



Water Ways

Volume XV – Fall 2018



MANHOLE ADJUSTMENT RING

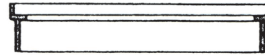
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HEATHER MCLEOD
Membership Services Assistant
ilrwahm@ilrwa.org

DENISE BURKE
Administrative/Program Assistant
ilrwadb@ilrwa.org

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State Circuit Rider
cameron@ilrwa.org • 217-820-3814

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noe@ilrwa.org • 217-820-1564

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ilrwajb@ilrwa.org • 217-820-1568

JEFF MCCREADY
Wastewater Technician
mccready@ilrwa.org • 217-870-4754

MARK MITCHELL
USDA Source Water Specialist
mitchell@ilrwa.org • 217-820-1565

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MISSION STATEMENT

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

On the Cover:

This picture was taken at Taylorville Lake by Heather McLeod, Membership Services Assistant.

Water Ways is the official publication of the Illinois Rural Water Association, P.O. Box 49, Taylorville, Illinois 62568, and is published quarterly for distribution to members as well as other industry associations and friends. Our website is www.ilrwa.org. Articles and photographs are encouraged. Advertising and submissions should be mailed to the above address or e-mail us at ilrwadb@ilrwa.org.



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Low Chlorine Residuals

by Greg Bates,
IRWA Board President

I recently was involved in a conversation with several engineers about a rural water utility having problems maintaining chlorine residuals in certain parts of their water distribution system. This was interesting to me as our system had similar problems last year in August and September trying to retain chlorine residuals even after flushing for several weeks in a row. This usually occurs once per year in our surface water system when the switch over from total chlorine to free chlorine occurs, for the yearly chloramine maintenance. The engineers had a crew do repeated flushing in the areas where low chlorine residual levels were occurring, but the result seemed to be the same...not much improvement. A consultation occurred between the engineering firm, water system officials, IEPA, and the water operators to come up with a next step plan. A decision was made to do some bacteriological testing in the areas of the low chlorine residual and try to find out what they were dealing with.

They did three rounds of samples (8-9 samples per round) throughout the distribution system and the last set of samples was speciated to determine the type of bacteria and the number of colonies present of each. It was determined that the problem was a bacteria called *Bacillus Thuringiensis-Cererus*; and it was at greater than 500cfu (Colony Forming Units per gram of sample) in several samples in an area of distribution system of 5 miles wide and 2 miles deep. This bacteria isn't considered to be harmful and is present everywhere. In a moist, warmer and confined area it either uses up or consumes the chlorine residuals when the colony numbers are high.

The solution to this problem is still to be determined. Flushing the area obviously was not the solution as the numbers didn't seem to change much. Currently they have added a portable chlorine injection system to provide a higher dose of chlorine to the area to try to eliminate or reduce the bacteria.



This was done to break the chlorine to a free residual so they have a stronger disinfectant to help kill the bacteria. While chloramines allow chlorine residuals to carry further/longer in a system, they are not as strong of an oxidant/disinfectant... so they are trying to get beyond the breakpoint and push free chlorine into this small area of the system. Sometimes the ammonia and organics in the water also feeds the bacteria allowing it to grow. So far there has been great improvement to the chlorine residuals in that area ranging between 2.0 Total to 3.0 Total, but still weak in part of the area. There has been some discussion about trying a Bio Penetrant chemical to eliminate the bacteria if the chlorine doesn't solve the problem.

The end result is yet to be determined. The portable chlorine injection unit has been in place for about 1.5 weeks at the time of this article and they don't expect to fix a problem that may have taken years to develop within a short period of time. 💧



Federal Funding: Take Advantage

by Don Craig,
Deputy Director, IRWA

Recently, myself and most of the IRWA staff and Board, returned from attending the annual National Rural Water Association Conference; which was held in Ft. Worth, Texas. This yearly convention is held at different large city venues across the nation. State Rural Water Association's staff, board members, and most importantly, representatives of their member small systems...travel from across the nation each September or October to come to this event, which is known as the WaterPro Conference. Next year's happening, will take place in September; and be held in "Music City"...Nashville, Tennessee...at the ever expansive Gaylord Opryland Hotel. If you've never been to Nashville, you have definitely missed something. And, the Gaylord Hotel is huge, and beautiful, to say the least.

