongest category, touched down in Southern Illinois. Harrisburg suffered the most devastation when it claimed 6 lives. Ridgway had severe structural damage and several other rural communities were affected. The area was truly in need of aid. As a Circuit Rider for IRWA and Southern Illinois being my territory, I was able to provide some assistance.

Before I headed to the affected areas, I spoke with Becky Mitchell, mayor for Ridgway. I wanted to know what items were needed the most and what can I do? I found out that even with Emergency Response Plans in place, communities can never be totally prepared. Amazingly enough however, people seem to come out of the woodwork bringing donated supplies and offering their time to help in the cleanup efforts. Typically human nature leads us to donate food, clothing, bottled water, household supplies, etc. The amount of these supplies brought in is astounding!

However, because disaster strikes unannounced...a community may not have a stock pile of say...tarps for example. This was the case in Ridgway. Their local and only hardware store in town was destroyed by

the tornado. Because more storms were predicted to follow, they really needed to cover the damaged structures to protect what contents the tornado did not destroy. So the demand for tarps was one item at the top of the list.

Knowing that, I was able to take a significant amount of tarps, thanks to purchases made by IRWA, and tarps donated by Restoff Tru-Value in Nashville, and Wal-Mart in Mt. Vernon.

The next day myself and staff from Hamilton County Water District, Dale Biggerstaff and Dave Harmon joined hundreds of volunteers in Harrisburg. Dale and Dave brought trucks, chainsaws and gear for clean-up. Operation Blessing, the organization in charge of volunteer coordination, assigned us to a group sent to clear a 6 acre field covered in debris and downed trees. We also helped individual homes in need and assisted unloading truckloads of donated supplies into an empty warehouse, which was also donated for the cause.

The entire experience was very humbling. I can only say, "Until you are up close and personal you can't fathom the damage".

So because each community's needs are unique when disaster strikes, IRWA and their staff are dedicated to working with you and your community to bring

supplemental aid. Therefore, in response to this recent tragedy, the IRWA board has approved an additional voluntary "Emergency Relief" line item on your renewal packet.

This line item is designed to help aid in acquiring the miscellaneous and unexpected needs for your community in the event of a disaster. So, when renewing your dues this year please consider what your contributions could mean to your community. Disasters always seem to pull people together...let's not wait till another one strikes. We can all stay ahead of the storm better if we pool our resources together now.

Thanks in advance for your support and as always thanks for being a part of the Illinois Rural Water Association.

See ya in my travels!



Pictured are Dave Harmon, IRWA Circuit Rider Pat Gammill & Dale Biggerstaff from Hamilton County Water District.





## What the Heck is Going On Out There??

By: Wayne Nelson, IRWA Training Specialist

Several years ago I held a meeting with operators, board members, and IEPA personnel to discuss the type of training that IRWA should provide. At that meeting one of the IEPA regional managers offered that we should instruct operators in how to do the job right. I replied that I believed that we always shoot for that goal. He then clarified his statement that we should instruct the operators not to falsify paperwork and testing results. I thought at that time that 1) this type of training wasn't needed and 2) this would not be an easy session to do. Essentially, I would be telling attendees to "straighten up and fly right" and quit being no-good lying crooks.

A lot has changed since that meeting. If there was one game-changing moment, it was probably the Crestwood, Illinois water supply case. The system illegally used a contaminated well for approximately 25% of its drinking water for nearly two decades. As operators, you may remember when the wording changed on all state forms stating that falsification is now a Class 4 felony with repeated violations considered as

Class 3 felonies. This had its roots in the Crestwood case.

In the time that has passed since my planning meeting, I have seen and heard about several operators (and system officials) that are not doing it right. As is the Crestwood information, the following is all now public record. A former water superintendent at Princeton, Illinois lost his job due to falsifying where he took his monthly bacteriological samples. A northern Illinois director of public works lost his job due to spending city money on equipment for his private business. In respect to big money being stolen from a municipality, the champ has to be the former comptroller for the City of Dixon, Illinois. This lady has been charged with allegedly stealing **\$53,000,000** since 1990.

Finally, in April, 2012, a former water operator was convicted on two counts of violating the IEPA Act in the Macon County courts. The charges involved falsifying the locations that bacteriological samples were being collected. His punishment included permanent loss of his Illinois Class A water license, the need to resign all

committees and boards that he served on, 18 months court supervision, 250 hours of community service, and paying court costs. The defendant was a man with 30 years in the business that has lost his professional career and reputation due to "not doing it right". The IEPA will be publicizing this case and this is definitely not the type of publicity that anyone wants.

Now let's get back to our profession as public water supply operators. This is the group that the IEPA manager wanted me to train on how to do it right. At the time of the meeting I didn't think that this type of training was needed but he obviously knew things that were going on that I did not.

Ours is an honorable profession regardless of the things that a few operators do. Please keep that in mind if you get the urge to "cut a corner" and not do it right. I want to continue to see you down the road.



### CHECK YOUR MAILBOX.....

THE 9TH ANNUAL IRWA GOLF OUTING BROCHURES HAVE BEEN MAILED OUT.

Friday, August 24, 2012—10:00 a.m. shot gun start

Piper Glen Golf Course—Springfield, Illinois  
You can also go online to our website and sign up at [www.ilrwa.org](http://www.ilrwa.org). Hope to see you there!!



Illinois Rural Water Association  
3305 Kennedy Road  
P.O. Box 49  
Taylorville, Illinois 62568

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QUALITY ON TAP

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

## **VOTING**

- Bird Pinkstaff Water District
- City of Flora
- City of Grafton
- Long Creek Township Water Department
- Village of Lostant
- Village of Sparland

## **ASSOCIATE**

- Fassett Sales Co.
- Hydro Mole
- PBD Painting Company

## **S.O.U.P.**

- Steve Kemper
- Janice Melton
- Timothy Price
- Bill Rankin

## **SUPPORTING**

- Illinois American Water Company—East St. Louis