



**SOUTHERN IOWA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION**  
SERVING THE RESIDENTS OF ADAIR, ADAMS, CASS, CLARKE, DECATUR, MADISON, MONTGOMERY, TAYLOR, RINGGOLD AND UNION COUNTIES

Spring 2004 Water Quality Report

**Dan McIntosh, Manager**

It's hard to believe 2004 is almost to its mid point. A lot has happened since our last newsletter. If you were unable to attend the SIRWA annual meeting, here's an update. The food was good, the giveaways were plentiful and the door prizes were fantastic. Some 420 people attended the meeting. Union County customers re-elected Jack Keuter as their representative. Eldon Binning was also re-elected, representing Decatur County.

Joanne and Earl Hanthorn were chosen to receive the "Friend of Rural Water" award that is given annually to a person who has helped SIRWA in the past. For those of you who do not know, Earl is a past Executive Director of SIRWA. The Board has thought about giving this award to one or the other of them for some time. They finally came to the decision that they are now, and have always been a team, and chose both as recipients of this award. We thank Joanne and Earl for their continued support in helping SIRWA to grow and prosper.

Brenda Standley was given the "Earl Hanthorn, Employee of the Year" award. This honor is given to an outstanding SIRWA employee, and is especially coveted as fellow employees vote for the recipient of this award. Read more about Brenda on page two.

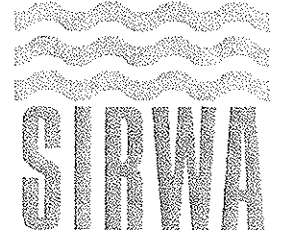
I have made two trips to Washington DC this spring. During the first trip I was involved with Gooseberry Lake, Ringgold County; Clarke County Reservoir Commission, Clarke County; and the 102 River Valley Authority, Taylor County. My mission was to discuss funding for the three lake projects with the Congressional staff. All three lakes are in different stages of development. Gooseberry is the elder of the lake projects and is almost ready to start purchasing land. The Clarke County Reservoir is in the process of a study to determine which site is most feasible. The 102 River Valley Authority, which just began meeting at the end of 2003, is just in its infancy. The three entities visited with our Representatives in Washington, presenting a united front for the need for water in Southern Iowa.

Two weeks later I returned to Washington

DC to lobby with Iowa Rural Water Association (IRWA). IRWA represents twenty rural water systems and hundreds of small towns across Iowa. IRWA employs technicians, also known as circuit riders, who help small communities with problems such as leak detection, rate studies, well head protection and other matters with which they require assistance. They are also on the forefront of legislation that is very important to the water and wastewater industry. Funding for much of IRWA comes in the form of grants that help pay for the staff who help rural water systems and communities across the state. Our message in Washington was how essential this money is in continuing this program. Iowa is very fortunate in the fact that most of our Senators and Congressman are well informed of the need for this type of funding in the rural communities and we were merely there to update them.

**2004 Iowa Rural Water Association Board Member of the Year**

In February 2004, Henry Heaton was named Board Member of the Year at the IRWA annual meeting held in Pella, Iowa. Henry has been a SIRWA Board of Director since March of 1993, serving as Board President from 1995 until April 2003. Henry brought to the Board a strong banking background, often being teased about being "tighter than bark on a tree". Henry has always been fair, ensuring that our customers have received one dollar's worth of product for one dollar spent. During Henry's tenure, he has seen our customer base grow from 2,200 to 9,512, participating in some 27 projects. He has also been involved in bringing on sewered communities with current customers totaling 1,041. Henry has learned many aspects of the water industry and is especially knowledgeable of the construction. When his hometown of Brooks came online with SIRWA, you would find Henry right out with the construction crew overseeing the installation of all 36 meter pits, and would often bring cool drinks, food and anything else needed to those working on the project. Henry takes his job as Board Member very seriously and is always watching out for SIRWA.



Southern Iowa Rural Water Association  
An Equal Opportunity Provider

**WATER EMERGENCY  
PHONE NUMBERS**

- (641) 782-5744
- (641) 344-1583
- (641) 344-1584

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**Board Members  
At Your Service**

- Jack Keuter, Board Chairperson, Union County
- Jim Smith, Board Vice Chairperson, portions of Madison, Cass and Adair County
- Ethel Campbell, Board Secretary/Treasurer, Ringgold County
- Henry Heaton, Adams County
- Helmut Mueller, Clarke County
- Eldon Binning, Decatur County
- Delbert Rogers, Taylor County

