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Miss ion st Ate Ment

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

o n the c over: Pictured are IRWA staff members with U.S. Congressman Bobby Schilling (17th District) at the 2011 Farm Progress Show held in Decatur, Illinois on August 30 – September 1, 2011. Pictured are Denise Burke, Kathy Rodgers, Congressman Schilling, Don Craig and Gale Moore.

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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Major Improvements to Virginia, Illinois Water System

by Wayne Nelson,
IRWA Training Specialist

In our articles for this magazine we try to keep you abreast of what is going on in the water treatment industry in Illinois. This month I want to offer a history of the Virginia, Illinois public water supply and the major changes occurring at their system.

The city of Virginia is located in Cass County about 30 miles west of Springfield. It currently has a population of approximately 1610 and serves as the county seat. A lot of the research for this article is first-hand knowledge of this



writer. I was born in a house on Main Street in Virginia (one mile from the water plant), my first water operator's job was at Virginia's original plant, and I recently moved back just outside of town after nearly 30 years.

A BRIEF HISTORY:

The first water treatment plant that served the city of Virginia was constructed in 1933-1936 and constructed largely by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). It obtained water (by a gravity feed main) from a 19-acre lake adjacent to the plant. Water was filtered, treated with alum, lime, and activated carbon, and then chlorinated. The plant was operated manually—from opening the gate valve to get water from the lake to the plant, to switching on the chemical feeders, to opening the filter valves. It was the same



way with the elevated tank in town. When the black disc hit the line on the exterior tower level indicator it was time to get to the plant and shut it down before the tank ran over.

Through the years droughts occurred that required the system to implement water conservation measures. After a major drought in the late 1970's, Virginia's city council voted to install

continued on page 5

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Major Improvements to Virginia, Illinois Water System

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a well that would supplement its lake source. This well was drilled and water was pumped directly into the lake when water levels warranted.

In 1984, an additional well was installed and the system went from a surface water supply to a system utilizing only groundwater. Due to the abundance of water from its wells located near the Sangamon River the system has not experienced any shortages since.

The original water distribution system was nearly all cast-iron. The trenches in which the water mains were laid were mostly dug by hand labor in the 1930's. Improvements over the years included the installation of A/C (transite) pipe for new construction projects in the 1960's and early 1970's and then PVC water mains in later years. Until

the late 1970's the system used a 80,000 gallon elevated storage tower that served a population of approximately 1800. To get through the night it was often necessary to top off the tank as late in the work day as possible, check the level during the evening, and, if necessary, start the plant up for a couple of hours around 10:00 p.m. This provided for a lot of overtime hours. No extra pay; just a lot of hours.

Since this tank was inadequate for the daily water usage by Virginia's customers a 200,000 gallon tank was constructed in 1978.

In the mid-1990's rural citizens banded together to organize a water district that would serve the area east of Virginia. The Cass Rural Water



District (CRWD) was formed and its board agreed to purchase water from the Virginia supply.

With the assistance of then-Congressman Ray LaHood (and Carol Merna, of the congressman's office) plans were developed to provide a regional water system that could serve the bulk of Cass County. The original partners included the city of Virginia, the CRWD,

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Major Improvements to Virginia, Illinois Water System

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the village of Ashland, the village of Chandlerville, and the then newly-formed Arenzville Rural Water Cooperative (ARWC).

Even without the addition of these other supplies it was obvious that the original water treatment plant was nearing retirement age rapidly. Due to the tireless efforts of the late Mayor David Sinclair and current Mayor Steve Sudbrink this project was developed, funded, and constructed. A ribbon-cutting and a public open house was held on August 13 at the treatment facility.

CURRENT STATUS:

The new plant was designed by the Farnsworth Group and included state-of-the-art treatment processes. While the old plan utilized a clarifier with a settling

basin the new plant has a Claricone. At the old plant chemicals were fed manually by dumping bags into the hoppers of the chemical feeders. The new plant has bulk chemical feeders. The water crew has went from adjusting water flow into the old plant by counting the number of turns on a gate valve to a SCADA system that monitors conditions from the wells to the far reaches of the water systems it serves.

