

Water Upgrades for 2009

Village of Baltimore officials have spent the last few years upgrading our Wastewater Treatment Plant and Sanitary Sewer system to meet Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) requirements. The wastewater treatment plant upgrade is scheduled for final completion in May, and a village-wide sanitary sewer line re-lining and repair project is close to contract award. The re-lining project is being primarily funded with an Ohio Public Works Commission grant. With the nearing completion of these projects, village officials must now turn to needed upgrades of the village's water treatment plant and water supply system.

Currently, a second water supply tank is being constructed east of the village. This supply tank will work in concert with the current tank to provide much-needed water pressure throughout the village. Currently, many areas of the village have less than acceptable water pressure to fight fires. The project includes a 500,000 gallon water storage tank and approximately 9,400 linear feet of waterline which will link the new tank and the water treatment plant. This project will also help provide better water pressure to the Thurston area, which currently purchases its water supply from Baltimore. Like virtually all other capital projects performed by the village, this is funded by a combination of grant and local monies.

Another water supply project which is scheduled for 2009 is the installation of an eight inch waterline along South Main Street from Market Street to Fairview Avenue. Currently, the area served by the current waterline does not have minimum fire flow capacity. The area served not only includes a large amount of residential properties, but also the elementary school, the new middle school, two churches, and a senior housing complex. Financed in part through a Community Development Block Grant, this project is currently being engineered, and will be completed in late Summer or early Fall of 2009.

The most critical future water project that will need to be tackled by village officials is the water treatment plant. The original plant was constructed in 1935, with the last upgrade being in 1975. An engineering study performed in 2004 concluded that, based on the age and condition of the plant, it would not be cost effective to upgrade the plant, and that a new water treatment plant is critical to the continued supply of water to the community. After many years of trying to make minor repairs and replacements, the plant just won't make it much longer. In 2008, more than \$50,000 was spent on unforeseen repairs needed on the plant alone.

Complicating the upgrade of the water treatment plant is the fact that, while the village's three groundwater wells more than meet both the village's current and future water supply demands, they do not meet the minimum 300-ft. isolation distance as required by Ohio EPA. This requires no development, even pavement, within this 300-ft radius, which is considered to be within the one year influence zone of the well aquifer. Ohio EPA will not approve the upgrade of the water treatment plant without the construction of wells which meet these minimum requirements. Village officials have submitted this project to the Ohio EPA for possible funding through the federal stimulus program. Should funding not be obtained through that program, there are other programs that Ohio EPA has indicated may be able to be used to assist with the funding.

It is the village's promise to its residents and businesses that all funding sources will be explored in order to limit the financial impact to the water system users as we make these required upgrades.