



# Water Ways

Volume XXII — Summer 2025



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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 photo was taken by Denise Burke, IRWA CFO/  
CPO, in Blue Mound, Illinois.

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# Emergency Response in Water and Wastewater Systems

by Roger Noe,  
IRWA Deputy Director

Illinois Rural Water Association had the requirement to have three emergency response training sessions throughout the state this year. The first of the year we had training in Havana, in May one was held in Paxton, and late this fall we will have one in St. Clair County. I guess I got the short straw or the opportunity to do the training session in Paxton. I am far from a good trainer compared to who we have as our trainers on staff. Overall, it was a good training session with good participation from the attendees. Since I am required to write another article, I thought I would discuss emergency response in water and wastewater systems.

Water and wastewater systems are critical to public health, environmental protections, and overall community well-being. Emergencies ranging from natural disasters and equipment failures to intentional contamination can severely disrupt this service. This article explores the components of an effective emergency response plan for water and wastewater utilities, including risk assessment, preparedness strategies, response protocols, recovery measures, and coordination with stakeholders.

Water and wastewater infrastructure plays an essential role in sustaining life, supporting economic activities, and ensuring environmental health. However, these systems are vulnerable to various emergencies, such as floods, earthquakes, cyberattacks, chemical spills and pandemics. The consequences of service disruptions can be severe, including disease outbreaks, environmental degradation, and economic loss. Therefore, robust emergency response strategies are necessary to ensure resilience and continuity of operations.

Types of emergencies in water and wastewater systems generally fall into the following categories. Natural disasters, earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, and droughts can damage infrastructure and limit system functionality. Technological and mechanical failures, pump failures, pipeline breaks, or electrical outages can cause interruptions. Human caused incidents, vandalism, terrorism, or cyberattacks may target critical infrastructure. Contamination events, accidental or intentional introduction to harmful substances can compromise water quality. Public health crisis like pandemics can strain system resources and staff availability.

An effective emergency response plan starts with identifying potential threats and assessing the vulnerability of systems components. Risk assessment involves mapping hazards and

evaluating their likelihood, identifying critical assets and single points of failure, and analyzing potential impacts on service delivery and public health. Preparedness strategies involves developing the capabilities and resources needed to

respond effectively. Key components include:

**Emergency Response Plans (ERP):** Comprehensive plans outlining procedures for detection, notification, coordination, and recovery.

**Training and Exercises:** Regular staff lines to communications with staff, customers, and emergency management agencies.

**Mutual Aid Agreements:** Partnerships with neighboring utilities to provide resources and assistance during crisis.

Every water and wastewater system should evaluate and update their emergency response plans on a yearly basis. IRWA is in the process of reviewing and updating the Emergency Response Plan template and Risk Resiliency template on our website.

When an emergency occurs, a rapid and coordinated response is crucial for response protocols. Which includes the Incident Command Center (ICS): a standardized approach to command, control, and coordination. Immediate actions: protecting health by issuing boil water notices or isolating affected systems. Damage assessments: rapid evaluation of infrastructure to guide repair efforts. Public Communication: Timely and accurate information, dissemination to the public and media. Coordination with external agencies such as IEPA, Health Department, EMA are important to keep the public safe and informed of the emergency. Post-incident recovery focuses on restoring normal operations and preventing future occurrences which include repair and replacement, debriefing and lessons learned, financial planning, and regulatory compliance.

Some past examples of incidents throughout the United States:

- Hurricane Katrina (2005) Water and wastewater systems in New Orleans experienced widespread failure. Recovery



continued on page 6

## Water... Good for Drinking?

by Chuck Woodworth,  
IRWA Circuit Rider

Is water good for drinking? That depends on where you read about the drinking water systems across America. I have been reading several articles on Google about drinking water. I've been doing this for a while, long enough that Google sends me boil order notifications from the east coast and as far west as Colorado. There really needs to be some standards applied to the news media when it comes to reporting about drinking water everywhere.

I know there are thousands of water operators working very hard to supply their community with good, clean and safe drinking water. Then the press comes along, and with one article about a one failed sample, could possibly undo the community's confidence in that water operator. The headline is intended to draw you in. Most I have found, are written by someone that does not really know what they are really talking about. By reading the article compared to the headline, it sometimes doesn't match up... Such as "States with Contaminated Drinking Water" or "Communities in Illinois with Contaminated Water".

The article I just read, has the headline of "Hidden Danger in Drinking Water Revealed in New Study". There has been several articles with a headline similar to these. Most pertain to the amount of PFAS that is in some community water supplies. Some have the amount of nitrate. Others do list the actual amount found, but many do not. A couple of articles do list what the MCL is, but most don't. I think it would be nice if the author of the article would explain the difference between parts per trillion, parts per billion or parts per million to the average person, who might read the article and having no idea what ppb even stands for, yet alone how small of an amount that is, per gallon they drink. The same way with mg/L, the average person does not know how much 2mg/L is. I mean, honestly, it's probably the same people that do not know the old 12 ounce can of pop or soda (depending on which part of the state you live) contains 360 ml. Back when I was in school, my math teacher told me if I didn't learn the metric system that I would not know how fast my car was going; because in the future, the cars will only have speedometer readings in metric. Automobiles for several years have had both mph and kph. HA...take that Mr. Caldwell.

