



UMHJSA Newsletter

SPPRING/SUMMER 2015

This newsletter is published by the Authority to keep its service area customers up-to-date on current and new projects and activities.

Our Board Members are:

Kent Nelson, Chairman
George W. Lewis, Vice Chairman
Steven Covaleski, Secretary
Eric C. Lindhult, Treasurer
George Hartman, III, Ass't Secretary
Alex Kalnajs, Ass't Treasurer

A Reminder Note: Our Administration Office hours are 7:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. Payments may be put in the mail slot at other times---no cash, please--checks or money orders only!!

We welcome Lewis Christy as our new Plant Superintendent since March, 2015. Mr. Christy is well qualified for his new position, having been employed in the wastewater industry for 25 years.

Have you recently had public water service connected to your property? Please call 214-659-3975 and notify us of the date of the installation.

IMPORTANT: Payments must be received by the due date. A 10% penalty will be added to bill payments which are received late.

**Phosphorus Removal –
It's An Expensive Unfunded Mandate**

The UMHJSA's current discharge permit issued by US EPA and PA DEP requires the Authority to remove phosphorus compounds, called phosphates, from the wastewater prior to discharge to Pennypack Creek, beginning January 1, 2014. This has been and will continue to be an expensive unfunded mandate for the Authority and ratepayers to follow. From October 2007, through September 2013, UMHJSA has spent \$625,000 on the investigation, design and permitting of the phosphorus removal project. The cost to finish the new phosphorus removal facilities and the first year cost of chemicals to remove the phosphates was about another \$625,000. There is also the perpetual cost of operating, maintaining and buying chemicals of about \$200,000 per year. It's expensive! If US EPA and PA DEP make our phosphorus discharge limit more stringent in our upcoming permit, annual costs will escalate. The source of phosphorus compounds in the wastewater is the meats, fruits, vegetables, soft drinks and potable water we eat and drink. The major source of phosphate in the Pennypack Creek is runoff from residential fertilizer. We need to remove it by adding chemicals to the wastewater treatment processes to be compliant with the national and state laws. Unfortunately the cost of our normal business operations to protect the environment is placed on all UMHJSA's customers via sewer rates and increases to these rates. Without treatment, phosphates cause algae to rapidly grow and can deplete the dissolved oxygen in Pennypack Creek which can result in fish kills.

SUMP PUMPS—We remind you again that it is illegal to connect a sump pump to the sanitary sewer system. This creates a burden on the sewer plant during high flow periods and could translate to a raise in rates in the future. If this is your present set up, please change the piping to pump outside to the curb or driveway.

CLEANOUTS---Please check your lateral (sewer pipe) for open cleanouts. This is a source of inflow to the collection system during heavy rain periods. Debris can fall into your cleanout causing blockages in your lateral and possibly the main sewer pipe in the street. If you need a cap, we will help you get one installed. Just give us a call (215-659-1462).

Visit your Sewer Authority on our web site, www.UMHJSA.org which includes a video tour to the treatment system.

Does the plant treat more water during significant rain events? The UMHJSA plant is rated at 7.189 million gallons per day (MGD). During periods of heavy rainfall/snow melt or a high water table, the plant will typically treat, while meeting our permit limits, more than 7 MGD due to infiltration and inflow (I/I) into the sewer lines (e.g., unwanted ground water

infiltrating into the sewer lines, manholes proximate to the Pennypack Creek become submerged during flooding conditions).

What is UMHJSA doing to reduce peak flows to the plant? UMHJSA is proactively inspecting our 125 miles of lines to identify potential areas of I/I and correct these areas as quickly as practical (reduce or eliminate surface or ground water from entering the sewer system).

Pharmaceutical wastes enter the environment by medication residuals passing through our bodies into sewer system and by disposal of unused or expired drugs into the toilet. Sewage treatment plants cannot remove pharmaceutical wastes; they merely pass through to the environment. How can you dispose of unused or expired medications? **Flush** prescription drugs only if the label or drug information sheet specified this disposal method. **Remove** unused or expired drugs from the containers and mix with coffee grounds or kitty litter placed in sealable cans or bags before throwing into the trash so drugs cannot be diverted elsewhere. **Look** into local take-back programs at medical facilities or pharmacies.
