



MSD

Louisville and Jefferson County  
Metropolitan Sewer District

# Update

News about activities and developments at MSD

November 28, 2001

## Education program helps employees help selves, MSD



Since 1990, MSD's Education Assistance Program has provided more

than \$200,000 to some 250 employees to learn new skills and information.

MSD reimburses up to \$3,000 for tuition and \$200 for books and fees a year for full- and part-time employees who satisfactorily complete approved education courses that develop their career interests and help meet MSD's operational needs.

Senior GIS Application Analyst Wade Drane is working on a bachelor's degree in business administration in information technology at Sullivan University. "I have the technical expertise needed in my field, but I need to learn more about management," Drane said. The bachelor's degree is Drane's first step toward his ultimate goal—a master's degree in business administration.

The program reimburses employees who take a maximum of nine credit hours per course period, and are actively employed at MSD when they complete the classes. To apply for the program, employees must file an Education Assistance form with their department managers.

Final approval rests with MSD's

*(continued on page 3)*

## Collaborative center to focus on Greater Louisville's infrastructure

The University of Louisville, Louisville Water Company and MSD have formed the Center for Infrastructure Research to serve as a focal point for utility infrastructure issues that relate to Greater Louisville.



*The U of L Center for Infrastructure Research will initially focus on issues for Louisville Water Co. and MSD, who own a combined 10,000 miles of pipe in Jefferson County.*

"We hope the center will become a driving force for research tailored for our community that also may benefit other urban areas regionally and nationally," said Executive Director Gordon Garner.

The center will be housed at the University of Louisville's Speed Scientific School and initially funded by \$50,000 from each of the partnering organizations. It will be led by a center director and an advisory board that will initially include two representatives from U of L, Louisville Water and MSD.

Other partners will be sought as the center begins operating.

Garner cited a national Water

Infrastructure Network estimate that \$23 billion a year for the next 20 years is needed to repair or replace aging water and wastewater infrastructure throughout the U.S. In Jefferson County, Louisville Water and MSD maintain approxi-

mately 10,000 miles of pipe. "To stretch limited resources, innovation in both technology and management is needed and requires collaborative research," Garner said.

Additionally, a centralized research effort at a respected university should improve prospects for gaining

financial support for specific research projects. "We see the center opening a wider door for funding partnerships with U.S. EPA, Water Environment Research Federation and other organizations," Garner said.

Dr. Louis F. Cohn, chair of the civil and environmental engineering department at U of L's Speed Scientific School, said initial research projects undertaken by the center will be selected by Louisville Water and MSD. "Louisville Water and MSD are among local organizations most affected by urban infrastructure issues," Cohn noted.

# First business plan team completes task

A six-person employee team has accomplished something no one else at MSD has. They are the first Strategic Business Plan strategy team to complete their assigned task and disband.

The team's assignment was to implement a strategy under the performance critical success factor, "Shift resources to essential or priority areas and activities as needed through the use of appropriate tools." They accomplished their work by developing a continuous improvement plan that can be administered throughout MSD.

"This team achieved what it set out to accomplish and has created an ongoing component that will make our strategic business plan and our organization more goal-oriented," said Research/Productivity Assessment Director Mike Sweeney, who oversees strategic business plan implementation.

Among its accomplishments the team was instrumental in securing MSD's certification by the Kentucky Quality Council, drafting a presentation examining MSD's past five years and projecting how MSD will operate five years ahead, and implementing the Customer Centered Culture program now underway.

"Not only did this team spur refinement of the strategic business plan into a more goal-oriented document, but it impacted our entire operations in a favorable, more customer-driven organization," Sweeney said.

The team—Kim Decker, Patrick Fitzgerald, Sponsor Pat Kirk, Kim Loechle, Elizabeth Mitchell and Lead Mitch Witten—has disbanded. According to Sweeney, they continue working on other strategic business plan teams tasked with implementing the remaining strategies.

