

Currents

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BEST-TASTING
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water

News and Developments for Customers of the Macon Water Authority

SPLOST revenue shortfall will limit stormwater projects MWA can pursue

Since entering into an intergovernmental agreement with Macon-Bibb County, the MWA has been providing technical assistance for stormwater rehabilitation projects funded by the voter-approved Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).

However, because the current Macon-Bibb SPLOST is generating less revenue than was originally anticipated, the MWA will not be able to complete \$4.4 million worth of needed stormwater infrastructure improvements.

The SPLOST shortfall serves as a reminder that Macon-Bibb's stormwater management program and capital projects to improve and rehabilitate stormwater infrastructure need a continuous source of revenue to support these basic services and critical infrastructure.

The need for stormwater infrastructure rehabilitation far exceeds the available funding from SPLOST dollars budgeted for this purpose. And that was before officials realized that SPLOST revenue will not reach the \$190 million cap when collections end in March 2018. In addition, stormwater



The MWA currently manages projects on behalf of Macon-Bibb County, using SPLOST revenues to rehabilitate aging and failing stormwater infrastructure, such as what was repaired on Riggings Mill Road (pictured above) earlier this year.

infrastructure is but one of many budgeted items being funded by the current Macon-Bibb County SPLOST.

Included on the ballot in this year's November general election will be a referendum for continuation

of the SPLOST. If citizens approve the SPLOST again, an additional \$25 million will be allocated for stormwater projects. The MWA has three major stormwater projects ready to go – two that involve repairs or replacement of more than 50 stormwater culverts and another project to address drainage problems in the Downtown Central Business District.

Regardless of the results of the upcoming SPLOST, the future of the local stormwater program should include other funding sources, whether in addition to or in place of SPLOST revenues. Otherwise, Macon-Bibb County's stormwater management program will not be able to maintain acceptable service levels and address its aging and failing stormwater infrastructure, says Tony Rojas, MWA President and Executive Director.

To examine what it would entail for the MWA to operate the stormwater system full-time, the Authority has commissioned a stormwater program study, which includes defining funding sources and related policies necessary to sustain the stormwater system in the future.

It's about that time to protect those water lines

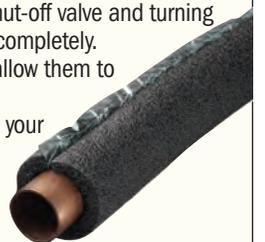
Even with warm weather slowly giving way to milder temperatures this fall, winter still may seem like it's a long way off. But it's about time for MWA customers to consider weatherizing their water lines, to prevent potential frozen pipes and pipe bursts in the future.

These tips may save you time and money by preventing unnecessary water loss and property damage due to busted water lines, especially those hidden within irrigation systems. Please consider the following:

- * Tape or wrap exposed pipes with protective insulation (pictured right).
- * Don't forget to insulate your water heater too, especially if it is in the garage.

- * Drain your entire sprinkler system after use.
- * Drain all outdoor spigots as well, by turning off the shut-off valve and turning on the spigots to allow the water in the line(s) to drain completely.
- * Disconnect garden hoses from outdoor spigots and allow them to drain, too, prior to storing them in warmer places.
- * Always know how to shut off the main valve servicing your property, in the event of a water leak or pipe burst.

For additional weatherization tips, log onto our website at www.maconwater.org/winterization-tips.



Consumer Reports: Do Not Flush "Flushable" Wipes

While some wet wipes are marketed and sold to consumers as "flushable" items, don't believe it! Wipes actually are NOT flushable, because they do not "break up" like traditional toilet paper. They may flush, but they do not disintegrate.

In fact, according to tests conducted by Consumer Reports, "flushable" wet wipes were still intact after 10 minutes following a simulated flushing. The test then placed those same wet wipes in a mixer for another 10 minutes. Still no disintegration.

As a result, Consumer Reports confirms what MWA wastewater plant operators and line crews have known for a long time – wet wipes are NOT flushable!

Oh, they may actually flush. But they remain solid, without

breaking apart, during their entire journey from your home to an MWA wastewater treatment facility.

But since wet wipes do not disintegrate when flushed, they can clog your home's plumbing and the sewer lines of the MWA collection and conveyance system, especially when they stick to fats, oils and grease (FOG), which also should be kept out of the MWA sewer system.

Thank you for helping us protect our sewer system and our water resources by properly disposing of fats, oils and grease, as well as those "flushable" wet wipes!

For more information, check out the grease education page on our website, or contact a Customer Care Representative at 478-464-5600.



MWA investing \$2.2 million for sewer line rehab

To assure its sewer collection and conveyance system can serve customers over the next 50 years and beyond, the MWA is investing approximately \$2.2 million for two major sewer line rehabilitation projects, which will extend the useful life of MWA infrastructure.

The first pipe lining project, set to be completed this fall, is a \$1.3 million investment to restore 6,200 linear feet of a 48-inch sewer main that runs from the Authority's Riverside Cemetery Lift Station to its Main Street Lift Station.

The MWA awarded this contract to Insituform Technologies, who will utilize the Cured-In-Place Pipe (CIPP) lining method to complete the sewer line rehab. CIPP is a trenchless technology that re-establishes the structural integrity of a sewer line without having to "dig and replace" the existing pipe, or threatening environmentally sensitive areas at the site of the work.

