

THE PIPELINE



A NEWSLETTER FOR AND ABOUT THE EMPLOYEES OF JOHNSON COUNTY WASTEWATER



Volume 7, Issue 5

May 2011

Protecting our environment ♦ Serving our customers ♦ Enhancing our communities

Go Green Earth Day Celebration planned in Olathe

The Johnson County Environmental Department is sponsoring the Third Annual Go

Green Johnson County event on Wed., May 25 from 11



a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the County Courthouse Square, 111 S. Cherry, Olathe.

Plan to join us over the lunch hour to learn about how to go green and save green from informational booths hosted by community environmental organizations, and celebrate some environmental successes in the county. There will also be a display of alternatively fueled vehicles that operate on electricity, compressed natural gas, propane, and biodiesel.

The event will kick off with remarks celebrating Johnson County's \$1 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce exhaust emissions from diesel vehicles operating in the Johnson County area. Vehicles upgraded by the funds from this grant will be on display, including a state-of-the-art fire truck from the City of Shawnee.

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JCW's plan for What would YOU do?

Talk about the morning from ___! Imagine coming to work at 6 a.m., following a three-day weekend, with a couple of other JCW employees at Sunset, only to find that the Sunset Office Building sustained extensive water damage following a rain, wind, and hailstorm the Friday evening before. You are the first ones in the building – what do you do? Who do you call?

That was the scenario that several JCW employees, as well as staff members from Risk Management, Facilities, ITS, Environmental, and Emergency Management/Homeland Security worked through as the subject of a tabletop exercise earlier this week.

The purpose of the exercise was to test, at a high level, the department's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).

"It's good to test our COOP to see if we really have a *plan*," **John O'Neil**, JCW general manager, said at the beginning of the exercise.

Nick Crossley, the county's director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, noted that JCW was one of the first county departments to actually develop a COOP and to test it.

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Budget picture for JCW in 2012 is still unclear

John O'Neil, JCW's general manager, and **Peggy Howe**, Black & Veatch, presented preliminary information to the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) at the May 12, 2011, Committee of the Whole meeting. While the budget won't be final or formally approved until August 2011, this meeting provided the BoCC with preliminary information from JCW. Likewise, JCW received direction from the BoCC on what should be presented at the final budget meeting in late June 2011.

The BoCC voted to direct JCW to present a scenario that increases the use of reserves for 2012 and forecasts greater revenue increases in subsequent years. JCW will also present a scenario based on the County Manager's recommended budget, if it is different from the other scenario.

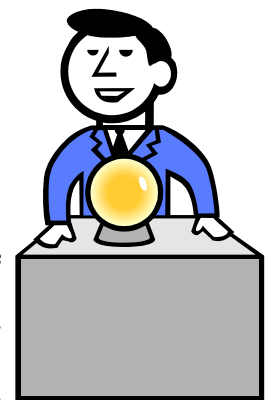
JCW and the County Manager were also asked to explore the possibility of JCW using general fund reserves in the event of a cash flow emergency. The meeting can be viewed on the Johnson County website at the following link:

<http://lims.jocogov.org/sirepub/mtgviewer.aspx?meetid=946&doctype=AGENDA>

Please note that the budget will not be formally adopted until August 2011. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Beth Brandel

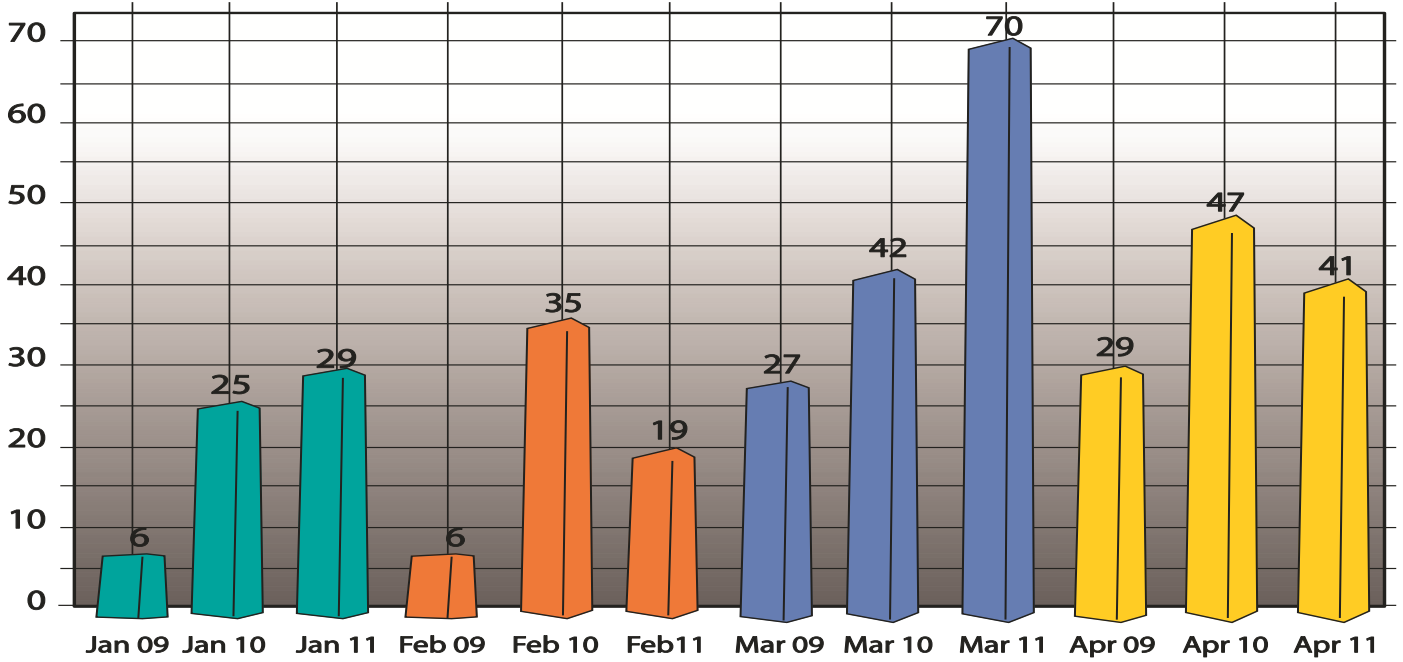
Director of Business Operations and Planning



