

July - August
2011

America's Best



Currents



Tasting Water

News and Developments for Customers of the Macon Water Authority

MWA issues \$12 million in revenue bonds to continue progress on Capital Improvements

The Macon Water Authority (MWA), in an effort to continue its long-range Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to upgrade the water and sewer system for the benefit of more than 51,000 customers, has issued \$12 million in new revenue bonds this summer. In addition, the MWA is refinancing another \$23 million of outstanding debt under more favorable interest rates. The refinancing will garner approximately \$3.0 million of net savings over the life of that bond issue.

This latest issuance of water and sewer revenue bonds – the Series 2011A Bonds – is the second of multiple bond issues the Authority is intending to pursue to bring in funding necessary to implement a \$50 million CIP, which was outlined in a master resolution passed by the MWA in July of 2010.

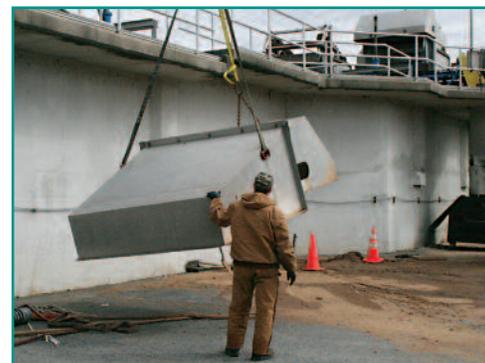
Last August, the Series 2010B bond issue brought the MWA an initial \$20 million to begin construction on the highest priority capital projects identified in the CIP by the Authority staff and consulting engineers. Now that the Series 2011A Bond Issue has raised another \$12 million to add to that initial \$20 million in funding from the 2010B Bond Issue, the MWA will be seeking the remaining \$18 million for the CIP budget through one or more bond issues over the course of the next two years.

The Authority's current, long-range CIP has more than \$17 million in anticipated water distribution system or water treatment plant improvements. The biggest capital expenditure on the water side of the Authority's current CIP is the \$10 million earmarked for constructing a new, auxiliary intake on the Ocmulgee River for withdrawing raw water for treatment in the Frank C. Amerson, Jr. Water Treatment Facility. This new intake will be installed at a lower elevation next to the existing river intake, which is also slated for upgrades as part of this project, according to the scope of the CIP.

While \$17 million is a sizeable investment in water system and facility upgrades, that amount is about half of what the Authority has planned for rehabilitating its sewer infrastructure. In all, the current CIP has identified more than \$32 million in necessary wastewater collection system or water reclamation facility improvements. The biggest ticket item on the list of sewer system upgrades is the \$8.5 million earmarked for the "Find and Fix Sanitary Sewers" program, which entails identifying, inspecting, testing, and cleaning or repairing impaired or failing sewer lines within the MWA system. In addition, more than \$12 million will be spent to rehabilitate two large sewer

interceptors (lines), while another \$8 million plus will go toward rehabilitating three major pump stations.

"This is the right time to be investing in upgrades and enhancements to our water and sewer infrastructure," says Tony Rojas, executive director of the MWA. "The older portions of our system have reached the end of their useful life, so improvements are imperative."



Among the current Capital Improvement Projects underway at the MWA, \$1.6 million of bond revenues is being invested in improvements to the Lower Poplar Street Water Reclamation Facility. Photo by Lisa Vaughn.

MWA joining fellow environmental stewards to host seventh annual Ocmulgee Alive!

The Macon Water Authority (MWA) and other, fellow environmental enthusiasts will host the seventh annual Ocmulgee Alive! on Saturday, October 22, from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Volunteers for Macon's annual river cleanup will gather at Rotary Park on Riverside Drive near First Street that morn-

ing to clean a large portion of the Ocmulgee River, along the popular Ocmulgee Heritage Trail, and other nearby streams.

The Ocmulgee River, coupled with Javors Lucas Lake, also serves as a primary source for drinking water for 51,000 MWA customers.

Last year's Ocmulgee Alive! saw a record 325 volunteers turn out for the event, which was the seventh largest among the 231 similar Rivers Alive cleanups held across the state of Georgia in 2010. The Rivers Alive events, such as Macon's annual river cleanup, are designed to create awareness of and involvement in the preservation of Georgia's waterways, including rivers, streams, lakes, beaches, and wetlands.

Once again, YKK USA and Graphic Packaging International will be teaming up with the MWA as primary sponsors, along with Ocmulgee Heritage Trail, Keep Macon-Bibb Beautiful, Ocmulgee River Initiative, Georgia Wilderness Society, and additional sponsors and volunteer organizations as well.

Volunteers should wear high-topped work boots or similar non-skid, sturdy footwear, long pants and a long-sleeved shirt, a hat and sunscreen for additional protection, as well as heavy duty work gloves, insect repellent, water, and a tool to pick up trash.



Last year's Ocmulgee Alive! saw 325 volunteers take part in Macon's annual river cleanup, which was the seventh largest Rivers Alive event in Georgia – out of the 231 held across the state.

Event organizers require all participants to sign a medical release and liability waiver along with their registration. A volunteer/event t-shirt will be provided for those who pre-register.

For more information and to sign-up for Ocmulgee Alive! – volunteers should contact the Authority's Mark Wyzalek at 478-464-5678 or OcmulgeeAlive@maconwater.org. Registration forms will be available on the MWA Web site at www.maconwater.org.



