

June/July 2009



Newsletter of the Trinity River Authority of Texas



*Protecting the Water Supply*

## HRWSS Participates in Water Research Foundation Study

The Trinity River Authority's Huntsville Regional Water Supply System is participating in a study to evaluate the effectiveness of granular activated carbon in controlling disinfection by-products precursors as well as emerging contaminants such as endocrine disrupting compounds.

The study is sponsored by the Water Research Foundation (formerly American Water Works Association Research Foundation.) The Water Research Foundation is a nonprofit organization that sponsors research to enable water utilities, public health agencies, and other professionals to provide safe

and affordable drinking water to consumers.

Granular activated carbon is effective in removing organic compounds associated with taste and odor issues. Since many water utilities already use GAC as a filtration media to control taste and odor compounds, the Water Research Foundation hopes significant expense might be avoided if GAC could be optimized to remove other contaminants. For this study, WRF is specifically interested in controlling disinfection by-product precursors, pesticides, pharmaceuticals and endocrine-disrupting compounds, and other



*Kyle Johnson, HRWSS Operator I, and Keith Bass, Operations and Maintenance Chief, prepare core samples of GAC for use in a study of the effectiveness of granular activated carbon in controlling disinfection by-product precursors, pesticides, pharmaceuticals and endocrine-disrupting compounds, and other trace organic contaminants.*



*Robert Burchett, Maintenance Mechanic II, and Keith Bass, Operations and Maintenance Chief, take a core sample of granular activated carbon from one of the four filter beds at the HRWSS plant.*

## Governor Appoints New Director to TRA's Board

Texas Governor Rick Perry has appointed a new Director to the Trinity River Authority's Board of Directors. Keith W. Kidd, from Dallas, Texas, is President of Encino International. He is a member of the Texas and Washington, D.C. Bar associations. Mr. Kidd received a bachelor's degree in international relations from Georgetown University, a master's degree in criminal justice from the University of Alabama and a law degree from Texas Wesleyan School of Law. He has served with the U.S. Army Reserve since 1993 with a current rank of Major.

Mr. Kidd is one of four Directors who represent Dallas County on TRA's Board.



*Keith W. Kidd*

trace organic contaminants.

HRWSS provides potable water to the City of Huntsville and two Texas Department of Criminal Justice prison units in northern Walker County. The system is capable of treating and delivering eight million gallons of potable water per day. HRWSS also delivers up to seven MGD of partially treated water to Tenaska's electric power generating plant in Grimes County.

HRWSS added GAC to the plant's four filter beds in 2004 to control taste and odor compounds. To participate in the study, HRWSS staff will take GAC core samples from the plant's filter beds as well as water samples from various points in the system's treatment process. HRWSS staff will then prepare the samples and send them to a laboratory for analysis. Samples will be gathered at various times throughout the study period.



*On the cover: TRA's Tarrant County Water Supply Project and its customer cities participated in a disaster preparedness exercise to practice critical resource management and communications during a crisis. The exercise focused on local emergency responder command and control coordination, critical decisions, and public notifications and communications necessary to protect public health and safety. See story on page 3.*

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# Construction and Landscaping Improve Access and Appearance of CRWS Administration Building

The Administration Building at the Trinity River Authority's Central Regional Wastewater System has recently been remodeled and rehabilitated to improve access and update interior and exterior spaces.

Central to improving access was the addition of a new elevator. The existing building, originally constructed in 1978, would not

accommodate an elevator shaft and control room making it necessary to construct an addition to the building. On the outside of the building, the addition was designed to match and complement the existing architecture.

A mature pecan tree, growing next to the area where the addition was added, was moved to accommodate construction activities. The tree was transplanted to a raised landscape bed that beautifies the front of the building. Low-water perennial plants, like Texas native's Turk's cap and black foot daisy, share the space with the transplanted pecan tree. A water feature that resembles a small river flows along the edge of the landscape bed. The moving water freshens the air and provides a soothing sound for visitors. The water and the blooming perennial plants attract birds and butterflies.

Other access improvements include new parking, sidewalks and signs.

Inside the building, the reception area and small lobby were upgraded and reconfigured to improve flow of traffic. The 30-year old stairway, to the right of the reception area, was updated to



photo by Sara King

An addition to the Administration Building at CRWS, seen here on the right, encloses an elevator and control room. The tree in the center of the photo was moved to accommodate construction activities. The tree has adapted to its new home surrounded by low-water landscape plants and a water feature that resembles a small river.

current safety standards.

Upstairs, office space was added to the training facility and the rest rooms were remodeled to improve access.