Getting back to this past conference in Ft. Worth, there were very informative

large opening and more formal specific sessions in regard to federal funding for rural water and wastewater systems across the nation. And speakers, stressed the fact, that agencies such as the USDA's Rural Development and the USEPA, are urging towns, districts, etc., to seek federal dollars for any and all new construction, renovations, replacements, etc. that they may need for their small communities and rural areas served.

There is no doubt, that aging utility infrastructure is an ongoing issue throughout the country, especially for rural areas that continue to see a migration of young people away from small towns to larger more metropolitan areas. Rural Development's low interest loan and grant funding programs, along with the EPA's Revolving Loan funds (handled by each state authority), have been and will continue to be a huge plus for those systems seeking to bring new

life to their existing facilities, construct totally new utilities, or even to expand into new suppliers.

I wanted to pass along just one small example of how rural funding makes a difference. I became aware of this, not too long before we left for the Texas conference. It is excerpts of a news story which was passed along to me by one of our member systems in northwest



Illinois. A copy of the entire article (from the online news source SaukValley.com) was sent to me by the town's Public Works Director, Tom Pierce. A couple years ago, while we were conducting a sewer video inspection for the town, Tom had mentioned to me and one of our Wastewater Techs, that they were in the early process of securing some kind of funding to replace several of the existing water lines, that were in dire condition after nearly a century of use. Of course, we stressed the need to talk to funding agencies, such as RD and the IEPA (who handles the revolving loan funds in Illinois), to work to get the ball rolling in possibly securing some type of low interest loan and grant money. The rural village's name is Tampico, and its aging water system serves approximately 800 residents via 345 connections throughout the town.

The article (dated July 16th) stated: "The Village will receive about \$2.5 million in federal funding to replace 2.47 miles of water main line on the northwest side of town. The announcement came from the office of U.S. Rep. Cheri Bustos, D-East Moline. Tampico will receive

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Water System Viability and Fiscal Responsibility

by Clark Cameron,
IRWA Circuit Rider

Hello everyone, I guess introductions are in order since I'm the "new guy" for IRWA. My name is Clark Cameron, and I have been a Class C water operator for 16 years, and am the new State Circuit Rider for the Illinois Rural Water Association.

I wanted to talk about fiscal responsibility and system viability in today's water industry. As all of you out there know, it is getting harder and harder to make ends meet...and there are many reasons why this is true. The cost of labor is always on the rise, and of course chemicals and utility costs rise yearly as well.

So, what can the smaller towns and water systems do to combat all these rising expenses? That is a question that is being asked more these days than ever before; with the answers as widely varied as the communities themselves. Some communities are cutting hours of operation, and the work force, to a bare minimum. While this idea does save money on operational costs, initially it does not address the reasons for the financial problems as a whole. Some communities are consolidating with other small systems to create regional water facilities. But bigger is not better if



the same management mistakes are being made as were made before. And as yet another answer, some towns are turning to private companies to run the community utilities. I can see how many small town boards could be convinced to go the way of privatization simply by the thought of being rid of the responsibility of the day to day governance. But, is this in the best interest of the community? There are becoming more examples of this way of thinking with each passing year, but only time will tell if this is a good plan. The bottom line is that no matter how big or small the town or water system...fiscal responsibility and

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Water System Viability and Fiscal Responsibility

continued from page 6

strong financial management are required to succeed.

