



**Council Report**  
**City of Pataskala Utility Department**  
**Joe Peterson, Utility Director**

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➤ **New Items**

• **New Operational Updates**

- Leaks
  - Water leak Oak Meadow Dr just north of Broad St (8" cast Iron) main break. A repair band was used and the pressure was maintained.
- Water Billing
  - A Utility Committee meeting was held on January 27<sup>th</sup> to begin discussions about a possible rate increase beginning in 2026.
- WRF Expansion Project
  - Boring samples are currently being done for expansion project.

**Ongoing Items**

• **Water Reclamation Facility**

- Daily Operations
  - The operators maintain exceptional daily operations of the WRF, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They consistently do an outstanding job of turning the City's wastewater into clean, safe water that is discharged into the South Fork of the Licking River
- COVID-19 Wastewater Testing
  - Pataskala Utility Department is participating in the COVID-19 wastewater testing program.
    - This program was originally created to find evidence of the COVID-19 virus in our wastewater stream.

- It has now been expanded to also include evidence of the Influenza virus.
  - The results of the COVID-19 wastewater testing are currently being posted to the Ohio Corona Virus dashboard found here:  
<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/dashboards/wastewater>
- WRF Upgrade & Expansion
  - The administration met with staff and EPA to discuss a test plan whereas the staff will be lowering the blower settings for an extended period in the evening to give some relief to residents. We will monitor the effect of this test throughout and adjust as needed to stay compliant.
  - A public meeting was held on December 16<sup>th</sup> to update the residents on the blower noise reduction efforts and the cities plans for the treatment plant expansion project.
  - Site visits were taken to the Chicago area to see possible alternatives that are being considered for Pataskala Sewage plant upgrade.
  - Boring samples are currently being done for expansion project.
- WRF Staffing
  - Utility Operator Rich Obar announced he will be retiring on April 30<sup>th</sup> 2025 after 13 years with the city. We wish Rich all the best in retirement.
- **Water Treatment Plants**
  - Daily Operations
    - The operators maintain exceptional daily operations of both Water Treatment Plants, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They consistently do an outstanding job of providing the City's customers with clean, safe water that meets or exceeds the requirements of the OEPA.
  - WTP 1 Iron Filter Project
    - Resolution 2025-016 was adopted January 21<sup>st</sup> 2025 to enter into contract with Structure Point for Design services for the Iron Filter replacement project.
- **Distribution and Collection System**

- Daily Operations
      - The systems team maintains exceptional daily operations of the entire distribution and collections system, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They consistently do an outstanding job of providing customer service to the residents, maintaining the city's infrastructure, and responding to emergencies of various types.
    - Leaks
      - Water leak Oak Meadow Dr
- **Billing Team**
  - Daily Operations
    - The billing team does an exceptional job of processing the payments for water and sewer service, scheduling the service work that needs done as well as providing excellent customer service 8 hours a day, 5 days a week.
    - A Utility Committee meeting was held on January 27<sup>th</sup> to begin discussions about a possible rate increase beginning in 2026.
- **Director**
  - WRF Expansion Design
    - The concept for the WRF Expansion Design is to break it up into two phases: planning design and final design.
      - To fund the planning design phase of \$500,000, the Utility Department intends to spend \$50,000 out of the Capital Improvements Fund, and \$450,000 from a 0% interest DEFA Planning Loan.
    - Once the planning design phase is complete, we will roll the planning loan into a 0% interest DEFA Design Loan for the final design services.
      - The amount of that loan will be determined in the planning design phase.
    - Once the final design services are complete, we will roll the design loan into a low interest DEFA Construction Loan.
      - This concept will defer payments until after the construction is completed in late 2028 or early 2029.
      - This concept will also save us approximately \$8,000,000 in interest savings over the bonding concept that the budget was built on.

- On 10/28 a utility committee meeting was held in council chambers to inform the public of the status of the WRF upgrade project.
- Creek Road Force Main Upgrade Project update
  - A progress meeting was held on Jan 15<sup>th</sup>. The project is delayed due to single digit temps. Hoping to have the bulk of the work completed by the end of Feb.
- Safety Program
  - The department will begin monthly safety meetings starting in January 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Peterson  
Utility Director  
[jpeterson@ci.pataskala.oh.us](mailto:jpeterson@ci.pataskala.oh.us)  
O: (740) 927-4134