Finally, the Administration Building was treated to a new roof.

The Trinity River Authority's Central Regional Wastewater System provides wastewater treatment for 20 cities and the DFW airport. The System is

rated to transport and treat 162 million gallons per day. Ongoing construction projects throughout the plant and collection system will increase the rated capacity to 189 MGD by the end of the year 2012.

Construction to improve access and the appearance of the CRWS Administration Building began in the fall of 2008 and was substantially complete in July.



photo by Sara King

Mike Young, CRWS Manager of Operations, exits the new elevator in the CRWS Administration Building.

## TRA Maintenance Mechanic Authors Book on Survival

James Hart, Senior Maintenance Mechanic at the Trinity River Authority's Central Regional Wastewater System, has authored a book on wilderness survival. The book, entitled *SWET Survival & Wilderness Experience Training*, was released this summer by Trafford Publishing.

Hart's 271-page survival manual includes 22 chapters that prepare the reader to face almost any situation that may be encountered in the outdoors. More than 100 detailed

illustrations are included to help the reader identify edible plants and build simple mechanisms to help in survival.

For those interested in outdoor activities and living, Hart's book is a useful and absorbing read. But the best use of this well-organized manual is to have it on hand during hiking and camping trips for quick reference.

Raised in the mountains of Utah and California, James Hart spent most of his boyhood weekends in

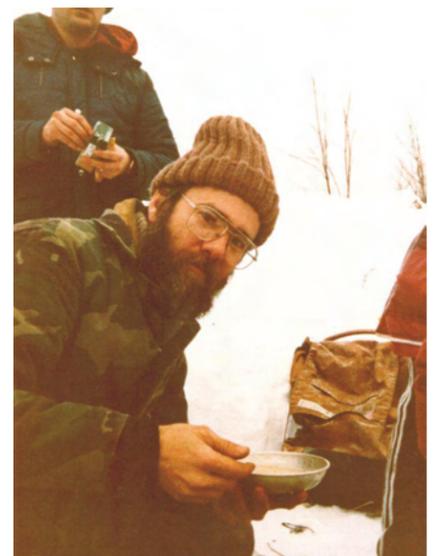
the mountains fishing, camping and hiking. Seeking more wilderness time, Hart joined the Boy Scouts of America where he learned common-sense strategies for living in, and enjoying, the outdoors. Hart earned the level of Life Scout and was just two merit badges away from Eagle Scout.

Later, Hart's enlistment in the U.S. Navy, including 18 months in Vietnam, further enhanced his survival skills.

After leaving the military and starting a family, Hart became a leader in the Boy Scouts of America program. He passed along his wilderness survival skills as Assistant Scoutmaster from 1973 to 1980. In 1980, Hart moved to Montreal, Canada where he volunteered with the Scouts Canada program. He served as Venture Advisor for 12 years, teaching and training survival skills to Venture Scouts on camping trips in the Laurentian Mountains north of Montreal. The group went on winter camping trips north of Quebec City to train for cold-weather survival.

During his time as Venture Advisor, Hart produced a collection of notes and drawings containing his extensive knowledge and experience on surviving and enjoying the outdoors. *SWET Survival & Wilderness Experience Training* developed from these notes and drawings.

The survival manual is available



James Hart trained for cold weather survival on winter camping trips north of Quebec City.

online from the Trafford Publishing, Amazon Books, Borders and other book sellers. The book was published in the U.S. and is also offered for sale in Europe, Canada, and Japan for \$21.95.

James Hart, CRWS Senior Maintenance Mechanic, has been employed with Trinity River Authority since 2002. He is responsible for maintaining CRWS' and Mountain Creek Regional Wastewater System's lift stations, making sure all the equipment is operational and that all preventative maintenance is up-to-date.

This fall, Hart will teach weekly classes on Survival and Wilderness Experience Training at the Richardson, Garland and Plano Recreation Centers.



James Hart, CRWS Senior Maintenance Mechanic, takes to the Pacific Ocean in a kayak. Hart's wilderness survival manual is the culmination of a lifetime of living in and enjoying the outdoors.

# TCWSP and Customer Cities Test Capabilities in Disaster Exercise

On June 15, the Trinity River Authority's Tarrant County Water Supply Project and the project's customer cities participated in a four-hour exercise intended to identify strengths and weaknesses in the project's response to a possible disaster scenario. The exercise was designed in accordance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program.

During the exercise, participants were presented with a disaster scenario that could result in water contamination or interruption of the project's mission to provide potable water to its customer cities. The exercise focused on local emergency responder command and control coordination, critical decisions, and public notifications and communications necessary to protect public health and safety.