Now let's explore the various ways that revenue can be lost. One of the main reasons is pumped water that is not accounted for. This may be the result of many causes including leaks, hydrant flushing and fires, filter backwashes, municipal pool facilities, unmetered users, and even possible theft. Having a meter maintenance and replacement program in place, is a good step to help prevent the unmetered usage. A consistent and accurate reading of the meters and collection of the bills is also vital. Good system maintenance with timely repairs of leaks is always a good idea. Proper chemical usage at the plant

can make a huge difference in filter runs and how often backwashes are required. All of which are pretty common sense things, but they are often overlooked.

And finally, a potential major reason for sub-par revenue income is the utilization of a poor rate structure. Facility management, in a lot of cases, has failed to make the hard decisions to raise the rates to match the rising expenses. While it is true that nobody wants to pay more for their water, the reality is that it costs more to provide quality and quantity of water with each passing year. The least painful way to accomplish rate increases is to do so a little at a time...each year if needed... instead of large raises every time an

emergency arises. Set a rate structure that generates sufficient revenue for your system to meet its needs, with modest raises built in for the future, and there should be enough department funds for whatever arises.

Whatever the way you choose to confront lost revenue, always keep an eye to the future and try to stay ahead of any financial problems rather than having to play catch-up. Make the hard decisions now, and be prepared. Good luck... because it's not always going to be an easy process, but if you need help, remember that IRWA is here to provide assistance.



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the money from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Rural Development. Approval was given for a \$1 million grant and a low-interest loan in the amount of \$1.565 million."

The story went on to say: "The Tampico Village Council gave its approval in October 2016, to pursue funding for the project, which will replace 30 percent of the village's water mains that provide water to over 790 residents. The water is safe, but the aging, undersized mains have a string of breaks." "Having clean water is essential and these Rural Development dollars will ensure that residents have the infrastructure needed to deliver it to

their homes," Bustos said when making the announcement. Bustos also said that more than half of the nation's water systems with health violations serve communities of 500 or fewer residents, demonstrating the need for more such Rural Development funding.

"It should be noted that Tampico has no problems with the Illinois EPA at this time, but the village wants to avoid that possible scenario in the future."

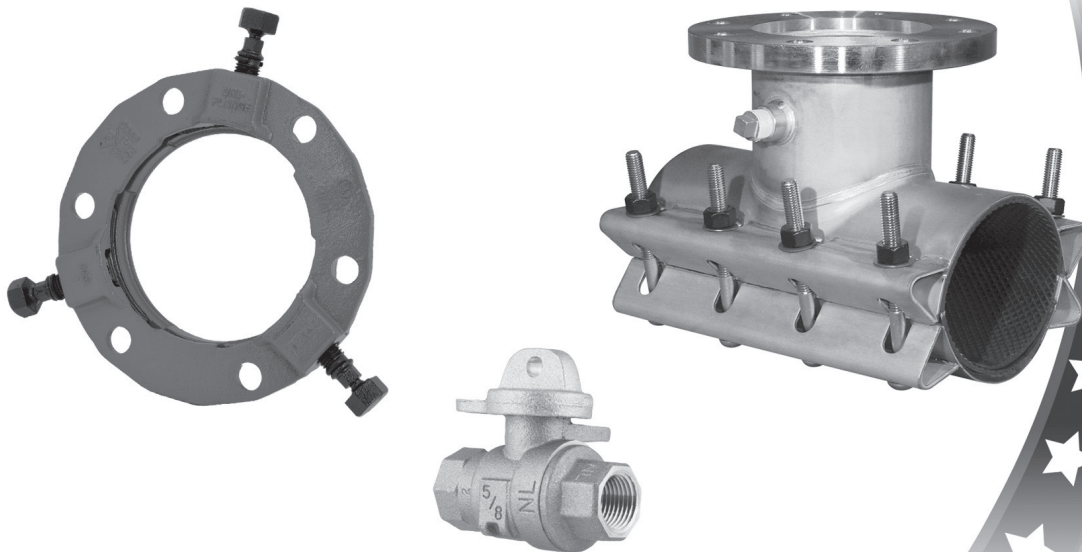
So, this is just one small example, of a community water system being proactive

in acquiring available federal dollars to renovate and improve their system. And, the ultimate goal is to continue to improve the entire distribution lines within the utility, as fiscally possible in the future. I'm sure Tom, and the residents of Tampico, are glad to see progressive and positive action in regard to their water supply's integrity and longevity.