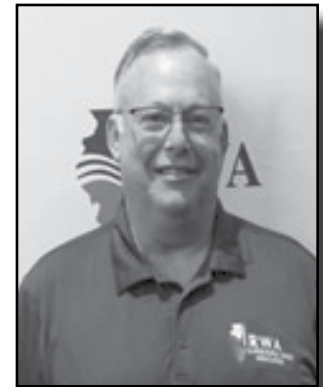
Several years ago, I was at an IRWA training session with Wayne Nelson being the speaker. He discussed the amount of a contaminant that was measured in either ppb or ppt that a person

would have to drink 5 gallons of water per day every day for 10 years in order for the contaminant to actually cause harm to a person. He went on to say, that if a person drank 5 gallons of water every day they would more than likely drown and would not need to worry about the contaminant. I wish I could remember more details of that training, especially which contaminant and how it was measured.

Back to the headlines "U.S. Drinking Water Contains Toxic Contaminants", this article says everything from Arsenic to Uranium can be found in public water supplies "all across the Country". Not one MCL was listed. Neither was the actual amount that is found. It does point out that "millions of people are exposed to these health risks daily". This article even points out that climate change is making it more difficult to find clean sources of drinking water.

I think I will do more research into these articles for a future article of my own, so if this short one grabbed your attention, wait for my next writing assignment.

Stay safe out there, and I'll see you down the road. 💧





## ***Questions about Rate Studies Emergency Response in Water and Wastewater Systems***

*continued from page 4*

highlighted the need for mobile treatment units and better emergency communications.

- West Virginia Chemical Spill (2014) A spill contaminated the Elk River, affecting over 300,000 residents. The event emphasized the need for better sourcewater protection and rapid contamination assessment protocols.
- Flint Michigan (2014) Switched their water supply to the Flint River without proper corrosion control. Lead leached from old pipes into drinking water, exposing thousands including children. This resulted in long-term health impacts and loss of public trust.
- Jackson Mississippi (2022) Water treatment plant failure left residents without clean drinking water. Years of underinvestment and neglect cited as the cause of the emergency.

Emergencies in water and wastewater systems can have far-reaching consequences. A robust emergency response plan that includes risk assessment, preparedness, efficient response, coordinated recovery, and interagency collaboration is critical. As threats evolve, utilities must continuously improve their emergency management strategies to protect public health and ensure service reliability. If your water or wastewater system would have any type of emergency, contact IRWA. We are here for assistance and support. 💧

## ***Rural Water and the Need for More Operators in “Small-Town America”***

*by Jason Cochran,  
IRWA Circuit Rider*

I’ve been thinking about this for a long time...long before I even got this job...and honestly, it’s an even more pressing issue now than ever before. So, take this with a grain of salt, if you want, but to keep this industry afloat, we need more operators, and we need more “small town” operators!

In Illinois, that’s your Class D operators, and in some cases Class C operators, because they need to add chlorine or ammonia, or even fluoride to the water from the system supply or a supplier, to attain or boost it back to regulation standards. There’s even a few small-town Class B operators out there, hidden away, with a couple wells still chugging along but not too many left. But mostly, we’re talking about Class D or C operators, here in Illinois, taking care of many of the small towns.

My thought is this... Every small town in America that can afford a Class D or C operator should have one, and pay them for what they’re worth. These operators help municipalities in more ways than a contract operator may have the time to do; and maybe even more than being taken over by a large water district, large water co-op, or, heaven forbid, a privately owned water company. They allow the small municipalities also, to keep their water and wastewater revenue, which is huge in “Small Town” America. When businesses can dry up tomorrow, and you don’t have any sales tax revenue anymore, your only income is your water and wastewater revenue. Having an operator in these small rural communities, makes a huge difference by allowing you to be able to keep your water and wastewater revenue. Then having the luxury of an operator on-site, and full-time, compared to a contract operator that’s only part-time, gives even more ‘added value’. That’s why I will always, in my opinion, believe any

small municipality that can afford a certified operator, should find a way to pay for one, without any excuses not to do so.

Private water companies, are continuing the process to buy up small, underprivileged communities. They promise to keep prices low and take good care of the system.

But fast forward a few years, and that may change dramatically. The customers of the community may feel ‘the pinch’, with year after year of price hikes. The sometimes poor, cash-strapped consumers, who thought they had it bad before, suddenly may find themselves worse off. The small community water and wastewater systems, who thought they couldn’t afford things before, now could find themselves in a possible full-blown tailspin of economic hardship, without the past water revenue. Honestly, I believe a lot of this could have been prevented by having operators in these small municipalities, taking care of things the right way from the start.