## SIRWA STAFF

<b>Lucy McIntosh</b>	<b>Manager</b>
<b>Cathy Lacina</b>	<b>Business Office Manager</b>
Brenda Standley	Accounting Assistant
Rhonda Campbell	Customer Service/Billing
Darla Parker	Customer Service/Billing
Joedy Krings	Customer Service/Billing
Julie Ross	Customer Service/Billing
<b>Wade Starlin</b>	<b>Operations Manager</b>
Matt Schultz	Senior Area Supervisor (Clarke & Union)
Steve Long	Area Supervisor (Adams, Adair & Taylor)
Trent Holliday	Area Supervisor (Union, Ringgold & Decatur)
Cory Latham	Area Supervisor (Ringgold & Decatur)
Bob Decker	Area Supervisor (Adair, Madison & Union)
Joe Edwards	Grounds Keeper
<b>Dave Bauer</b>	<b>Project Engineer</b>
Rodney Brown	CAD Operator/GIS
<b>Chad Mahan</b>	<b>Const. &amp; Maint. Manager</b>
Troy Foster	Sr. Digging Crew #1
Jeremy Flynn	Digging Crew #1
Casey Paulus	Digging Crew #2
Harvey Shields	Meter Reader
Jeanette Warren	Meter Reader
Mary Fleming	Meter Reader
Brenda Smith	Meter Reader
Jim Harris	Shop Maintenance
<b>Jeff Rice</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>
Larry Antisdell	Inspector
Jack Freese	Inspector
Daniel Shepherd	Easement Coordinator
Scott Smith	Electronics Technician
Cody Starlin	Electronics Technician Assistant
Chad Levi	Add-on Coordinator

### New Project Update

Jeff Rice, Project Manager

Another season of construction is underway and progress is being made in our S.E. Cass project. This can be attributed to excellent weather last fall and a dependable contractor in Max Smith Construction. Trenching started in July of 2003 with most of the 172 miles of main line being trenched in just over three months time. Boring, tie-in and testing crews went to work getting nearly 100 services online with drinkable water before winter shut down operation. There are now six crews doing the finishing up work which includes cleanup. We anticipate completion in July, weather permitting.

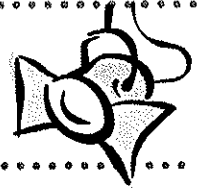
We are working hard at promoting our added user program, which is connecting people that are along our existing lines. We have a program in place for potential customers which allows \$2,000 to be deducted from the initial hook-up fees. If you have a neighbor or friend that is interested in getting connected, please have them contact us.

### Brenda Standley voted Employee of the Year

The "Earl Hanthorn" award is given each year to honor the outstanding SIRWA employee of the year. This award is voted on by the employees themselves, so it is especially coveted. This year's recipient has been with SIRWA for two years and has become a real asset. She is what we term as Cathy's "Right Hand". She has taken over many of the financial duties including all of the accounts payable. Even though she has only been with SIRWA for a short time, she is needed as if she has been here forever. Brenda always seems to have a smile on her face, no matter what.



### NEW EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



#### Joe Edwards - Grounds Keeper

We would like to welcome Joe Edwards to the SIRWA team. Joe was hired late March as the Grounds Keeper/Floating Supervisor, helping out where he is needed. Joe takes care of some thirty towers as well as many pump stations, keeping them groomed and looking great.

Joe resides in Afton and when he isn't mowing he enjoys camping, fishing, four-wheeling and a wide array of water sports.

Before Joe came to SIRWA he worked for T & H Construction in Lorimor. He brings a lot of useful knowledge and skills with him.



#### Mary Fleming - Meter Reader

Mary started in April and jumped right in to meter reading. She also helps in the office when needed. She previously worked part-time for the DNR and loves the outdoors. Meter reading is a perfect fit for her.

Mary lives in Creston and has two sons. Jake, 22, who is beginning his fourth year at the University of Iowa. Ryan, 6, is in kindergarten at St. Malachy.



In her spare time, Mary spends as much time as she can with her family and friends. Her love of cooking, gardening and helping out at her sons school keeps her busy in between.

## On The Drawing Board Lore Bauer, Project Engineer

The Engineering Department has purchased a large scanner that allows us to make copies of old drawings and maps. We have been using the scanner almost daily and Rodney Brown, our CADD technician, has become quite adept at operating it. He will be able to make changes to the old drawings after they have been scanned and stored electronically on our computer system.

In late January of this year I attended a computer training course on our water systems hydraulic modeling program. Since then we have been busy preparing and running the analysis of several of our pressure zones. We are analyzing the systems as they exist today, looking for areas that may need upgrading. We are also driving each pressure zone to determine the total number of homes or businesses that are not, but could be, connected to our distribution system. After driving the service area we will re-analyze each area to determine what upgrades will be required if all the un-served houses and businesses were to connect. We are hoping that by the end of the year we will have the entire distribution system completed.

In March, the City of Thayer was awarded a grant from the Iowa Department of Economic Development through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for sewer system improvements. However, with the Federal budget not yet passed by congress, the grant funds cannot be dispersed. We are continuing to work with USDA-Rural Development to determine what improvements will be constructed. We expect to begin design of the project later this fall or early winter and to take bids for the construction of the project next spring.