As you travel into this small town, it generally resembles most all rural villages in Illinois and across the nation; but, it does have one lasting and impressive "claim to fame". Tampico is the birthplace of our country's 40th President... Ronald Reagan! 💧

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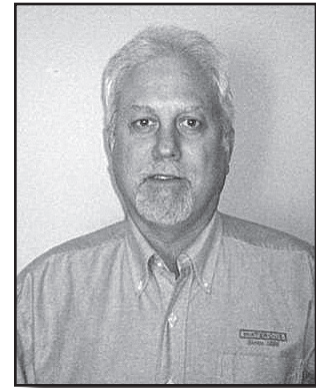
Smoke Testing

by Jeff McCready,
IRWA Wastewater Technician

In the past 17 months, as a Wastewater Tech at Illinois Rural Water Association, I can count on one hand (and have fingers left over) the number of wastewater facilities that do not have issues with inflow and infiltration...otherwise known as “I & I”. Higher flows during rain events can lead to issues at treatment plants, lift stations, sewer backups in homeowners’ basements and higher energy costs from excess pumping. Sources of I&I can include cracked main lines, laterals, manholes, cross connected storm sewer points of access, homeowner gutter down

spouts or foundation drains, cleanout caps cracked or missing, and illegal sump pumps.

Smoke testing is one method of identifying and locating some of these connections. Smoke testing is the process of mixing non-toxic smoke with large volumes of air into the sanitary sewer line typically through a manhole. The smoke travels the path of least resistance and quickly shows up in areas that allow the water to enter the system. The reason I stated “locating some of these connections” is because, typically a sump pump has a check valve on the



discharge line and most of the time the pump is sitting in water, therefore the smoke will not show up at the sump pump.

IRWA personnel are available to help

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The Rural Water Fleet Program is a valuable member benefit for water and wastewater utilities. State Rural Water Associations determine eligibility for their members, and provide a fleet code that allows access to substantial vehicle discounts to fill the need for reliable work vehicles. Fleet vehicles must be registered in the name of a member water or wastewater system.

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On-Site Registration

All conference attendees must obtain a name badge and conference material at the registration desk. If you do not pre-register, please make sure that you register as soon as possible after you arrive at the conference center. Please note that on-site registration is \$25.00 higher than pre-registration.

Registration Hours

Thursday, November 15th 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.

Hospitality Evening

After the sessions end for the day mingle with your peers and join us for appetizers & beverages.

Cancellation & Refunds

Refunds are issued only in the event of an emergency or hospitalization. We must have a **written notice of cancellation** to issue a refund.



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Thursday, November 15

8:30 a.m.—9:15 a.m. “Municipal Websites”

Rural Water Impact/Municipal Impact makes it easy for systems to set up and manage their own website. Shelly and Shannon will be showing us how simple it can be.

9:25 a.m.—10:10 a.m. “Identity Theft and Utilities”

Tim Bertschy from Heyl Royster will teach us the guidelines for complying with federal and state regulations protecting customers' information from identity theft.

10:20 a.m.—11:05 a.m. “Basics of Writing and Applying for Grants” Emily Fortschneider with Heneghan and Associates, will be discussing the confusing process of writing and applying for grants.

11:15 a.m.—12:00 p.m. “Rural Development Updates”

This session will be a discussion of the money and programs that Rural Development has to offer.

1:00 p.m.—2:00 p.m. “FOIA and the Open Meetings Act”

Chris Boggs, AAG, Assistant Public Access Counselor from the Illinois Attorney General's Office will talk about and review the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act.