The new plant was constructed just south of the old plant and is located on Illinois Route 78. It went on-line in the spring of 2011. After nearly 78 years of service the old plant was retired and demolished.

Other system improvements consisted of the construction of a 300,000 gallon elevated tank that went on-line

in the latter half of 2010. This new tower provides storage for the city of Virginia as well as for the ARWC and removes the need for booster stations in the satellite systems. An additional water storage tank located at the plant holds 400,000 gallons of finished water.

Much of the history and many of the changes covered in this article was under the supervision of certified operator Randy McClure. Randy was hired to operate the water and wastewater plants for the city of Virginia in 1975 and, for the past several decades, has served as the city's Director of Public Works. To put it in

perspective, Randy has captained the supply for nearly half of the system's 78-year life. Randy and I both attended Virginia High (at the same time) and from then to now we have both went from young pups with pretty long hair to old dogs with a lot of gray. His capable water and wastewater department crew consists of operators Hayden Coffey and Bill Hegener.

At this time the Virginia public water supply provides water to its customers, the CRWD, the ARWC, and the village of Ashland. These supplies now make up what is known as the Virginia Regional Water System.

AND SOMETIMES OTHERS:

On June 18 of this year the Jacksonville, Illinois treatment plant was flooded due to a massive storm with heavy rainfall. Up to five feet of water was inside the treatment plant. During the three weeks that Jacksonville spent repairing the damages to its water treatment plant the city and its satellite systems were under a boil order as well as a conservation order.

The North Morgan Water Cooperative is one of Jacksonville's satellite supplies. Due to an interconnection via CRWD and the City of Ashland, the North Morgan Water Cooperative was able to obtain water from the Virginia plant. After flushing and bacteriological samples showed the North Morgan system to be cleaned up from the Jacksonville water the system was able to lift its boil order and conservation measures while on the Virginia system.

THE NEXT 78 YEARS:

The old treatment plant served the Virginia community well for nearly eight decades. It is hoped that the new plant will also. I also expect the system will provide water to more and more rural customers in Cass County and perhaps beyond. 💧



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IRWA New Internal Programs are Progressing

*by Don Craig,
Deputy Director, IRWA*

Approximately a year ago, we initiated two new services to rural water and wastewater systems across the state. Those two new projects are the GPS/GIS Asset Mapping program; and the implementation of our new state of the art Sewer Line Video Service. The intent of starting these two project services is to provide new areas of assistance to our members at a reasonable cost. Also, it is our goal, to have both of these new services become self-sustaining, and to hire full-time personnel in the future, as field technicians, to manage these programs. But, as for now, both of these are being administered by me.

We have continued to receive many, many inquiries and requests for sewer video line inspection projects, and those are increasing with each month as the 'word' gets out. Our Field Techs have been busy handling these requests, and operating the unit in various systems in the state. Needless to say, the unit has provided some very clear and interesting videos of lines in question. The system personnel have been very pleased with the service provided thus far.

Typically, the process will follow this order. Someone from the facility will contact one of our wastewater techs or call into the office directly, in regard to getting some video inspection work completed within their system. Those inquiries will be directed to me, and after discussing the scope of the inspection to be done and setting a date and time with the system manager... I will forward a copy of our IRWA proposal (contract) on to them to review, sign, and get back to me.

Most all of the inquiries to date, have been for one-day inspections to video a few hundred linear feet of sanitary or storm sewer lines. For those types of situations, we only charge a \$250 "Maintenance" fee to member systems. Those utilities that are not members of IRWA, they will be charged

\$500 for the 'one-day' service. Larger projects, encompassing several hundred or thousands of feet to be inspected and taking more than one day, will incur a rate of seventy cents per foot for member systems, and \$1.00 per foot for non-members. Both would also incur expenses, including per diem, hotel costs, and mileage... to get the project completed. Nothing will be charged to the system, until the entire project and post-processing is completed. The system will get a letter of review for the project breaking down the inspection process and potential problems of note, and also, will receive a CD including the video files of the line(s) inspected in the project.