The City of Macksburg does not have a centralized sewer system, and the discharge from many of the septic tanks serving the houses and businesses is directed into the roadside ditches or drainageways. We have submitted a Plan of Action to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to address this situation. In December of 2004 the City will be submitting an application to the Iowa Department of Economic Development for a grant for development of sewer system improvements. If all goes well the City will be awarded a grant in March of 2005, with construction of the improvements during the spring, summer and fall of 2006.

SIRWA is participating in the construction of four additional sludge storage lagoons at the Creston Water Treatment Plant. Construction of these lagoons began in early May. The construction of additional lagoons is necessary because of increased water production at the plant due to the growth and expansion of SIRWA's system. It is expected that the lagoons and associated piping will be complete late summer or early fall.



## A Note From The Office Cathy Lacina, Business Office Manager

We have hired two meter readers. One of the two readers, Brenda Smith, has returned to us after an injury that kept her from being able to read last year. We are very happy to have her return as she knows our system well and has jumped back in like she never left us. Mary Fleming is our other meter reader. She started in April and is busy learning our system and getting to know the towns and rural areas. She enjoys the outdoors and is catching on quickly. Read more about Mary in the New Employee Spotlight on page two.

For the past few months we have been using a program called the Auto Dialer. With this added technology we can call our customers and let them know if we have not received a payment, if there is going to be a water outage or any other emergency that might affect our water system. So please call in and make sure we have a current phone number on record for the daytime hours as well as for the evening so that we can contact you at any given time.

## Area Supervisor Spotlight


### Wade Starlin, Operations Manager

Approximately one-half of the area supervisor's time is spent performing customer work orders or service calls. Generally SIRWA does not charge for the service call unless they fall under certain criteria. First of all, we do not charge a customer needing the water shut off. Only when the water is turned on is the customer charged \$50.00 during business hours and \$75.00 is charged if the service personnel will have to be out later than 3 pm. If a customer is shut off due to non-payment of their bill, the customer is charged \$50.00 for a reconnect fee. We also do not turn water on after hours for delinquent customers.

Another scenario, if a customer calls in with a water or sewer problem and we send someone out and determine the problem to be their own the customer is assessed a \$50.00 charge during business hours or \$75.00 after 3 pm. An example of this would be a water leak after the customer's meter or frozen pipes during the cold months. We also charge for parts if a meter happens to freeze up and break due to poor insulation such as in a crawl space, under trailer homes or in basements.

The SIRWA Board of Directors has put our service charge policy into place in order to keep water costs reasonable. Customers with rental houses, or that shut off their water service for the winter to go south, or with vacation homes in our service area use the shut off and turn-on service the most. The Board felt it was fair to charge the people that use these services rather than raise water rates for everyone else who may use the service less frequently, if ever. This policy also encourages the customer to look into a problem themselves if they know that they could possibly be charged a service charge if the problem exists and their water service shut off.

**CALL BEFORE YOU DIG**  
**1-800-292-8989**

 Southern Iowa Rural Water Association

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- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 01-01-22-019000 | 01-01-10-425002 |
| 01-01-46-229001 | 01-01-54-292000 |
| 01-01-58-353002 | 01-01-57-003000 |
| 01-01-20-045000 | 01-01-55-119001 |
| 01-01-52-115000 | 01-01-59-084000 |
| 01-01-67-029000 | 01-01-81-035000 |

**The Dirt On The Digging Crew**

Chad Mahan, Construction & Maint. Manager

The construction team has been staying busy maintaining water lines, replacing flushing hydrants and setting meter pits in the town of Lorimor, which we added to our system this past winter. We have also installed a fire hydrant, valves and a meter at the Lorimor water tower. The plan is to get all caught up as soon as possible so we can start replacing some of the old water mains in the town of Afton.

The two construction crews are well equipped to perform all jobs that need done. We currently have three backhoes, two boring machines, a small trencher, a jet vac machine and various types of sewer equipment. The backhoes are used practically every day fixing leaks, setting meter pits and anything that entails digging. The boring machines allow us to bore anything from a one inch service line to a six inch sewer line, on grade. Our trencher doesn't get used very often, but when needed it is handy. The jet vac machine is a useful tool for locating utilities that are too difficult to locate with a probe. One crew also uses the jet vac to clean the inside of our water towers. Our sewer equipment includes a see-snake which allows us to see inside the mains to identify problems. If when a sewer blockage is discovered, we are equipped with a sewer cleaning machine to clean the blockage from the line.

Remember, if you are going to dig make sure and call your locates in at least two days in advance. If you don't you may find some of the 3,600 miles of pipe we have in the ground. The number to call for Iowa One-Call is 1-800-292-8989.

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