2:10 p.m.—2:55 p.m. “Utility Software and Solutions”

Christine and Kathy from Cambridge Technologies will be discussing software solutions that includes utility billing, accounting, checkbook manager, and payroll programs.

3:05 p.m.—4:00 p.m. “Eliminate Paper and Fire Excel!”

Chris Sosnowski, CEO of Waterly will be discussing the inefficient way the water industry collects its data. Standard data collection methods result in lost time, lost revenue, and insufficient insight into how our water systems are operating. See how they want to change the future of water for the better!

Friday, November 16

8:30 a.m.—9:15 a.m. “Lifestyles Health Plans”

Brian Jablonski with CBIZ will go over this option for low cost health insurance. Only 2 or more people are needed in your group to start a plan.

9:25 a.m.—10:10 a.m. “Ameren Illinois Efficiency Programs”

Leidos Engineering is an Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Contractor. They will be telling us about programs available for energy efficiency projects at WWTP's.

10:20 a.m.—11:05 a.m. Options for Accepting Credit and Debit Cards” Tracy Rone from CourtMoney will discuss a service to help set up and accept credit/debit card payments.

11:05 a.m. —11:15 a.m. “Property and Casualty Insurance Overview” Jeff Krzyaniak from Dimond Bros. Insurance will discuss options for property and casualty coverage.

NOVEMBER 15 & 16, 2018

Registration Form

Must be completed for all attendees

(Please photo copy for each additional attendee)

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Non-Member \$215.00 = \$ _____ 2nd Non-Member \$107.50 = \$ _____

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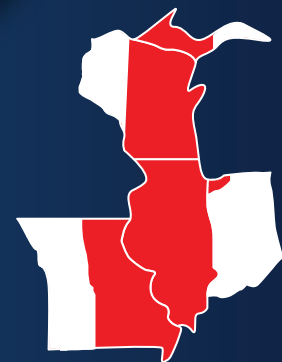
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with this relatively easy process with 2 smoke machines for loan to members. Some planning and notifications are needed prior to the process. A “must” before smoke testing is to explain to residents in the affected area... what you are doing, why you are doing it, when you are going to do it, and what is liable to happen when you do it. One way of doing this is using door hangers or letters sent out a few days prior to the testing. Also the local fire department and sheriff’s offices must be notified. The reasons for this are, that during the smoke testing process residents will notice smoke coming from the plumbing vents on the roofs of the houses and various locations throughout the neighborhood and possibly inside their homes.

As I stated before, the smoke machines are free to loan to IRWA members; and the cost to the facility is minimal. The system is responsible



for the purchase of the liquid smoke (approximately \$60/ gallon through USA Bluebook or similar vendors), gas for the machine, and having no less than 2 people to assist. If you’re like a lot small communities and only have 1 or 2 employees, you may be able to recruit the Mayor or Board Members to help.

At one of the facilities that I assisted, we found 8 different sources of I&I after setting up on one manhole. Two

of these sources included 2 catch basins in the street. Another facility also found catch basins in the street connected to the sanitary sewer, plus an abandoned warehouse with holes in the roof where all the rain water was running down various drains inside. These are not sources easy to eliminate. The problems with catch basins are, that you need to have some storm sewer line or appropriate drainage, to tie these into or you have street flooding. It can be an expensive repair to make, but possibly could save the facility money in the long run.

If you think smoke testing of your sanitary sewer lines might be something you want to do, contact the Wastewater Tech in your area, or the IRWA office, and we can see if smoke testing is right for you and your system.

Keep up the good work all of you do and be safe. 💧





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As the Cookie Crumbles, So Do My Excuses

by Rev. James L. Snyder

Several weeks ago, I was at home alone when the doorbell rang. I answered the door to find representatives from a local Girl Scout troop doing what they do so well; selling Girl Scout cookies.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage was not home so danger was not lurking behind the living room curtains. When Girl Scouts come selling cookies, I am cookie dough in their fundraising hands.