Most operators keep things in line, in regard to making sure valves are exercised twice a year, hydrants are flushed and repaired when needed, and the daily sampling is done to ensure



*continued on page 9*

## ***What We Are Up Against***

*by Kaleb Kahl,  
IRWA Board Member*

I thought I would take this opportunity to put down in words, the struggles that a lot of us as operators are facing when it comes to sample collection, delivery, and reporting. The examples I have experience with, and would like to focus on, are Lead and Copper samples as well as THM and HAA also known as DBPs or Disinfection By-Products.

### **Lead and Copper.**

We have been required to collect these now for many years. With the new rules, many of us have gone from sampling every three years to as often as every six months. So, here is what I see as the major issue with Lead and Copper samples - basically, you are at the mercy of the occupant of the residence. Let's say I need to get 20 samples from 20 different homes occupied by 20 different people, who have 20 different opinions about the directions they receive, as well as 20 different opinions about the importance or validity of these required samples. So as manager of this system, I now have 20 new employees that I must count on to complete a task. How will they perform? Well, there is no need for them to worry too much about it, they are getting the same pay no matter the outcome of this endeavor.

So now that I've spread 20 bottles across my system, I've got to gather them up and get them to a lab for analysis within the required hold-time. Maybe your lab mailed you bottles in a cooler or a box that holds 10 or 20. So as you receive the samples back from the homes, you are nearing the end of the hold time for that first sample. You must now decide to mail the first set in or drive them to the lab. Maybe you only have 4 or 8 of them, not enough to fill the shipping cooler or box. You will have to figure something out. If you are using the Post Office, we will cover that dilemma a bit later. If you are delivering to the lab yourself, this can lead to many trips.

### **Ok now DBPs.**

In the past, we had an entire month for gathering and delivering the DBP samples. Then after several confusing decisions and directives, we are now given a 10-day period to collect these samples. Oh, I failed to mention for those of you that don't know, the samples must always be refrigerated or on ice. Let me tell you, this can be challenging. With weekends and holidays, there are instances where you are limited in finding a window to both gather and mail off the samples where they can get to the lab before the ice or ice pack melts, causing samples to be rejected.

### **Shipping**

The post office isn't what it used to be... Understatement of the year. I'm sure we have all felt this pain in sending water bills, receiving water bill payments, and shipping samples. If your sampling period starts in the later half of the week, you better wait until Monday to mail it off. But wait, what if there is a holiday next week? Now that week may be out of the

question, so you are stuck with collecting the sample, keeping it cool and mailing it off the following week, which may already be outside of the sampling period. So if anything should happen to the sample, there is no way to resample within the period. This will lead to a violation for you. Not a lab violation, or a post office violation, a violation for your system.

### **Reporting**

The lab reports need to be reported to both the IEPA, as well as the homeowners, where the samples were collected. So now we are at the mercy of the lab to either inform us or the IEPA, the results in a timely fashion. We are also required to notify the homeowners in a certain amount of time. So, it's easy to see where these tasks are a bit more of an 'ask', rather than the requirements of our routine monthly samples.

These may seem like small inconveniences, but they can really be a burden for small systems who barely have the staff to do day-to-day operations. Some systems have no personnel at all, so this falls to the contract operator, who will ultimately take the fall when a violation is issued, even though it may have been totally out of their control.

There are a lot of things that we can do to help ourselves with these processes. Reach out to homeowners, mail a letter ahead of time to prepare them. Look ahead and plan your sampling dates and mailing dates as best you can, though sometimes there is little option. These are just a couple examples that I have personally experienced. And, I have heard from other operators about the 'headaches' they have, and of how it seems so backwards for the system or operator to do everything right and yet, still get a violation for something out of their control. I can assure you that the board members at IRWA have discussed this; and we plan to meet with and discuss these issues with the IEPA. IRWA board members are also operators, and feel the pain just like you. We all agree that the water quality and safety are of the utmost importance for our customers. I think we also agree that sometimes the blame goes to the wrong person, and we do not like seeing folks put in an almost impossible situation to deal with; and, that is what we would like to see discussed with IEPA, for needed changes and resolution. 💧





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## ***Rural Water and the Need for More Operators in “Small-Town America”***

*continued from page 6*

safe drinking water. They also handle quarterly and yearly sampling, along with any other required testing, so there are no surprises. Beyond that, they help maintain a good working relationship with any potential supplier, ensuring that when issues come up, there's already a partnership in place to work through the problem together.

Operators also deal with the public every single day. They're the ones who explain issues when they arise...whether it's a boil order from a water main break, a hydrant repair after a car accident, or even a situation where the fire department may have shut down a hydrant too fast, and broke the breakaway stem inside.

And while yes, contract operators, large water districts or water Co-ops, and even privately owned water companies, can do these things, here's the difference; they may not take pride in it the same way. For a small-town operator, this is a lifestyle. It's not just a job, it's part of who they are. They're invested in the system and the community. Anyone who's worked as an operator knows exactly what I mean. It is part of you, it never leaves you, and will always be with you.

