

West Central District Meeting

Eau Claire – February 11, 2009

On February 11, 2008 the West Central District meeting was hosted by the City of Eau Claire and was held at the American Legion Post 53.

The meeting opened with a welcome address from Jeff Pippenger. Jeff is the Utilities Administrator for the City of Eau Claire. Jeff gave a brief history of Eau Claire and the Eau Claire Wastewater Utility. Jeff stated that the Eau Claire Wastewater Treatment Facility serves the cities of Eau Claire and Altoona. The city maintains 319 miles of sanitary sewer, of which 50% is concrete, 34% is PVC, and about 8% is vitrified clay pipe. Jeff highlighted the importance of knowing the age of your system and being proactive with your maintenance program to prevent sewer back ups. Jeff finished by asking everyone to enjoy the meeting, to be sure to network with fellow WWOA members and visit the vendors, enjoy the catered meal of barbequed chicken, and for all of us to realize the impact each of us has on our communities.

West Central District President Steve Skinner then opened the business meeting. Steve noted that Rita passed away November 13, 2008. Rita was the lab technician at the Sparta Wastewater Treatment Plant and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

The next WCD meetings will be in Ellsworth on May 12th, and Alma Center on August 19th. The WCD is planning to put together a team for the operator's competition and WCD members are encouraged to participate. We are also looking for award nominees, so if you have someone who you feel deserves an award, please nominate them.

Kathy White was the first speaker. Kathy is the Chemist and Industrial Pretreatment Coordinator for the City of Eau Claire. Kathy was instrumental in developing the Mercury Pollutant Minimization Plan or PMP for the City of Eau Claire. Kathy elaborated on the history and hazards of mercury, then Kathy described the development and implementation of the Mercury PMP for Eau Claire.

Bob Manowski of L & S Electric gave us a short run down of their company and the services that they provide. Bob then pointed out a few maintenance tips:

- Know whether your motors have roller or ball bearings because service is different for each bearing type.
- Do not over grease your motor bearings.
- When roller bearings fail it is usually catastrophic to the motor, in other words, more than just the bearings themselves get damaged.
- Improper coupling alignment will ruin bearings. A laser alignment done properly will prevent this.
- Do not leave motors sit in an unheated space for extended periods of time without running them. Condensation will form and cause damage.

The next speaker was Dan Olson, Regional Sales Engineer for Yaskawa Electric. Dan pointed out that Yaskawa, formerly Magnatec, is world's largest manufacturer of variable speed drives. Their P7 line of variable speed drive is designed for normal duty fans, pumps and blowers. Dan stressed the importance of making sure the air filters and fan that cool a VFD are clean. Fans can be cleaned with compressed air, once the power to the VFD is shut off. VFD's have many safety features built into them that will shut the VFD down if a fail condition exists. Dan recommended not trying to repeatedly start a VFD that fails; you can damage the drive by doing so.

Steve Hayden of the City of Eau Claire gave the last talk of the morning. Steve is the Utilities Engineer for the city and his topic was electrical safety. Steve emphasized some of the recent changes to the National Electrical Safety Codes. Steve reviewed the steps of creation and documentation of a facility electrical safety plan, training, and identifying hazards. Steve also covered the personal protect equipment and distance requirements for electrical work.

After lunch, Craig Capper discussed Eau Claire's biosolids land application program. Craig is the Utilities Chemist for the City of Eau Claire. Eau Claire produces Class B biosolids that meet the high quality limits for metals. Last year they land applied 4,961,000 gallons of biosolids at a concentration of 5.5%. 90% of this sludge gets injected, while 10% is surface applied to hay fields during the summer. The City owns a Terra-Gator tanker that holds 3,200 gallons, is GPS guided, and injects the sludge into the soil at a rate that is predetermined and computer controlled.

Jeff Pippenger then gave a presentation on the recent and future upgrades to the Eau Claire Wastewater Treatment Plant. The design firms involved are Donohue and Ayres Associates. The Phase I project addressed the need for more sludge storage space to meet the 180 day requirement. It also included the addition of a carbonic acid process to reduce the effect of ammonia toxicity and an upgrade to the Otter Creek Lift Station. Phase II will include the following upgrades: replacing the RBCs with an activated sludge system, gravity thickener sludge pumps, digester covers, digester pumps and motors, replacement of two generators, safety and code compliance updates, odor control, new water lab, SCADA system, clean and inspect the plant electrical system, a dewatering wet well, and upgrades to the Eau Claire River lift station. Design will take place during 2010 and 2011, with construction during 2012 to 2013. The project is expected to cost thirty-three million dollars.

The last speaker of the day was Steve Thon of the Wisconsin DNR. Steve talked about the CMAR, CMOM, EDMR, and TMDLs. Steve put his psychology training to good use by throwing candy bars to anyone who answered his questions correctly.

The day ended with tours of the Eau Claire Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Thank you to all the speakers, vendors, donators, and the City of Eau Claire for hosting the event.

Paul Sterk
Vice President
West Central District, WWOA