“Hello, mister,” they chimed, “We’re selling cookies to raise money for” I immediately interrupted and exclaimed, “Yes, yes, I’ll take all you have!”

When the passion of the moment

passed, I did not need a fortune cookie to know I was going to be in big trouble with the wife, one tough cookie. Catching me with my hand in the cookie jar is serious business with her.

After all, 27 boxes of Girl Scout cookies are rather difficult to conceal, let alone explain. I was about to toss my cookies when an idea presented itself. What I needed was a good surefire excuse.

Excuses, which are a way of life for many people, have been around as long as mankind. In fact, it was the first man, Adam, who invented the pass-the-buck phenomenon for the benefit of all those who would follow him.

It occurred in the Garden of Eden, if you remember your Bible stories, just after Eve encountered the serpent, enticing her to eat of the forbidden fruit. Eve immediately baked an apple pie a la mode for Adam.

When God confronted Adam with the situation, Adam immediately said, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” This, then, was the beginning of excuse-making to get out of a difficult situation.

Although a man may have invented excuse-making, it took a woman to develop it into an art form. Men, you

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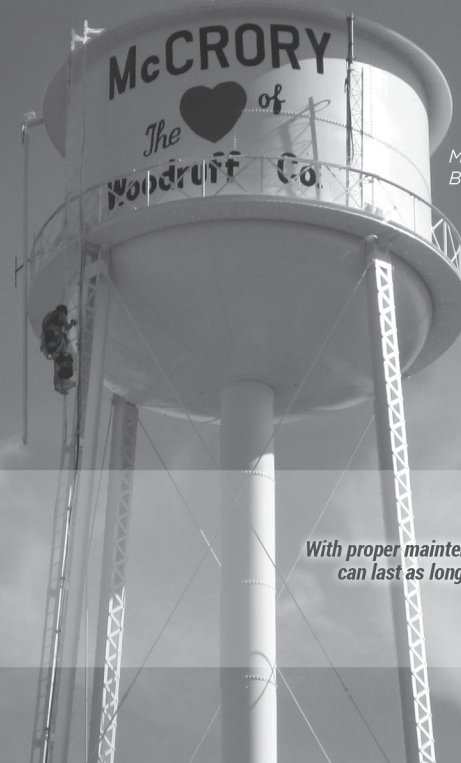
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see, are too literal and unsophisticated to develop a series of plausible excuses.

For example, a man will say, “Bob, my wife won’t let me go fishing with you next Sunday,” and it stops there. Nothing needs to be added, Bob knows exactly what the score is. After all, he has been there with his own wife.

Women feel compelled to introduce the element of emotion into every situation. Why is it that women are more gifted than men when it comes to making believable excuses? I certainly don’t know the answer, and that’s the only excuse I can think of at the moment.

Getting back to those Girl Scout cookies, I knew I needed to come up with some excuse or better yet, several excuses to explain why I bought 27 boxes of cookies when I’m not supposed to eat cookies.

Because I’m just a man, the only excuse I could come up with was “the Devil made me do it.”

Unfortunately, my wife did not accept that excuse and I immediately knew I was in trouble. Exasperated, my wife decided to help me come up with a list of viable excuses to use the next time Girl Scouts with cookies knock on the parsonage door.

Reasons I can’t buy cookies:

- ◇ My mother made me eat cookies when I was young.
- ◇ I only eat cookies at Christmas and Easter.
- ◇ I don’t believe in eating packaged cookies.

- ◇ I’m satisfied with watching people on TV eat cookies.
- ◇ I’m too busy to eat cookies. Try another time.
- ◇ I don’t have any good clothing to wear while eating cookies.
- ◇ I’m too old and cookies really are for the young.
- ◇ I don’t believe cookies really exist.
- ◇ I don’t eat cookies. I prefer donuts.
- ◇ I’m afraid the roof will fall in if I eat cookies.
- ◇ My wife and I cannot agree on which cookie we like.