This project began with cleaning 1,750 linear feet of the sewer line, followed by installation of by-pass piping to allow for the pipe lining process to be done. The temporary by-pass is secured and anchored to the outer banks of the Ocmulgee River, before crossing the river to the

Ocmulgee Heritage Trail downstream. However, the Ocmulgee Heritage Trail will remain open this fall at the sites where the work is being done.

In a related project, the MWA will invest more than \$930,000 to rehabilitate another major portion of its sewer system, also using the CIPP method. The Authority awarded this contract to Layne Inliner, a contractor now responsible for lining 3,750 linear feet of 24-inch, 30-inch, and 36-inch diameter sewer mains, running from the MWA Corbin Lift Station to the Riverside Cemetery Lift Station.



The MWA is investing \$2.2 million in two major sewer line rehabilitation projects.

SECOND FRONT

MWA supports Habitat for Humanity work at Lynmore Estates

Always active in community outreach, the Macon Water Authority (MWA) recently supported the neighborhood revitalization efforts of Macon Area Habitat for Humanity (MAHFH) within the Lynmore Estates Subdivision.

During Lowe's Centric Day on Sept. 17, volunteers put to good use a Neighborhood Revitalization Grant from Lowe's to fund weatherization and energy efficiency updates for 10 homes.

The Authority assisted with this event by providing MWA bottled water and by educating residents on various weatherization tips for how to make their homes more energy efficient during the summer and winter seasons. Tips included how to protect household water lines from freezing temperatures and potential pipe



Volunteers gather while working with the Macon Area Habitat for Humanity to weatherize 10 homes within the Lynmore Estates Subdivision.

bursts this coming winter. (See related story on page 1.)

"The residents of Lynmore Estates are very

appreciative of everyone who participated in this event," says Carrie Redmond. "We are grateful to those who freely gave of their time, talents and skills to enhance our community and the quality of life for our residents."

Organizers of the event included Dr. Sundra Woodford, Neighborhood Revitalization Manager for Habitat for Humanity and the District 5 Representative on the Macon-Bibb County Board of Education, as well as Ernestine Thomas, Lynmore Estates Neighborhood Team Leader, and Carrie Redmond, President of the Lynmore Estates Neighborhood Watch.

"We could never accomplish this revitalization work at Lynmore Estates without the generosity of community-oriented partners such as Lowe's and the Macon Water Authority," says Woodford.

A special thanks to the sponsors of the 12th annual Ocmulgee Alive!

The success of Macon's Annual River Cleanup would not be possible without the efforts of volunteers and the generosity of corporate sponsors, as this year marks the 12th Annual Ocmulgee Alive!

Ocmulgee Alive! is affiliated with the Georgia Rivers Alive campaign, and it is one of the largest river cleanups in the state. Ocmulgee Alive! also is an award winning public outreach and education program.

Making those awards and accolades possible, in addition to helping

preserve the water quality of the Ocmulgee River, are five corporate sponsors.

Special thanks are extended to YKK USA, Graphic Packaging International, and Coca-Cola Refreshments, who have been Ocmulgee Alive! sponsors for the past several years. But this year saw the return of Kumho Tires Georgia as a corporate sponsor, and KaMin Performance Minerals, a new sponsor last year.

For the first time in the event's 12-year history, there were five corporate sponsors for this year's Ocmulgee Alive!



KUMHO TIRES



Coca-Cola

Refreshments



Be wary of bill collection scams

The MWA is reaching out to its customers via public notices to warn them of a variety of scams that have been reported to the utility's Customer Care Representatives.

MWA customers may be targeted by intimidating, fraudulent individuals who are seeking money and/or customer financial information they claim to need for overdue water/sewer bill payments. MWA customers should be aware of these potential scams that frequently target utility customers.



The MWA has strict guidelines regarding how we make contact with our customers. We will never require customers to make payments with a credit or prepaid card, and we do not make outbound calls asking for a customer's credit card information. Also,

we never call and demand payment in the event of, or with the threat of, disconnecting water or sewer services.

If you have any doubts about the legitimacy of any call, email or visit from someone claiming to represent the MWA, especially if they are insisting that you make a payment for a water/sewer bill, please do not talk to this individual. Instead, contact us directly at 478-464-5600 or csting@maconwater.org, so we can assure you of your account status and protect you from this criminal activity!

Altamaha Riverkeeper Upcoming Events

The MWA not only prides itself on providing the best tasting drinking water in America, but the utility does so with water professionals dedicated to environmental protection and preservation of natural resources. In fact, environmental stewardship is written into the vision of the MWA and is among the core values of our utility.

Similarly, the Altamaha Riverkeeper is a grassroots organization dedicated to the protection, defense and restoration of Georgia's biggest river - the Altamaha - as well as the Ocmulgee, the Oconee and the Ohoopie, which are its tributaries.

Thus, protecting the Ocmulgee River is inherent in the work of both the MWA and Altamaha Riverkeeper. The Altamaha

Riverkeeper has a few events this fall that may be of interest to MWA customers.

★ The organization's **Riverkeeper Rendezvous** on Oct. 22, featuring a riverside evening of celebration highlighted by a low country boil and special music by Recycled Glass.

★ The 10th annual **Clam Jam** on Nov 5, which will be held at the Boswell Pine Marsh Farm in Brunswick. This event will feature clams, oysters, shrimp, Dr. Neal Boswell's famous Boston Butts, the Wall O'Wine, live music, a silent auction and a live auction.

For more information on these events and more activities from Altamaha Riverkeeper, check out the organization's website at www.altamahariverkeeper.org.

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