I'm not knocking the employees from these other companies. They work hard too. But for them, in most cases, it's just a job. They clock out and move on until the next day, and that's fine, it probably should be that way for them. But for a “small-town” operator, they never stop thinking about the system. Even after dinner, they're back out checking on things...such as making sure lift station pumps are running, confirming sump pumps have kicked off, and double-checking that the water tower isn't overflowing for the fourth night in a row.

This is what an operator does for a small community. They keep aging infrastructure on its feet longer, stretching it another five years, while the town works to secure financing for much needed upgrades. They go the extra mile, when others don't. And, they do what has to be done to make things work, with less, and not complain. They take pride in the hard times when others quit, and never take any credit when things are good. That's what separates an operator in a small town, from just an employee from anywhere else.

The operators in these “Small Towns” are the backbone of rural water. They keep the small systems going on a daily basis. They also keep the larger municipalities, large water districts, large water co-ops, and privately owned water companies who may sell wholesale water to the small towns, updated with their daily sampling in case there would be anything wrong with the water. These operators also take care of the tens of thousands of miles of distribution water mains in systems across the state. The operators do such tasks as repairing water mains when they need to, but on a daily basis, the operators are vigilant to keep the water moving through this vast system we call “American Rural Water”.

Their work keeps people safe every day, whether it's checking chlorine residuals, doing monthly bacterial sampling, or handling

the dozens of other sampling and maintenance tasks required throughout the year. Operators fix infrastructure issues daily, and stick to preventive maintenance schedules to minimize breakdowns. They're also on the lookout for cybersecurity and physical security threats. The federal government and U.S. EPA are even pushing small municipalities to develop cybersecurity plans to protect against online threats. And, let's not forget that physical terrorism is still a real world concern. Just because you're a small community doesn't mean you're off the radar. It can happen anywhere.

Illinois class D and C operators see their systems firsthand, out in the field, every single day. They're the ones who will notice when something...or someone...doesn't look right. If something seems suspicious, they're the first to take action. If it's more than they can handle, they'll make sure the right people are involved fast, whether that's other departments or the police. Public safety is always the priority.

This is something you may not always get quickly, from a contract operator, or a private water company, who may not be there every day.

If your town or system can afford an operator, then try to hire one. They are worth it. They'll take care of you, and care about the systems. So, support them financially, in return. Don't take them for granted. It's a two-way street.

If your administration and your operator work together, your municipality will thrive. Your community will reap the benefits of having a “Small-Town” operator on the ground...someone who knows the system, knows the people, and takes pride in both. Too many municipalities, are struggling every single day, because they don't have operators and fighting just to make ends meet, without the proper help. I believe if we get more operators out there in these communities, we can stop a lot of this struggle.

With the NRW Apprenticeship Program rolling out across Illinois and America, and IRWA stepping up like it always does, when it comes to Rural Water; I'm honestly more excited than I've ever been about where we're headed. I know the folks running the Apprenticeship Program here at the Illinois Rural Water Association, and they are some of the best in the business. And with the apprenticeship program now being implemented across the state, I truly believe this is the start of something big. We're going to see new operators coming up through the ranks... people who care about their communities just like the rest of us do.

It's not going to fix everything overnight, but it's a start. And, sometimes that's all you need...a place to start, and people willing to step up. Rural water and wastewater systems have never been about giving up, it's always been about finding a way to make it work, no matter what. And if you ask me, this is our way forward. 💧



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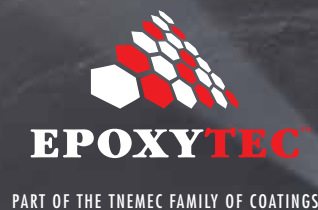
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## OUR COMMITMENT

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- Provide quality options for insurance solutions specific to the Water & Wastewater Industry.

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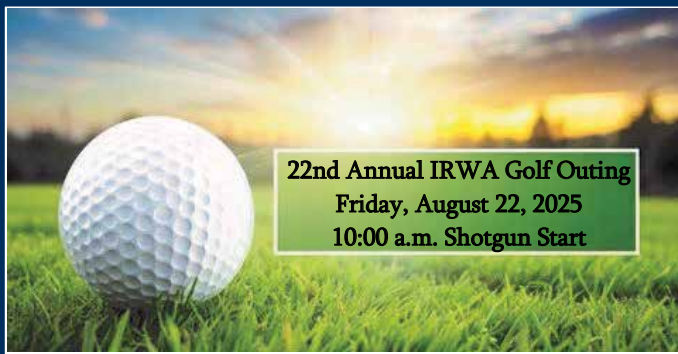
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The Illinois Rural Water Association (IRWA) is hosting its 22nd Annual Golf Outing. This event is sponsored as a way to have a fun IRWA member activity.