To put it mildly, I was impressed with the growing list of excuses my wife was able to come up with in such a short period. It showed she had practiced this art form for many years. I never could have come up with such a list on my own.

As I studied my new list, I was certain I could face any Girl Scout in the future. My wife does not share my confidence and no longer permits me to answer the door when the Girl Scouts are on the prowl. She is worried any preconceived excuse would quickly dissolve at the first sight of those cookies.

What is an excuse? An excuse is a lie at both ends, held together by the glue of convenience.

For some people, a bad excuse is better than no excuse at all. These people spend their whole lives justifying everything they do or don’t do.

After this experience, I began to understand all the excuses people have given me over the years for not attending church. Whenever I approached the subject, they seemed ready with some excuse and usually backed by plenty of others if needed.

I now see they spent quality time devising these excuses that, to their thinking, got them off the hook.

All excuses seem quite ridiculous in light of what the Bible says. “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25).

Not all the excuses in the world will stand the test of eternity. That is just the way the cookie crumbles. 💧

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Rev. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, 1471 Pine Road, Ocala, FL 34472. He lives with his wife, Martha, in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 352-687-4240 or e-mail jamesnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.



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Through the implementation of GPS & GIS technology, IRWA can effectively produce hard copy and digital maps. With this service available from IRWA, utilities can attain new and accurate maps to better manage their water, wastewater and storm sewer assets.

The printed maps can be large-scale wall maps up to 36"x48" showing utility features with the desired layers (aerial photos, streets, topography, etc.).

The digital map file on a CD, can be accessed with free software that IRWA will provide and install on a utility computer. The program allows you to view, print and click on system features (such as a valve, hydrant, meter pit, curb stop, manhole, lift station, treatment facility, etc.) and pull up attribute data about each. As well as several other capabilities such as printing, zooming, etc.

IRWA has a working relationship with DiamondMaps.com, to put your IRWA project maps on their server, for mobile viewing with a smartphone or cellular capable tablet - including editing capability. This is at no extra charge to the system for the first year's subscription. Continuance of the Diamond Maps service after the first year is at the utility's discretion.

Payment for services is a set charge per feature, with IRWA members receiving an automatic 30% discount, and even more of a reduction with bigger projects.

For more information, you may download a brochure from IRWA's website: www.ilrwa.org/Equipment/Asset_Mapping.html or contact Don Craig by phone: 217-561-1061 or e-mail: craig@ilrwa.org

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The National Rural Water Association and the Ford Motor Company have created a partnership to offer special fleet discounts to State Rural Water Associations and their utility system members. This partnership combines the buying power of 31,000 individual utilities to provide reduced fleet pricing on utility vehicles. The Ford Fleet Team is #1 in commercial fleet customer satisfaction according to surveys. The Rural Water Ford Fleet Program is a valuable member benefit for water and wastewater utilities. State Rural Water Associations determine eligibility for their members, and provide a fleet code that allows access to substantial vehicle discounts to fill the need for reliable work vehicles. Fleet vehicles must be registered in the name of a member water or wastewater system.



Member utilities should contact their State Rural Water Association to access the Rural Water Ford Fleet Program. Vehicles may be purchased at your local dealer or through the national fleet auto group, get all the details you need online at: www.nrwafleet.com. Incentive discount pricing is available on fuel efficient cars, vans, SUVs and trucks. Systems can save up to \$5800 off factory invoice per vehicle. Happy shopping!

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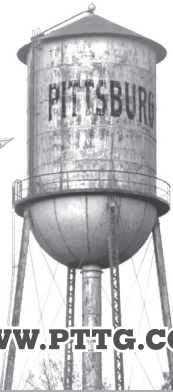
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