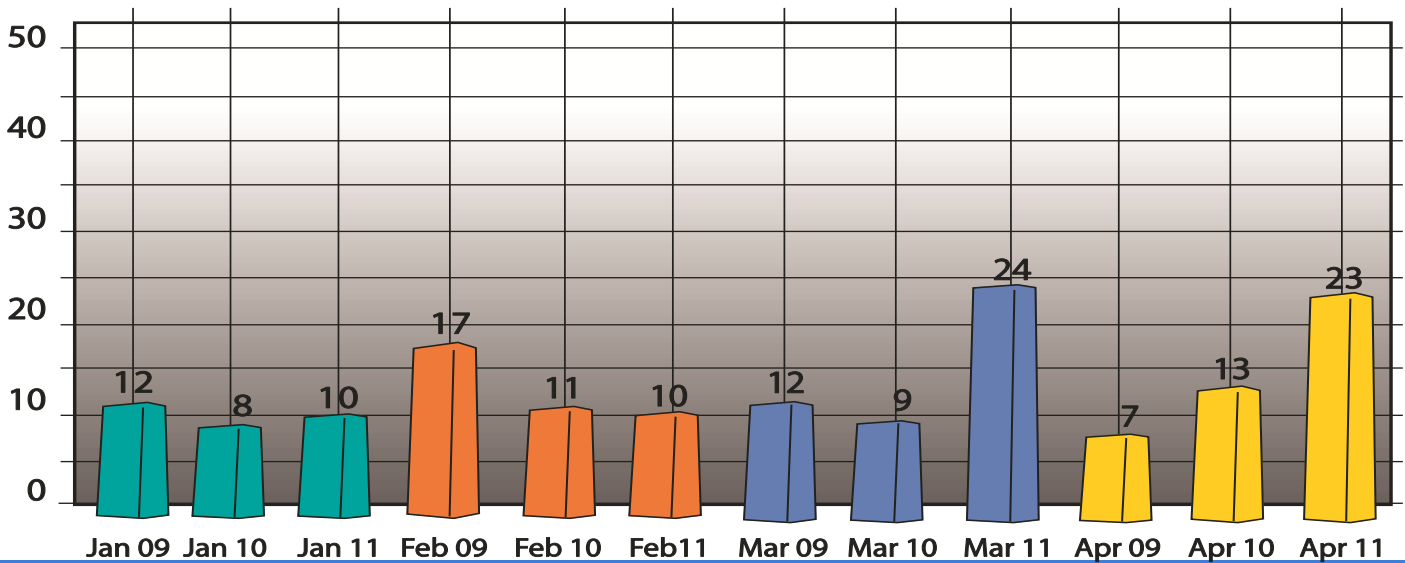
Levels of Service –

2011 posts highest permit totals for 1st qtr

Single-family Residential Permit Sales



Commercial Permit Sales



THE
PIPELINE
A NEWSLETTER FOR AND ABOUT THE EMPLOYEES OF JOHNSON COUNTY WASTEWATER

JCW

The Pipeline is a monthly newsletter published by the JCW director of communications for and about the department's employees.

All questions, comments and submissions should be directed to **Lori Sand** at 913-715-8572 or lori.sand@jcw.org.

Submissions must not be more than 500 words.

Kudos to **Larry Jiskra**, cleaning/inspection, crew member, and **Trevor Smith**, construction crew member, who recently earned the Kansas Water Environment Association's Association of Boards Certification. Larry completed Collections Class 4 certification and Trevor completed Collections Class 1 certification. Congratulations, guys!



Funny pet tales

Patrick McQueen

Financial manager

Cutie is our five-year-old Blue Fronted Amazon parrot. She loves music and provides lots of entertainment as she tries to sing along to just about anything. Imagine Jimmy Buffett in operatic style!