The participant's disaster response performance and capabilities were measured and validated. The response was then compared to lists of target capabilities and critical tasks identified by Homeland Security. Gaps between response performance and target capabilities were identified and prioritized.

TCWSP provides treated water to the cities of Bedford, Euless, North Richland Hills, Colleyville and Grapevine. Raw water is drawn from Lake Arlington and transmitted through two 8.7-mile long transmission lines to the treatment plant in Euless. More than 15 miles of treated water distribution lines carry water to the project's customer cities. TCWSP is currently undergoing construction to increase reliability, improve taste and odor and increase distribution capacity.



Gerald Null, TCWSP Project Manager, Sid McCain, TCWSP Chief of Operations and Maintenance, and David Harris, TCWSP Operations Chief, respond to a hypothetical disaster scenario during an exercise designed in accordance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program.

# TCWSP to Replace Pump Station

At the June meeting, the Trinity River Authority's Board of Directors authorized a \$4,110,000 contract for the construction of a new booster pump station in the Tarrant County Water Supply Project's distribution system.

The new 23 million-gallon-per-day Glade Road Booster Pump Station will replace the North Richland Hills Booster Pump Station, constructed in 1979. This booster pump station functions to carry water from the TCWSP distribution lines into the northern portion of North Richland Hills, one of five cities served by TCWSP. The new booster pump station will be constructed on Glade Road, on a 1.3 acre tract next to the existing pump station.

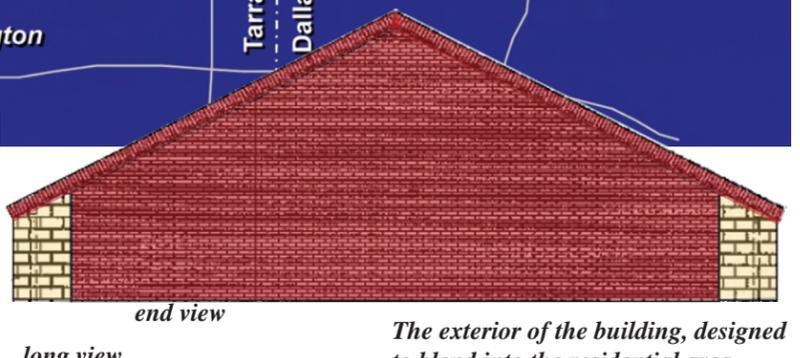
The exterior of the building, designed to blend into the residential area surrounding the pump station, will be a combination of wheat-colored decorative concrete and sunset-red brick with a green steel roof.

TCWSP is capable of providing 87 MGD of treated water to the project's customer cities of Bedford, Euless, North Richland Hills, Colleyville and Grapevine. Raw water is drawn from Lake Arlington and transmitted through two 8.7-mile long transmission lines to the treatment plant in Euless. TCWSP is currently undergoing construction to increase reliability, improve taste and odor and increase distribution capacity.

The new Glade Road Booster Pump Station is scheduled to become operational after ongoing construction in the TCWSP's plant and distribution system is complete.



The Tarrant County Water Supply Project provides treated water to the project's customer cities of Bedford, Euless, North Richland Hills, Colleyville and Grapevine. The new Glade Road Booster Pump Station will carry water from the TCWSP distribution lines into the northern portion of North Richland Hills.



The exterior of the building, designed to blend into the residential area surrounding the pump station, will be a combination of wheat-colored decorative concrete and sunset-red brick with a green steel roof.

# General Manager's Message

## TRA Engaged in FY 2010 Budget Preparation



General Manager Danny Vance

Trinity River Authority is experiencing one of the most important and busy times of the year. Budget preparation and approval dominates activities in summer and early fall. TRA's next fiscal year begins on December 1, 2009 and will end on November 30, 2010. The budget must be complete and approved by TRA's Board of Directors by the beginning of the new fiscal year.

TRA functions as a governmental wholesale provider of water and wastewater related services. Our budgeting process, and the way in which we administer our budget, insures that our customer base is treated equitably. TRA's annual budget is the guiding document that provides direction and stability as we move through the year.

There are two primary purposes

***TRA exists without the benefit of a tax base and/or appropriations from the state or federal government.***

for TRA's budget. The first is to serve as a planning device that sets forth, in terms of dollars, the work that TRA plans to accomplish during the oncoming fiscal year. It also serves as a fiscal control mechanism.