## Area Team News

### *Beargrass Creek*

#### **Alderman Johnson partners on project**

Properties in the 300 blocks of east and west Southside Court, and the 200 and 300 blocks of Downes Lane will soon see improved drainage.

Plans call for installing a paved swale, replacing driveway aprons and replacing sidewalks to provide proper drainage. The \$142,150 project is being cost-shared with Sixth Ward Alderman Dan Johnson, who is funding 50 percent of the total.

#### **Improved drainage coming to Oleanda Avenue**

A project to construct adequate drainage systems to relieve standing water problems has been approved by MSD's Board.

Improvements call for a pipe and catch basin system, and driveway apron replacements as needed. Standing water during rains has long plagued the 3300 block of Oleanda Avenue, between Taylor Boulevard and Weyler Avenue.

The project is expected to cost \$65,240. According to Beargrass Creek Area Team Leader Loyiso Melisizwe, the total construction cost will be reimbursed by funds from a Housing and Urban Development grant.

### *Morris Forman Wastewater Treatment Plant*

#### **Flood pump station slated for upgrade**

MSD plans to replace electrical transformers that power the Western Flood Pump Station, part of the flood protection system built during the 1950s.

Located on Algonquin Parkway, the Western Flood Pump Station goes into service more frequently than any other flood pump station in the MSD system, according to Morris Forman Team Leader Saeed Assef. "Recent testing determined that the electrical transformers powering this facility are in poor condition. They have been in service since the 1950s and are at the end of their service life," Assef said.

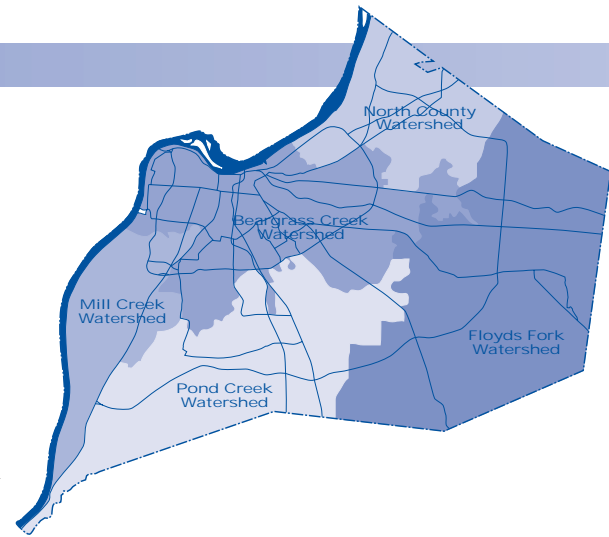
The old transformers will be removed and replaced with new ones at a cost of \$83,200. "This will ensure that the Western Flood Pump Station continues to properly function as a safeguard against flooding," Assef said.

## Financial reporting recognized

For the 11th consecutive year, the Government Finance Officers Association has awarded MSD a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

MSD received the certificate for its comprehensive annual financial report for the year ending June 30, 2000, and is valid for one year.

Of the government entities



# Right-sizing brings challenges, opportunities to MSD staff

Customer Service Manager Allison Sheppard used to worry how MSD's 24/7 customer hotline would be adequately staffed when department personnel needed to attend

ice experience and cross-training are pitching in to help.

Employees from area teams, executive offices, industrial compliance and facilities management are



Some employees who recently assisted in MSD's Customer Service Department include (from left to right): Alonzo Smith, Tori Coward, Larry Pardue, Sharise Horne, David Roth, Dana Price and Tom Harlow. All are assigned to area teams except for Roth, who works in Industrial Compliance and Monitoring, and Price, who is on the executive offices staff.

training or take time off.

Mondays used to be incredibly hectic for Wastewater/Stormwater Maintenance Manager Tom Middeler, wondering how his staff could respond to the weekend backlog of emergency service requests from customers.