Please note, that IRWA will become more stringent on the amount of linear feet to be included in 'one-day' jobs, as opposed to being charged for a large project including several hundred feet or more of line to be inspected. Our field techs will be instructed to only include inspection up to the amount of feet included in the signed proposal (contract). We ask that system personnel do not ask the tech to include more than that, while they are onsite. More linear feet of line to be inspected must be approved, based on per foot charge, and have a signed contract to complete.

As for the GPS/GIS Mapping Program, I just recently finished up the entire process with our first system, the Village of Benson in Woodford County. I would like to personally thank Fred Luedtke, the Manager/Operator for Benson and the Village Board, in getting involved with our new program, seeing it through, and for being our first GPS/GIS system.

As of this date, I am presently working on the GIS mapping side of a project for the Village of Franklin Grove in Lee County, and have just recently completed the GPS field work for another



project, the Village of Wapella in DeWitt County. Also, from Randolph County, a larger project for Egyptian Water Company is on the list for completion. And, we have had serious inquiries on larger systems for possible projects, as well.

Needless to say, completing an entire GPS/GIS project is much more time consuming than most of the services our organization provides... especially in the 'infancy' of the program. Typically, I like to meet with inquiring system personnel, to go over the entire scope of a potential project. If the system wants to move forward with a mapping program, then I will work up an estimated proposal for the entire cost of the project to be completed. IRWA charges a fee per each feature (valve, hydrant, well, tank, manhole, etc.) to be located and recorded with our GPS unit in the water and/or wastewater system. That fee is \$7.00 per feature for member utilities, and \$10 per feature for non-members. There is no other processing fee involved in the overall costs, but expenses will also be part of the total amount. Again, the system will not be billed, until the entire GPS/GIS post-processing is complete. The system will receive a copy on disc, of all the GPS/GIS files, which include the published map file(s). Also, we will provide and install 'reader' software for the system, to view the published system map on their computer, which they can access coordinate information as well as

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Water is Life: The P2D2 Story

*Submitted by Jay Bell,
District #4 Board Member*

(The following article was authored by Mr. Mike Soares. His consent was given to publish the article in IRWA's Water Ways quarterly magazine. We appreciate his support and expertise. There is more information about Mr. Soares, at the end of the article)

Crowded into a small open space near Michigan Avenue next to the Chicago River, protected from curious Chicagoans by skyscrapers and television cameras, a press conference took place on Wednesday, August 24th, 2011. After speeches from various government officials, teachers, and students, Illinois Governor Pat Quinn finished signing the documents in front of him and called out "Where's Mr. Ritter?" Paul Ritter, science teacher at Pontiac Township High School, stepped forward. "These belong to you," said the governor, pressing Illinois House Bills 2056 and 2053 into his chest and sharing a look of accomplishment with those surrounding, most of who were intimately involved with the genesis of the bills. "Take these, they belong to you." After years of development and thousands of hours of work, Mr. Ritter and his students had realized their dream of protecting the Illinois water supply by seeing the Prescription Pill and Drug Disposal Program (P2D2) passed unanimously by the Illinois Legislature and signed into law by the chief executive

of the state. The Chicago River, famously reversed long ago and ultimately reaching the Gulf of Mexico vicariously through other rivers, serves symbolically for P2D2 which also originated in Illinois and yet has made its way throughout the country both by word of mouth, media exposure, and the sheer will of its creator and his students.

The story of P2D2 began in 2007 when Mr. Ritter's wife, Jodee, asked aloud about what she should do with expired and unused pharmaceuticals taking up space in their medicine cabinet. Not wanting to simply dump the drugs down the drain, knowing full well that they would eventually make their way to the water supply, Mr. Ritter took the dilemma to his classroom and posed the question to his Ecology students. With assistance from the internet, teacher and students began to uncover what Ritter describes as "startling information pertaining to the effect of pharmaceuticals on the quality of drinking water around the world." According to the P2D2 website, "They found that scientists with the United States Geological Society have detected drugs such as antibiotics, anti-depressants, birth control pills, seizure medication, cancer treatments, pain killers, tranquilizers, and cholesterol-lowering compounds in varied ground water sources." Challenging his students to research prescription waste disposal, Mr. Ritter was disturbed when it



was revealed that waste water treatment methods were not only incapable but never intended to remove such chemicals in local facilities. Furthermore, they discovered that scientists were concerned "that, in humans, the chemicals in our water supply could increase rates of breast, testicular, and prostate cancer, as well as lower sperm counts and disrupt hormones." As the information sank in, it became evident that the safe disposal of prescription drugs was not currently a viable option. Mr. Ritter became determined to change that and set about creating a program that would provide this service.