TRA exists without the benefit of a tax base and/or appropriations from the state or federal government. All of TRA's projects are independent financial entities to insure that no one project, city or group of cities is being subsidized by any other project or group of

customer entities. Because TRA operates on a fund accounting basis, the entire TRA budget actually consists of 42 individual budgets that combined, represent the Authority's financial operations for the coming year.

TRA's annual budget can be best described as zero based and evolves from the lowest levels within the management organization. Each operating project or administrative element begins the budget process for the following year within months of the beginning of each new year. The first steps in the budget process involve an evaluation of the accomplishments of the past year and the establishment of goals for the next year.

The customers served by each individual water or wastewater project play a very important role in the establishment of goals for the next year. In February, letters are sent to customers asking their estimates of flow or service demands for the coming year. The customers are most knowledgeable on this topic since they are aware of growth or other significant factors that affect service within their respective communities.

The first level of management scrutiny occurs when the Northern and Southern Regional Managers and the other five Executive Managers review and sign off on their respective areas of responsibility during the April-May time frame. With their input incorporated in the emerging budget document, the General Manager begins his review. All questions are answered and a final draft document is produced no later than the end of June.

A series of meetings are held to review the proposed draft budget with the 25 members of TRA's Board of Directors. Late August and

September are very busy months as meetings are scheduled with our customers and customer advisory committees to again review our goals and their anticipated costs for the coming year. With the endorsement of our customers, the budget is submitted to the TRA Board of Directors for approval at the October meeting.

For FY 2009, the Authority is operating on a budget of \$194,568,880. Of this amount, \$143,680,550 is dedicated toward TRA's Operating Funds; \$31,120,000 to our non-operating funds; \$8,943,320 to our Governmental Funds; and \$10,825,010 to our Internal Service Funds.

These four areas represent all Authority funds with the exception of expenditures for construction activities or capital improvement projects. Construction activities are accounted for in individual construction budgets for each

***...the Authority has made a significant effort to reduce or hold costs to a minimum.***

project related to the expansion or improvement project. Construction budgets do not conform to the fiscal year but exist for the life of the specific construction project and are closed when construction is completed.

The FY 2010 annual budget is currently under development. The economy has been challenging for all of our customers. In response to their financial issues, the Authority has made a significant effort to reduce or hold costs to a minimum.

The result of this effort can be seen in several budget categories. For instance the Information Technology Budget has decreased 18 percent from 2009 and budgeted capital outlays for all projects have declined 49 percent.

At a time when our projects in the DFW area are experiencing tremendous growth in treatment capacity, we have managed to hold hiring to an additional four employees for six projects that have additional treatment components, all of which require operation and maintenance.

In addition, we were able to renegotiate several key contracts that will result in significant savings to the Authority. One such contract involved power supply. By successfully timing the market, the Authority was able to lock-in a lower rate that will lower power costs by over \$1 million in next year's budget and save over \$2 million by the end of Fiscal year 2011.

The Authority continually strives to hold down costs, but significant additional efforts were made this year to re-evaluate our operations and expenditures with a view toward reducing costs where feasible. Not all of our 42 individual budgets will experience a reduction. Considering that the budget process is not complete as of this publication, the total TRA budget, represented by the aggregation of 42 individual budgets, will result in an Authority-wide budget decrease when comparing 2009 to 2010.

## TRA's Regional Wastewater Systems Earn Peak Performance Awards

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies has honored the Trinity River Authority's five regional wastewater treatment systems with peak performance awards for the year 2008. NACWA distributes peak performance awards to wastewater treatment systems compliance with the system's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit limits. NACWA has three categories of peak performance awards.

Gold Awards honor projects that have achieved 100 percent compliance with NPDES permit limits for an entire calendar year.

Silver Awards recognize facilities that have received no more than five NPDES excursions throughout calendar year.

NACWA's prestigious Platinum Awards recognizes 100 percent compliance with NPDES permits over a consecutive five year period. Platinum Award status continues, year after year, as long as 100 percent compliance is maintained.

All five of TRA's regional wastewater systems achieved 100 percent compliance in 2008 earning gold and platinum awards.

Central Regional Wastewater System received a Platinum Award for an astounding 15 years of 100%

compliance with the system's permit limits. CRWS is one of only 14 systems nationwide to achieve 100% compliance for 15 or more years.

***CRWS is one of only 14 systems nationwide to achieve 100% compliance for 15 or more years.***

Red Oak Creek Regional Wastewater System received another Platinum Award for continuously maintaining 100 percent compliance for an impressive nine-year period.

Ten Mile Creek Regional Wastewater System has received a Platinum Award for seven years of maintaining 100 percent compliance.