Jerry Hillhouse does his part to clean up trash and debris along the Ocmulgee River during last year's river cleanup.

SECOND FRONT

MWA hosts sixth annual Kids Fishing Derby

Record crowd attends event sponsored by Academy Sports & Outdoors and others



Grandfather Charles Hughes (foreground), grandson Kole Hughes (center), and son Bobby Hughes (back), make the MWA Kids Fishing Derby a family affair, using Ivory Soap as a tried and true method for catching catfish.

A record crowd participated in the sixth annual Macon Water Authority (MWA) Kids Fishing Derby at Javors Lucas Lake, with nearly 600 participants and accompanying adults on hand to cast their lines in an attempt to catch a variety of fish, including bass, bream, and catfish.

Academy Sports & Outdoors again served as premier sponsor of the event, though nearly 80 additional local businesses, companies, or individuals made significant contributions as well. In addition, a strong contingent of MWA employees and board members were on hand as volunteers, handling everything from parking cars to serving lunch.

Jacob Leuenberger, age 12, won the "Biggest Catch of the Day" by reeling in a catfish that exceeded 6.8 pounds. He also won first place in his age group category – participants 10 to 13 years old. Finishing second in this age group was Jaloni Gordon, while Christopher Hopkins finished in third.

In the 14 to 16 age group category, Chris Howard took home first place with a catch that weighed in at 4.8 pounds, with Adam Suddeth finishing in second and James Leuenberger finishing in third.

Emmaleigh Randolph won the competition in the 6 to 9 year old age group, followed by Logan Matthews in second place and Joseph Willis in third.



Academy Sports & Outdoors again served as the premier sponsor of the 2011 MWA Kids Fishing Derby, the sixth annual event hosted by the Authority. Pictured from Academy Sports (left to right) are: Mac Vaughn, Chad Douglas, Fred Walker, Kurtis Johnson, Talisha Searcy, and Rocky Bales.

Finally, in the 3 to 5 age group category, Sierra Cumbess won first place, with Jacob Harbin in second place and Cameron Hardwick in third.

The annual MWA Kids Fishing Derby is held on one of the few dates during the year that the Georgia Department of Natural Resources allows the public to fish without a permit, in order to promote the sport of fishing and outdoor recreation.

MWA Executive Director providing industry leadership

Macon Water Authority (MWA) Executive Director Tony Rojas has been called to serve his fellow industry professionals as the President of the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP), taking office during the recent 2011 Annual Conference & Expo.

This summer, Rojas was asked to serve on a panel with other city and county leaders from around Georgia, to make recommendations to the Governor's Water Supply Task Force. Rojas already serves on the State Board of Examiners for Certification of Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators and Laboratory Analysts, following his appointment by the Governor in 2009.

While the MWA Executive Director will be working overtime to lead the GAWP as President this year, he will have a new Finance Director on staff to help. Guy Boyle brings a wealth of experience to the role of Chief Financial Officer for the Authority. Boyle replaces the recently retired Melissa Thorpe, who had served 17 years as Finance Director.



MWA employees among the best water professionals in Georgia

During the 2011 Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP) Annual Conference & Expo, held July 10-13, at the Savannah International Trade & Conference Center, three Macon Water Authority (MWA) employees were recognized as being the best of the best within the state's water industry.

Terry Forrest, MWA Director of Wastewater, was the 2011 winner of the GAWP Nathan Meredith DeJarnette Award for his role in further encouraging and promoting operational advancements and achievements in the water and water pollution control field. The award reflects Forrest's outstanding accomplishments in operating a water or water pollution control facility, and/or outstanding service in training other operators.

Kate Kubesheski, Wastewater Plant Operator for the MWA, received the Water Environment Federation's William D. Hatfield Award for outstanding performance and professionalism in the operation of wastewater treatment plants. The Hatfield Award is the equivalent of being recognized as the top wastewater plant operator in the state of Georgia.

Finally, the Authority's Darryl Macy



Receiving industry awards at the GAWP Annual Conference held recently in Savannah included the MWA's (left to right): Darryl Macy, as an inductee into the 5-S Society, Terry Forrest, as the recipient of the Nathan Meredith DeJarnette Award for operational advancements and achievements in the field, and Kate Kubesheski, as the recipient of the Water Environment Federation's William D. Hatfield Award for being the state's top wastewater plant operator.

was inducted into the GAWP "5-S" Society for his teaching and training of water professionals all over the state, and for the betterment of the water and sewer industry in Georgia.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND LEADERSHIP

Frank C. Amerson, Jr.
Chairman, County-wide
478.745.3003

Javors J. Lucas
Vice Chairman, District 2
478.742.2722

Dorothy 'Dot' Black
District 1
478.742.3503

Steve Rickman
District 3
478.743.0056

Frank Patterson
District 4
478.808.2020

Bert Bivins, III
Bibb County
Representative
478.738.9466

Ed DeFore
City of Macon
Representative
478.474.0754

Tony Rojas
Executive Director
478.464.5622



790 Second Street
P.O. Box 108
Macon, Ga., 31202-0108

478.464.5620 (M-F)
478.464.5656
(After Hours)
478.750.2007 (Fax)