The crusade launched by Mr. Ritter soon began to inspire others, including both students and teachers, and the outreach to the community began in earnest. Assistant Principal Eric Bohm, at the time a history teacher at the high school, initiated a "letter writing campaign" to elected officials ranging from local, to state, to even federal levels in order to increase awareness of prescription drug disposal. Contact with local radio stations in central Illinois also raised the profile of the fledgling program, boosting it into the consciousness of the general public and ultimately to the Illinois state capital. As the program gained steam, students at PTHS slowly began to move out of their comfort zones and began realizing that their efforts were paying off in high impact ways. Lessons in conservation and recycling were reaching far past the high

continued on page 13



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Water is Life: The P2D2 Story

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school to make positive changes in the community and potentially the world. In short, Mr. Ritter's influence began to extend far beyond the classroom for these students, and his attempt to capture young hearts and inject into them his zeal for saving the Earth began to manifest itself in real world applications both in Pontiac and also statewide.

Billing itself as "a collaborative effort between communities, local pharmacies, police departments, hospitals, city officials, students, and more," the P2D2 program which once existed only in imagination swiftly boiled over into reality. Pharmacies such as Walgreens, K-mart, and local Sartoris Super Drugs in Pontiac agreed to allow customers to bring in unused prescription drugs for the purpose of safe disposal. However, neither Mr. Ritter nor his students were satisfied with only local success. Mrs. Megan Bozarth, a social studies teacher at PTHS, was enlisted to teach her honors students how to write to

representatives and senators in support of bills concerning legislation funding P2D2 efforts, placing an additional \$20 fee on illegal drug possession fines in Illinois. With these new funds, Illinois could ship all prescription drugs collected to incineration facilities at no cost to the taxpayer. The bills passed unanimously through the Illinois House in the spring of 2011 and eventually made their way to the governor's desk.

Today, in addition to Illinois, P2D2 programs exist in Alaska, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Washington, New Jersey, Georgia, Massachusetts, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi with more states showing interest all the time. Since the full implementation of P2D2, the program has even attracted international attention. Paul Ritter, the man who sounded his high profile message for students and community to hear and act upon, is humbled to see all the hard work and effort come to fruition. According to Mr. Ritter, "This program was developed

with the philosophies of 'think globally, act locally,' and 'students are the agents of change.' Knowing that the P2D2 program is a work in progress, I realize that it will change in response to our global needs. I do hope that people will look at it in years to come and see that we gave everything we could to be the catalyst for knowledge and change. This program has changed my life forever. I dedicate this material to our children. They are the future of our world."

(Mr. Michael A. Soares has been a high school English teacher since 1995 and has been at Pontiac Township High School since 1997. He was an early contributor to the P2D2 program and has incorporated environmentally-conscious lessons into his curriculum, including the "Eco-cu", a hybrid of haiku and pro-environment ideology. He lives in Bloomington, IL, with his wife and three children.) 💧

Work Cited

"Prescription Pill and Drug Disposal Program." P2D2Program.org. September 20, 2011.

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IRWA New Internal Programs are Progressing

continued from page 8

feature 'attribute' data. And, if wanted, per a fee, we can produce grid map books and hardcopy wall maps with requested 'layer' (aerial, street, topography, etc.) views. Also, it should be noted, that IRWA will keep copies of all data at our office, and always has the ability to complete more GPS work in the field, and add that updated information to the existing data files, and to those of the system. Many systems have already planned to do the main water system

features (line, hydrants, valves, tanks, etc.) for example, and then to have others (shut offs, meters, etc.) located in a subsequent project. By doing so, they can disperse the overall costs over a longer period of time.