TRA's Denton Creek and Mountain Creek Regional Wastewater Systems earned Gold Awards for maintaining 100 percent compliance for the year 2008.

**Employee Milestones**

**New Hires**

Cora Burns joined LLP as Custodian. CRWS welcomes Nathan Harris as Operator I. Mark Castle joined DCRWS as Operator I. TCWSP welcomes Cipriano Saucedo as Maintenance Mechanic II. Jeremy Borders joined ROCRWS as Operator I.

**Promotions**

Kenneth Surratt was promoted to Operator II at TMCRWS. Joseph Hill was promoted to CSS Construction Inspector II in CSS. Jarrod Vickrey was promoted to Operator II at TCWSP.

Ercel Landrus was promoted to Operator I at LRWSS. Richard Hampton was promoted to Chief Electrician at CRWS. John Wardell, Operator II at TMCRWS transferred to ROCRWS.

**Current Events**

David Harris, Operations Chief at TCWSP, has earned his Class A Water Operator License. David Scott, Operator II at MCRWS, has earned his Class B Wastewater Treatment License. Kelly Hunter, Instrument Technician II at TCWSP, has earned his Class C Surface Water Operator License.



Connor Privitt celebrates his team's victory in the Granbury Pinto League baseball championship game. Connor plays third base for the Yankees and is the grandson of Don Rowe, Senior Real Estate Specialist with TRA's Land Rights Department.

The Trinity River Basin serves as the primary source of water for half the population of Texas.



Malcolm (Evert) Cowdin, CRWS Maintenance Mechanic II, has successfully completed the requirements for the Military Emergency Management Specialist Award. The State Guard Association of the United States presented Cowdin with the award on June 26, 2009 at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas.



Yesha Rai, NR Senior Secretary, passed her citizenship exam and took the oath to become an American citizen on June 9. Yesha was born in India and emigrated to the U.S. in 1999.



Jessica Willis, daughter of Valerie Willis, Senior Secretary at DCRWS, married William Attkisson on May 30.



Betty Call, Southern Region Services Coordinator, retired on June 5 after more than 30 years of service with the Trinity River Authority.



Brett Munoz, 6-year old son of Kristie Munoz, LLP Biologist, competed in the Loretta Lynn National Motocross Racing Championships in Nashville, Tennessee finishing 15<sup>th</sup> overall. Brett qualified for the national championship by finishing first at the Southwest Regional Motocross qualifier in San Bernardino, California and second in the area competition in New Mexico.



Adam Sanders, son of Thomas Sanders, Construction Services Manager, was married to Laura Hodges on August 1 at the Ashelynn Manor in Magnolia, Texas. Adam graduated from Sam Houston State University with a degree in Criminal Justice in 2007 and is a deputy sheriff with the Harris County Sheriff's Department. Laura graduated from Sam Houston State University with a degree in Communications and is teaching English, journalism and debate at Harmony Science Academy.



Patricia A. Bennett, Senior Accounting Clerk at the GO, has a new grandson. Peyton Dean Young, was born June 9, 2009 to parents Deanna and Jeremy Young, from Anna, Texas. Peyton is seen here with his big brother Logan, age 5 years.



Jason Smith, Operator II at LRWSS, and his wife, Tiffany, are proud parents of a new baby girl. Madalyn was 6 pounds, 12 ounces and 19 inches long at birth. Madalyn's big brother Gavin, age 9 and big sister Elise, age 8, are very excited to have their new sister in the family.



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INTRA is published by the Trinity River Authority's Public Information Division for the Authority's valued employees, directors, consultants and other interested individuals. To request or submit information for publication, contact editor Debbie Bronson, TRA Public Information Assistant (817) 467-4343 [bronsond@trinityra.org](mailto:bronsond@trinityra.org).

## *Anniversaries*

### **35 Years**

Bill Tatum, Manager, CRWS  
Billy Hill, Manager, ROCRWS

### **20 Years**

Mike Roser, Chief Operator, DCRWS

### **15 Years**

Bernard Moozhayil, Operator I, CRWS

### **10 Years**

Jimmy Chapman, Senior Maintenance Mechanic, TMCRWS  
Lora Dell Ford, Senior Accounting Clerk, GO

### **3 Years**

Salvador Escobedo, Maintenance Mechanic I, CRWS  
David Ciccarelli, Maintenance Mechanic II, TCWSP  
John Stephens, Operator II, TCRWSS  
Bernd Linn, Laboratory Technician II, CRWS  
James Dias, Chief Maintenance Mechanic, CRWS