The location for this event is **Edgewood Golf Club in Auburn, Illinois**. The date for this four person scramble is **Friday, August 22, 2025**. The fee is \$75.00 which includes lunch, a gift bag, green fees and golf cart. Various prizes will be given away as well. As always, IRWA is trying to make this a fun-filled and affordable golf scramble. Your participation will ensure that this year's event will be every bit as successful as past outings. This event gives the IRWA members an opportunity to have fun and enjoy a day of golf while networking with fellow industry professionals.

You are encouraged to submit your registration forms prior to the **Friday, August 8, 2025** deadline. Please make checks are payable to Illinois Rural Water Association. You can also go online and sign up and pay by credit card at [www.ilrwa.org](http://www.ilrwa.org).

This will be a four-person scramble with a **10:00 a.m. shotgun start**. Participants are encouraged to be at Edgewood Golf Club and check in at the registration table no later than 9:30 a.m. Lunch will be served as you make your way by the club house while playing golf.

It is IRWA's hope that you will be able to attend this event. Please feel free to contact **Denise Burke** at 217-287-2115 with any questions you may have or email her at: [ilrwadb@ilrwa.org](mailto:ilrwadb@ilrwa.org). We look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,

Board of Directors & Staff

**WHAT:** 22nd Annual IRWA Golf Outing

**WHO:** Water & Wastewater Operators, Board Members, Mayors, Vendors, Others

**WHEN:** Friday, August 22, 2025

**WHERE:** Edgewood Golf Club - Auburn, IL

**FEE:** \$75.00 for operators (includes lunch, gift bag, green fees & golf cart)





## ILLINOIS RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION

### 22nd ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

The 22nd Annual Illinois Rural Water Association Golf Outing will be held on Friday, August 22, 2025 at Edgewood Golf Club located in Auburn, Illinois. Directions to the course are located on the last page. The golf format will be a shotgun start at **10:00 a.m.** Please check in at the registration table no later than 9:30 a.m. Please fill out the registration form below and send it along with your check to the address listed below. **You may also pay by credit card online at [www.ilrwa.org](http://www.ilrwa.org).** Registration must be received and paid by Friday, August 8, 2025 in order to reserve your spot. We are limited to 144 golfers for this event.

#### Course Rules:

- Dress must be in good taste keeping with golf tradition.
- Only non metal spikes are allowed.



Edgewood Golf Club - 16497 Kennedy Road —  
AUBURN, ILLINOIS

217-438-3221

[www.golfedgewood.com](http://www.golfedgewood.com)

### Registration Form

Friday, August 22, 2025 - 10:00 a.m. (Shotgun start—4 person scramble)  
Single Golfers will be teamed with a foursome.

NAME(S):

---

---

SYSTEM NAME:

---

ADDRESS:

---

PHONE:

---

#### # OF GOLFERS

Operators / City Officials / Guests \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$75.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Members / Vendors \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$85.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

(If Associate members are sponsoring the golf outing (please see next page), then the fee to participate will be \$75.00).

Total = \_\_\_\_\_

(includes lunch, gift bag, green fees & golf cart)

Please make all checks payable to Illinois Rural Water Association. Return your completed registration and payment to: Illinois Rural Water Association—P.O. Box 49—Taylorville, Illinois 62568

You may also pay by credit card online at [www.ilrwa.org](http://www.ilrwa.org).

### Sponsorship Form

Lunch Sponsorship	-	\$500.00	(limited to 3 sponsors)
Beverage Cart Sponsorship	-	\$500.00	(limited to 2 sponsors)
Hole Sponsorship	-	\$150.00	(limited to 18 sponsors)
Hole in One Sponsorship	-		
\$300.00	(\$5,000 cash)	\$275.00	(2 Airplane Tickets– any destination in continental United States)
\$250.00	(Golf Clubs)	\$250.00	(\$500.00 golf shop credit)
Gift Bag & Prize Sponsorship-	SEE BELOW		

**LUNCH SPONSORSHIP:** Lunch sponsors will have their sponsorship sign posted where lunch will be served reaching all of the golfers and two free registrations to participate in the golf outing.

**BEVERAGE CART SPONSORSHIP:** Beverage cart sponsors will have their sponsorship sign on the courtesy carts that will be on the golf course driving around with bottled water, beer and soda compliments of your company. They will also receive two free registrations to participate in the golf outing.

**HOLE SPONSORSHIP:** Hole sponsors will have their sponsorship sign **off the tee**. This is a great opportunity for visibility.

**HOLE IN ONE SPONSORSHIP:** Hole in one sponsors will have their sponsorship sign displayed off the tee and will be recognized prior to the shotgun start of the outing.

**GIFT BAG OR PRIZE SPONSORSHIP:** If your company wishes to provide an item for each gift bag (approximately 144) or would like to bring a door prize to donate, please contact Denise to discuss.

If your company would like to set up a game at one of the holes, etc, please contact Denise to discuss this option.