We will continue to be committed to implementing these two new programs for the direct benefit of our member systems. As such, each will mature to the level that is the best it can be, and

help rural systems at an economical cost. From our website, you can find out more specific information about both of these new programs and the equipment used; and get insight as to how one or both can be an asset to your water and/or wastewater system. Also, if you would like to talk to me directly, or have me meet with system personnel to further discuss these services; please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be glad to be of assistance. 💧

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Reflection

by Kathy Rodgers,
Source Water Specialist

October marks my 2-year anniversary working with IRWA. What a whirl wind of activity. In those two years, together we have diverted thousands of pounds of medication from entering our water ways, expanded protection zones on dozens of water sources, highlighted the importance of public water supplies, etc...

Unfortunately, just when the ball got rolling the USEPA Source Water Protection and Training Program will not be available for FY2011. Shoot.

Yet, as I've begun to turn the page to see what happens in the next chapter, I started reflecting on the opportunities and the experiences that I have shared with all of you throughout these past couple of years. You have made my job has been one of the most rewarding and enriching experiences of my career.

For instance.....Two years ago was my first Illinois Rural Water Association's Conference. How cool are they? Never have I been involved with such a full service combination of work, education, food, and fun. A water operator's job can be so lonely and so I am proud to be a part of an event that gives operators a chance to tell war stories, get advice from other professionals, and be able to network while having fun.

This past year, several Illinois water operators joined me in orchestrating

a multi-city pharmaceutical disposal event. Each participating municipality managed their event marketing, volunteer recruitment, and secured their own venue. Their efforts resulted in the collection over 1,500 pounds of unwanted medication! I was blown away by how easily water operators were able to organize and the impact that they made.

The enthusiasm shown during this event made me dig my heels in to continually learn what water protection efforts inspire action.

IRWA and their partners in conservation were at the Farm Progress Show held in late August and oh my goodness was it hot. Thousands of people in the middle of a cornfield, temperatures were ranging in the 100's with not a cloud in the sky. IRWA was there to help quench visitors' thirst with the offer of ice cold water courtesy of your public water supply. In three days we handed out over 5,000 cups of water (not including refills and water bottles). Even coming out of a hose with that hint of rubber taste people were grateful for a sip. Moments like those you realize the vital service our profession provides.

These past two years I've come to the realization that water and waste operators are truly a group of unsung professionals. So I can say with all honesty: It's been an honor.



Thank you all for:

- Welcoming me into your plants as if I was an old friend. It was so much more than I expected.
- Giving me insights into the issues you faced from day to day.
- Not walking out of my presentation.
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I hope to see you around the water tower! 💧



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Water Plant of the Year 2011– City of Geneseo

by Gale Moore,
Circuit Rider

The City of Geneseo was named Water Plant of the Year at Illinois Rural Water Association's Annual Conference in Effingham held February 22 – 24, 2011.

Geneseo is located in Henry County, approximately twenty miles east of the Quad Cities (Moline), next to Interstate 80. Geneseo's population was 6,586 at the 2010 census and the city has two water towers with 500,000 gallons storage in each, and a 300,000 gallon ground storage tank.

The water plant produces 650,000 gallons per day from three shallow wells approximately sixty five feet deep with a high concentration of iron (2.45 ppm) and manganese (.25 ppm), thus requiring filtration. The Tonka Dualator III filter plant was installed in 2006 and consists of the standard Tonka induced draft spray type aerator, a detention tank, and a gravity filter.

Iron and manganese removal is accomplished by the oxidation of these soluble elements to an insoluble state and removal by filtration. The oxidation is accomplished in two ways, aeration and

the addition of potassium permanganate. The aeration process breaks up the raw water with spray nozzles causing oxidation of the iron and manganese, this water then falls downward into the detention tank.

Approximately twenty five percent of the iron and manganese is removed in the aeration and detention process. The water then leaves the detention tank and flows to the gravity filter.

