



THE LAWRENCE LIFT NEWSLETTER

BE PREPARED FOR WINTER WEATHER

It is in the winter months when we see increased leak activity. So, please be sure and check your plumbing and fixtures. Make sure you have winterized, and if you are unsure what to do or how to do it, contact your plumber. There is also a great deal of helpful information available on the internet that you may use to prevent leaks due to freezing and breaking of water lines and/or meters. The Water and Sewer Information section of the Utility's page of the city website (www.cityoflawrence.org) also has information for winter preparedness.

Fast, Easy, and Convenient! Check out our new online bill pay! Visit us at www.cityoflawrence.org/billpay to enroll in eBill and pay by credit card!

Scott Salsbery
Utilities Superintendent
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ISSUE

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Dear Lawrence Utility Customer,

"And so this is Christmas and what have we done? Another year over, a new one just begun." (Lennon/Ono)

Many of you may be wondering that too! What has Lawrence Utilities done this year? Well, quite a lot actually. If you are a regular reader you will no doubt be aware that we are just about finished with building our new water treatment plant at Richardt Street, a new 4.3 million gallon per day facility, which will replace the old and worn out existing facility. Those living in the area will be pleased at the new appearance of this facility once it is all completed. Many of you too have been sending emails and phone calls expressing your happiness with the Oaklandon Tower repainting, which was actually a lot more extensive than just a simple repainting! However, I do know that a few folks were not happy about the length of time the park was closed, which went beyond what was originally planned, albeit for reasons outside our control. We also replaced a failed section of water main that was suffering repeated main breaks and causing damage to the roadway and other property. Actually, it wasn't the main that was suffering, but the residents connected to that main that bore the brunt of the all-too-frequent breaks. We are also in the process of completing our wellfield improvements project, which includes structural, electrical and mechanical improvements in our Fort and Indian Lake wellfields, as well as adding emergency generators in order to guarantee water production capability during power outages affecting the wellfields.

On the sewer side of the operations, we have completed a manhole rehabilitation Project as well as a sewer main rehabilitation project and a sewer main relocation. This is in addition to our sewer crews' numerous sewer manhole grade adjustments and other repairs.

All these projects are in addition to all the daily activities we perform in order to operate and maintain the water and sanitary sewer systems on behalf of the City and its residents and our customers. I do not want to neglect to mention the rollout of our new On-Line Bill Pay platform, which has gone very well indeed. However, I would like to encourage our customers

who have not done so, to sign up and create their own user accounts, elect to receive electronic bills and, one of my favorite features, recurring credit card payments. This feature is really convenient! Additionally, if you are in our billing office or Lawrence Government Center, check out our new kiosks where you can also conveniently pay your utility bill! And let's not forget the additional upgrade of our water utility's bond rating. Since 2017 the rating has been upgraded four times, going from "junk bond" rating to A-minus with a Positive Outlook. In addition, we have started engineering on several other projects that will be built in 2019.

In 2019 we will continue to push our water main replacement projects as well as perform additional sewer main, manhole and lift station improvements. The water main projects will be focused in those areas of the City where the mains are oldest and have the most problems with failure frequency and iron buildup. For the sewer system, we will continue to focus projects on eliminating inflow and infiltration of groundwater/rainwater into the sewer system, which drive up our treatment costs.

I would like to close by mentioning our Business Office staff and the tremendous job they do in collecting and processing meter readings for billing purposes (about 14,800 readings monthly), scheduling/processing work orders, providing customer service for walk-in as well as phone-in customers, collections, backflow program monitoring and tracking, meter testing, performing customer service work orders in the field and a host of other duties that are all important to our successful op-

eration of the utilities. I know the amount of work that gets done in the office on a regular basis and how hard our staff of 5 clerks, 5 field technicians and 1 manager work to perform all the various tasks they handle. It can get extremely busy at times in the billing office. It is our pledge to you to continue to strive to be courteous, polite and respectful in the performance of our duties. We will continue to train and emphasize the importance of listening carefully, speaking politely and respectfully and, above all, helping as much as possible while complying with established policies and procedures. We would simply ask that our customers take the same approach with our Business Office staff and reflect on the fact that, if there is a billing issue or problem, it is not the person you are upset with, but rather the situation.

Along these lines, please know that we cannot solve plumbing problems on the customer's plumbing. But we can, and do, spend a reasonable amount of time advising customers about things they can do or check if they are having problems related to unusually high water usage. And while there are some things we can do to assist, such as (but not limited to) provide billing data, perform a meter accuracy test, or run a meter profile (provided your type of meter has this capability, not all do at present), the bottom line is that if the meter is registering a leak, it is because there is a leak. I can assure you that when we respond to inquiries involving unusually high water usage, we perform a thorough check to determine if there is any possibility the problem could lie with the meter or if a setting in the account was somehow changed. We will provide all the information we can

to help a customer determine what may be the cause of their problem, but in the end, the customer will need to resolve the plumbing issue. It goes without saying that, when we find leaks on the supply side of the meter, which does not actually affect the meter reading, we respond as quickly as we can to make repairs and will also see to restoration of disturbed areas. And ultimately, if we find an error on our end, we do provide billing corrections in accordance with established policy. If you are interested in knowing more about our policies and procedures with regard to water and sanitary sewer services, irrigation systems, billing, etc., please visit the website at <http://www.cityoflawrence.org/utilities/water-sewer>. Then click on the "Policy and Procedure Manual" link.

Along with all the employees of Lawrence Utilities, I wish you and yours a Happy Holiday Season!

Thank you,
Scott Salsbery, Superintendent

ONLINE BILL TIPS & TRICKS

Signed up for eBill but haven't received an email with your bill?

- Sign in online to make sure your Enrollment Status says "Actively Enrolled"
- If your Enrollment Status says "Enrollment Pending Email Confirmation" be sure to check your junk mail for the activation link!
- You can also select 'Resend Activation' if you can't find your activation email!

Having Difficulties signing out of your account?

- Select 'User Profile' to view the 'log out' option
- Would you like to change your password?***
- Select 'User Profile' followed by 'Profile Maintenance'

Any additional Questions, feel free to contact the billing office at (317) 542-0511