### Sponsorship Registration Form

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsorship Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

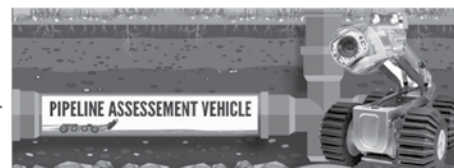
Please complete and return the Sponsorship registration form and payment to:

Illinois Rural Water Association—P.O. Box 49—Taylorville, IL 62568

If you plan on participating in the golf outing, please fill out the registration form on the previous page and return with this form with your payment. If you plan to attend but not golf in the outing, please let us know on this form.



## VIDEO INSPECTION SERVICE WITH



Video inspection technology for wastewater and storm sewer systems can help you identify and prioritize maintenance issues, while improving service and reducing emergency maintenance costs.

IRWA incorporates both a “Set Minimum Maintenance Fee” and a “Maintenance Fee per Foot Charge”. The sole purpose of each is to operate, and maintain the IRWA Sewer Video Inspection Van and equipment used.

IRWA is glad to provide this Sewer Video Inspection Service to our members, and non-members (at a higher fee). As of March 1, 2024, the IRWA voting members “set minimum maintenance fee” for this service is \$500.00 for projects that do not exceed 500 feet (Non-IRWA voting member utilities pay \$750).

Larger projects requiring more time and inspection coverage, will be based on the set minimum maintenance fee up to 500 feet. Then a maintenance per foot charge of \$1.00, will be assessed for footage above the minimum allowance. IRWA member utilities receive an automatic discount on the “per foot” charge, as well as the reduced set minimum maintenance fee, for each of these types of projects. Non-IRWA member systems will pay the increased set minimum maintenance fee of \$750, plus a charge of \$1.50 per foot, above the initial 500 feet allowed in the minimum.

(Note: Due to staffing varied work demands and logistics, IRWA will not undertake video inspection jobs exceeding 5,000 feet maximum per project.)

A proposal (contract) must be signed in advance of the inspection. Upon completion, your system will be invoiced for the services and will also receive a detailed report including graphic diagrams of the inspection features, and a correlating digital video file for visual reference.

For more information, or to schedule an inspection of your system, email Roger Noe at: [noe@ilrwa.org](mailto:noe@ilrwa.org), or you can call him at 217-820-1564.



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

The digital map files, can be accessed through a working relationship that IRWA has with DiamondMaps.com, to put your IRWA project maps, on their server, for mobile viewing with a smartphone or cellular capable tablet, as well as access on your computer over the internet; and will give users full editing capability. 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.) on various base maps such as aerial and road view; and pull up attribute data about each, which you can edit and add data to.

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. Also, the system will receive a digital copy of all initial GPS and GIS processed mapping files; and IRWA will keep a copy as well.

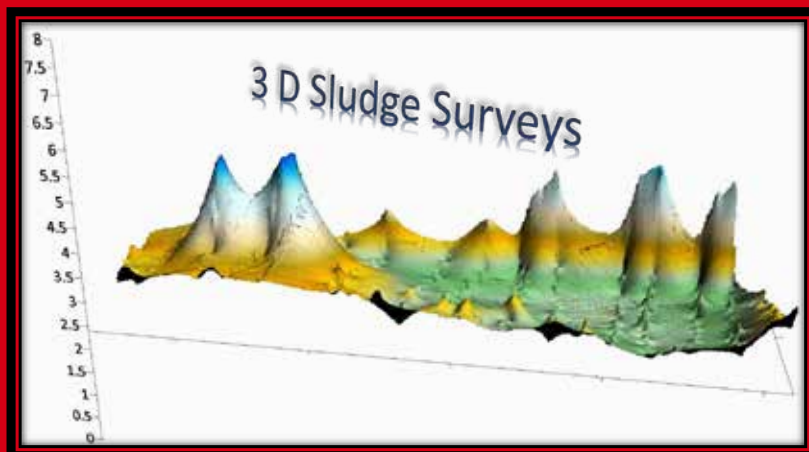
Payment for GIS services is a set charge per feature, with IRWA members receiving an automatic 30% discount, and even more of a reduction with bigger projects.

E-mail Don Craig at: [craig@ilrwa.org](mailto:craig@ilrwa.org), or call him at 217-561-1061 for additional information.