During the service mode, the aerated water flows thru the filter unit and the insoluble iron and manganese is removed. After approximately 1,200,000 gallons of water has passed thru the filter, an air/water backwash is required. 💧



Knowing Who You Are

by Roseanna Leaton

The Movie "Eat Pray Love" is based upon an individual's search to find herself. A growing number of people spend much of their time wondering who they really are and what their real life purpose is meant to be. We in general live a life of luxury. There is little real hardship in the way that we live in the Western world today. We have more money, more creature comforts and a greater ability to pursue myriad activities both near to home and far away. When you are being deprived of basic necessities in life your focus inevitably remains glued to the task of survival; one doesn't have time to luxuriate in ponderings about who you are or what your life's purpose is. Your purpose is simply focused upon staying alive. And

so the more comfort you have in your life the more time you inevitably have with which to focus your attention upon things of a more philosophical nature. Ironically the more we have the more dissatisfied we appear to become as we simply move our focus on to different things. When, I wonder, will we as a community finally appreciate what we have got and allow ourselves to enjoy a feeling of balance and satisfaction in our lives? Julia Roberts, in this movie, sets out on a course to find herself which takes her to Rome, India and Bali over the course of a year. In Rome she learns to enjoy food for its taste and not worry about calories or weight gain. She also learns to make platonic friends and to live alone instead of constantly being in one relationship

or another. She's not totally at one with this new experience, but she's apparently learning from it. In India she learns to meditate and to further relax her thoughts, to a certain degree. She feels a little more centered but still knows that her journey is not complete. On she moves to Bali. Here she has to face a challenge; can she enter a close relationship without losing herself once more? I'm sure that many people could empathize with several of the emotional tussles which were being expressed in this movie. Many people wonder who they are or what they should be doing. Many more wonder where their soul mate is and how they are ever going to find them. Some people shy away from relationships because they

continued on page 21

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feel they will lose themselves if they were to commit; others throw themselves into one relationship after another and find themselves molding their habits and behaviors to whoever they are with. All of these scenarios reflect a certain amount of emotional conflict, instability or insecurity. The quest to find oneself frequently takes people away from home, in search of peace and quiet and tranquility. The fact remains that you find this peace only when your mind becomes peaceful; this does not necessarily mean you have to go away so as to find peace. Having said this, sometimes one finds it easier to totally change their environment so as to break old habits. The thing to remember though is that you

generally have to go home at some point and still have to take the peace which you have found back home with you too. Otherwise you have not achieved any long term resolution to emotional turmoil or insecurities. And when it comes to relationships, if you have really found your peace, and found yourself, you will not fear losing yourself. You will feel confident and secure in being one of two whole people who share a relationship as opposed to being one small fraction of a whole. Fears are only ever borne from your own chosen (although often unconsciously so) perception of a situation. An alternative approach to finding yourself is to take time examining your thought processes and expectations

in life and then focus upon ways in which you could think more powerfully and productively. To feel balanced and satisfied in life you have to learn to feel happy with yourself as you are, to stop comparing yourself to others and instead to feel confident being you.

About The Author

Roseanna Leaton, specialist in hypnosis mp3 downloads to build confidence easily.

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Get Ready for Winter with these Home Maintenance Tips!

- Be sure to change the air filter in your furnace and call your HVAC contractor to test the heating output and give the system a tune-up. (A programmable thermostat will help lower your energy costs.)
- Inspect your heating ducts and vents. Dust them off and clear away anything that may have gotten into them over the summer.
- Check your doors and windows for any leaks. If you feel cold air coming in, you may need to recaulk or add weather stripping. For a simpler solution, you can purchase a plastic sealing kit from the hardware store.
- Take a moment to change the batteries in your smoke detectors.
- Clean the gutters a few times during the fall, especially if there are many leafy trees around your house. If gutters are clogged, water will spill over them and may cause damage to the foundation.
- Disconnect garden hoses and if possible, drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets. This reduces the chance of freezing in the section of pipe just inside the house.
- Empty out unused fuel from any gas-powered equipment stored in the garage, such as a lawnmower, because sediment can build up and clog the fuel lines.

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amount charged for a Map Book will be \$50 plus \$5 per page, and a wall map is billed at \$100 per map. More information is also posted on our website at www.ilrwa.org, or you may call our office at 217-287-2115. 

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