Research/Productivity Assessment Director Mike Sweeney searched for ways to use the skills of Industrial Compliance and Monitoring staff during lag times.

They all found answers to their problems in an unusual place—MSD's ongoing effort to serve more customers with fewer staff.

"Right-sizing our workforce has caused us to look inside our organization to help," says Sheppard, who initially had relied only on former customer service employees now working in other departments to fill staffing gaps in the past. Now MSD employees who want customer serv-

learning new skills as they help staff the customer service department. "They are doing more than filling in momentarily," Sheppard says. "They are personifying MSD's team concept in a way that truly keeps our customers first."

On Mondays Industrial

Compliance and Monitoring staff supplement Middeler's maintenance crews to respond to weekend customer service requests. Although a maintenance crew works weekends, customers often wait until Monday to report problems, creating a backlog of work on Mondays.

To Sweeney, sharing staff resources makes sense from a service perspective. "Customers don't see each of us as a maintenance, operations or customer service employee," Sweeney said. "They see us all as MSD employees."

Sweeney said sharing staff resources helps both MSD and individual employees. "As an organization, our services become more diversified. Plus, we are able to achieve the goals of our strategic business plan and principles for results-based management to cost-effectively per-

## Education program helps (continued from front page)

Education Assistance Committee, which ensures that the course will either maintain or improve the employee's job skills or prepare them for advancement. Courses taken by MSD employees include classes to improve reading skills, obtain a high school or equivalent diploma, and to enhance present and future work assignments. Approved courses must be taken at accredited colleges, universities and training institutions.

Participants are eligible for full reimbursement of GED and other courses in which they receive an A or B. Partial reimbursement is given for courses in which the participant earns a C and for ungraded pass/fail courses.

Beargrass Area Team Coordinator Tori Coward used the program to brush up on accounting, public speaking and information processing skills while pursuing an associate's degree in business management. "Going to college for free has been

*"I have the technical expertise but I need to learn more about management."*

—Wade Drane

most rewarding for me," she said. "Knowing I have to make an A or B in class to get full reimbursement makes me work even harder."

Elizabeth Mitchell, Education Assistance Committee chair, said participating employees are able to help MSD and themselves. "By taking advantage of the program employees can become more efficient in their current positions and open opportunities for advancement within MSD."

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# MSD

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Metropolitan Sewer District

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## Inside Update

- Collaborative center to address local infrastructure issues
- Education program helps employees help MSD
- Right-sizing brings both challenge and opportunity
- First business plan team to complete task disbands

## Upcoming Events

### December 6

*Seminar, Design-Build Adds Value*, 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Executive Inn, 978 Phillips Ln. To register phone Debbie Shontee at 540-6203

### December 7

*Holiday Cultural Extravaganza*, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m., 1825 S. Seventh St.

### December 10

*MSD Board meeting*, 10 a.m., 700 W. Liberty, first floor

### December 13

*Retirees Club Holiday Party*, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Masterson's Restaurant, 1830 S. Third St.

*Public meeting*, Deering Rd. Sewer Collector, 7 p.m., Southwest Government Center, 7219 Dixie Hwy.

### Dec. 24 & 25

*Christmas Holidays*. MSD offices are closed. For emergency service call 587-0603

## Right sizing brings

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form tasks in-house," he said.

Employees benefit by learning more about MSD and new skills. "The home base of every staff member is expanding, and they are literally stepping up to the plate by acquiring the knowledge they need to perform a variety of tasks," according to Sweeney. "They are becoming more competent as individuals and more valuable to our business and our customers."

Sheppard says that the chance to work in another department or division also helps employees better understand MSD's Customer First culture. "It gives them a chance to see Customer First at work in other areas and learn how to better apply customer-friendly thinking in their usual work."

## MSD Milestones

Congratulations on promotions:

- Kevin Haycraft to Equipment Operator II
- Charles Simpson to Construction Crewleader

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