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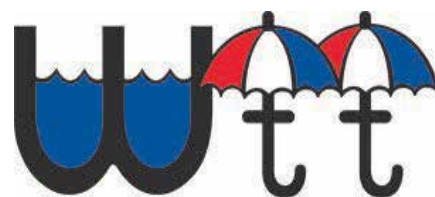
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- Settling aids
- Lagoon sludge reduction
- Dewatering polymers
- Antifoams

and so much more



# What are you looking for? - The ABC's of ilrwa.org

- **Advertising in Water Ways information** (Ad agreement and links) - Publications > Advertising Information
- **Apprenticeship**—Resources > Apprenticeship
- **Becoming a Certified Water or Wastewater Operator**—Resources > Becoming a Certified Operator in Illinois
- **Boil Order Notice**—Resources > Downloads
- **CCR**—Services > e-CCR Hosting
- **Certification Overview from IRWA**—Training > Certification
- **Certified Water Operator Contract**—Resources > Downloads
- **CEU Forms from webinars or conferences**—Training > CEU Form Archives
- **CEU's from CD training**—Training > CD's
- **Compliance Assistance**—Services > Compliance Assistance
- **Cross Connection** (manual, survey & ordinance) - Resources > Cross Connection
- **Current hot topics and upcoming events** - Home
- **Energy Efficiency Assessment**—Services > Energy Efficiency
- **For Sale/Wanted**—Services > For Sale/Wanted
- **Forming a new water district**—Resources > Downloads
- **GPS/GIS**—Services > GPS/GIS Mapping
- **Industry Organizations**—Resources > Links
- **Job Board**—Resources > Job Board
- **Lead Information** —Resources > Lead Information
- **Leak checklist and how much am I losing flyers**—Resources > Downloads
- **Legislative Information** – (Who is my rep?, Bills that IRWA is following)—Resources > Legislative
- **Mutual Aid**—Resources > Downloads
- **Nitrification Action Plan Information**—Resources > NAP
- **NFP Tax Forms** — Resources > Downloads
- **NRWA Fleet** - Membership > Benefits—click on the NRWA logo
- **Operator Groups**—Resources > Links
- **PFAS**—Home
- **Rate Study**— Services > Rate Study
- **Red Flag Act**—Resources > Downloads
- **Speaker Request Form for Conference** —Training > Conferences
- **Tracer Wire Specs**—Resources > Downloads
- **ERP/Contingency Plans**—Resources > Emergency Preparedness Planning
- **Video Inspection Services**—Services > Video Inspection
- **Wastewater CEU information**—Training > Wastewater > under table
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Will evaluate your energy needs, consumption and costs and recommend measures to reduce energy consumption and identify sources of funding for improvements.

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Ameren has also asked the ICC for approval of an additional 83 million dollar increase for next year!

## Consider ...

The high cost of operating utilities has gotten to the point where the utility has to look at all options available. Keeping the operational costs to a minimum ensures that your rates are the lowest possible and still ensure safe drinking water and wastewater utilities.

## What do we assess?

The Energy Conservation Circuit Rider will assess your electric bills, system assets and operational procedures. They will break it down into a usable format with options to explore which will lower costs and a projection of the time to payback.

## Why ...

Most Operators spend their time in operational issues to ensure safe drinking water and maintaining compliance. They often do not have the time to dedicate to energy savings or expertise in doing assessments. We can take the time and figure it out for you.

## Key Offerings

Find where your system can save money on energy. Not only can your system be more efficient, it can outline which changes can generate repayment the quickest.

## What is requested of the system?

You Provide a Tour of the Facilities for Circuit Rider  
You Provide Copies of Energy Bills for one year

## What Do You Receive?

Recommendations on how to conserve and save on your energy bills with items listed on the projected cost of improvements and how quickly those investments recoup the return.



How Do I Get A Free Energy Assessment?

Contact Steve Stortzum

618-335-1474 – cell phone

217-287-2115 – IRWA office

stortzum@ilrwa.org



## Warm and Fuzzy

by Evan Jones,  
IRWA Director of Field Staff Programs /  
Circuit Rider

I recently had not one, but two of those “feel good situations”, which make you realize what you do makes a difference; and that, as a technical assistance provider, you are really doing some good. Sometimes, while being an IRWA Circuit Rider making visits and/or being onsite for some kind of request, you don’t always get to hear or see the result of the assistance you give. Well like I stated, I received two of those twice this month and it gave me that warm and fuzzy feeling! I won’t give everyone the names of these systems, but I’ll give you the shortened ‘bio’ of size, treatment process, and the problems they were undergoing.

It may not seem like big news to everyone, but it sure seemed that way to me the other day.

The first system has a population of 2,400 and 1,280 connections. The facility produces water from their Class C treatment plant; and they also have a Class 2 wastewater treatment plant, as well as taking care of streets. The community has, I believe, 4 to 5 public works employees. They contacted me quite a while ago about leak detection, and the water loss had crept up to a higher percentage, and the number wasn’t petty at all. The system has had a lot of issues, and some unforeseen turnover of personnel that hasn’t helped. I was able to assist the utility in listening to the entire system, and we did find several leaks. In doing this and resolving those, it started cutting down on the loss overall, but it still remained high.

In our process of listening to the distribution system, we were able to determine that a good portion of this lost water was going outside of town to a rural area that they supply. So, while fixing leaks we had found, they also concentrated on what was going on in the rural area. And, low and behold, they had a homeowner (who was now informed to keep an eye out) report a strange occurrence in his pond... Yep, you read that right! His pond had some moving water along the edge. That discovery and resolution to the leak, was a huge fix for the utility! Now they still have loss, but it is well within an acceptable range. The operator told me the good news when I swung by one day, and he was just thrilled...and, so was I! Oh, as a result of lowering their overall loss, the community water system is at the lowest production numbers in almost 15 years!

The second ‘warm and fuzzy’ situation occurred in a system that has a population of 1,200, and has 680 service connections. It produces water from a Class A surface water plant, and they have a Class 2 wastewater plant; and they also take care of streets, critters, and anything else that comes up, that nobody else wants to be seen doing. This system hasn’t had a lot of staff turnover, but they sure were going through the water. They have two separate pressure zones to contend with as well. I have gone to this system at least once a year, for many years, to listen to anything and everything we could in the pursuit of finding water loss. We would find a couple small leaks each time, with never much luck getting the water loss to come down. We always came back to a fire hydrant every year saying, “Well it’s leaking, but it doesn’t sound that bad”.

The main line, that feeds this hydrant, is under the state highway in town, which makes it a not so easy fix. Trust me,

when I say logistics of shutting down this highway is not a fun endeavor. (If I told you why, it would give away the location, thus not protecting the innocent any longer. That’s my “Dragnet” quote for the day).

Well, we all had been fooling ourselves about this leak for years! We finally came to the conclusion it just needed fixed....well, it was the big one! The leak, which didn’t sound big, was on a main line listed on the map as one type of material, and in real life it was another. As such, I can say that ‘Transite’ pipe can make a big leak sound small, especially when you’re under the assumption that it’s cast iron.

Like I was saying, the location under the highway, lacks all warm and fuzzy feelings. The supervisor sent his guys down, just to exercise valves to get prepared to shut it down the next week to perform the repairs. Well, this turned into a snapped valve, which had water spewing across this unnamed and highly traveled highway, late in the week. This now required emergency locates, a contractor to do the repairs and the supervisor driving an hour and a half to meet a supplier with the correct parts to fix this valve, and the leak which we all thought wasn’t a major concern. It was very humbling for all involved, to say the least, but once all the problems were fixed, that cut the water loss down to low levels they haven’t seen in years.

I do want to say, just writing this up is giving me that warm and fuzzy feeling again. It is crazy that I made two unrelated stops in like a week’s time to do this. It was brought up just in a general conversation, I think they both went something like this. “Hey, I want to show you our numbers!” “Remember when you were over here, and we found this or that, and you helped with this or that?”. And, I would reply “Yep, I sure do !”. And they went on “Well you helped and it made a difference, and we are at the lowest numbers in years!” (That’s when I had to, in both circumstances, wipe a small tear away).

Not every day does the Circuit Rider get to hear such tales, or do they always find out what they did made a big difference. But, I did that twice in a week and it was GREAT! If an IRWA Circuit Rider, or any other IRWA staff member helps...just let them know. A text, call or maybe a nice thank-you letter, goes a long way for us that run all over trying to help others. I honestly forget sometimes where I’ve been and who I’ve helped, but it sure feels good when I find out what I did made a difference. Have a great summer and stay cool!! 💧





# RURAL WATER FINANCING AGENCY

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Finance Team History:

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Finance Team History:

**300+ loans for \$500 million**

## About Us

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*Illinois Rural Water*  
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ILLINOIS RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION



# Illinois Fun Facts

## State Symbols & History:

- Illinois is known as the "Prairie State" and the "Land of Lincoln".
- It became the 21st state on December 3, 1818.
- Illinois was the first state to ratify the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery.
- Chicago was home to the first modern skyscraper, built in 1885.
- Notable historical sites include Abraham Lincoln's burial place in Springfield and the Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site, representing a sophisticated prehistoric civilization.
- The square dance is the official American folk dance.
- The first McDonald's restaurant opened in Des Plaines.
- Collinsville is home to the World's Largest Catsup Bottle.
- Illinois was the first state to choose the violet as its State Flower.
- The white oak is the State Tree and can live for hundreds of years.

## Geography & Nature:

- Carlyle Lake is the state's largest man-made lake.
- The Chicago River is known for having its flow reversed in 1900.
- The Mississippi River forms the western border of Illinois.
- Charles Mound is the highest natural point in the state at 1,235 feet, making Illinois a relatively flat state.
- The official State Prairie Grass is big bluestem.
- Milkweed flowers are important for pollinators.
- The painted turtle is the state reptile and is found in lakes and ponds.

## Economy & Industry:

- Corn is the official state grain, and Illinois has very fertile soil, ranking third nationally in prime farmland.
- Morton, IL is known as the "Pumpkin Capital of the World".
- Illinois is a leading producer of nuclear energy.
- The state is a major transportation hub, with the Port of Chicago and O'Hare International Airport.
- Chicago has one of the world's busiest airports and the world's largest public library.

## Unique & Quirky Facts:

- The town of Casey features numerous oversized objects.
- Illinois is home to the world's largest collection of 8-track tapes.
- Twinkies were invented in River Forest in 1930.



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