She is extremely curious and loves to perch on my shoulder while we are outside watching the kids play.

She does most of her talking in the evening. It has become a bedtime ritual for everyone to sit at the top of the stairs and talk back and forth with her.

With four kids, two cats, a dog and a parrot there is *never* a dull moment at the McQueen circus.



Lori Sand

director of Communications

The name of our yellow lab mix, *Booger*, has made for some interesting situations. One day my husband called and said that when he went home for lunch, he could not find the dog anywhere.

We'd had some workmen in our house that morning and I figured that they'd left a door open and he'd sneaked out.

I drove home in our convertible and drove the two mile walking route we took everyday, yelling out of the car, "*Booger! Booger!*" Did I ever get some looks! I started laughing, which only made it worse.

The rest of the story ... I came home and after searching the house, he appeared next to me a couple of hours later — no idea where he'd been hiding.

He got his name when as a puppy he kept jumping the fence to the neighbor's yard. He was originally named *KC*, but I kept saying, "You little *Booger*, get back over here" — and it stuck.



Meet Janet Jacobs

GIS technician



- ★ My favorite childhood memory is living in New Jersey and having family outings at the shore.
- ★ My favorite food is Italian.
- ★ My dream vacation destination is warm weather and a beach.
- ★ My claim to fame is that I played Big Ten sports for the University of Illinois. I went to college on a softball scholarship. I also sang on stage at Kemper with REO Speedwagon in an encore song. My mic was dead though.
- ★ My most embarrassing moment was when I stepped on Scott Hamilton's (the ice skater) foot at the airport. He had just completed a skating competition which he won and was leaving Denver. He was even carrying his victory bouquet of flowers. I turned around and ran into him and stepped on his foot. I was wearing huge hiking boots. It had to hurt. I said I was sorry and he just smiled and said, "It's ok."
- ★ My talent is that I'm an empathic listener. I find humor in just about everything.
- ★ Lessons I have learned: Be kind to everyone you meet. Never be too proud to say I was wrong and I'm sorry.
- ★ My hero is my grandmother. She survived difficult circumstances while growing up and still had great love for her family, a quiet grace and a great sense of humor. She also taught me how to play cards
- ★ I'd like to meet the Dalai Lama. I could learn so much from him.
- ★ In high school I was quiet, shy and well-behaved. That all changed in college
- ★ I'm afraid of snakes. Copperhead Todd Rogers is my hero. Bitten by a snake and he didn't die on the spot of a heart attack.
- ★ I spend too much on my granddaughter, but she is worth it. I am very proud of her
- ★ My passion is growing spiritually. I love meditation.
- ★ I have worked for JCW for about five years and 20 years with RTA
- ★ Finish this sentence: *When I grow up ... I want to be a rock star.* A very, very mature answer, don't you think?

Recent news regarding the future of KPERS

Sources: Reprinted from an article by **John Hanna**, *Plan to eliminate pension plan shortfall passes Kansas Legislature*, the Kansas City Star, May 10, 2011, and a press release dated May 10, 2011 from the League of Kansas Municipalities.

A plan for eliminating a long-term shortfall facing Kansas' public pension system won final approval Tuesday, May 10, from the Legislature, even though it doesn't accomplish many Republicans' goal of starting a 401(k)-style retirement plan for new teachers and government workers.

The legislation goes to Governor **Sam Brownback** who's expected to sign it after having described the pension system's problems as "a pressing financial issue." The House approved the bill, 89-30, a day after the Senate passed it, 31-7.

The measure boosts the state's annual contributions to the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System starting in July 2013, phasing in a \$28 million annual increase over four years. The report raises the cap on how much an employer's contribution can increase to 0.9 percent on Jan. 1, 2014; to 1.0 percent on Jan. 1, 2015; to 1.1 percent on Jan. 1, 2016; and to 1.2 percent on Jan. 1, 2017.

It also will require public employees to choose between paying more of their salaries toward their retirement benefits and having their future benefits cut. Subject to IRS approval – it provides members with two options.

Tier 1 members can choose to increase their KPERS contributions from 4 percent to 6 percent. In return, their multiplier will increase from 1.75 to 1.85 for those years of increased employee contributions. This option would be the default if a Tier 1 member fails to choose an option. Contributions would increase to 5 percent on January 1, 2014 and to 6 percent on Jan. 1, 2015. Or Tier 1 members can choose to continue contributing at a 4 percent rate. Members choosing this option, however, will see a reduction in their multiplier from 1.75 to 1.4 for future years of service.

Meanwhile, all Tier 2 members will continue to contribute 6 percent of their salary toward KPERS. But they must choose between keeping their 1.75 multiplier and losing their Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) or keeping their COLA and lowering their multiplier to 1.4 for future years of service. The first option would be the default option if none is chosen.

The measure also establishes a 13-member KPERS Study Commission to analyze the benefits and pitfalls of different retirement plans, including defined contribution plans; whether the state should move toward a 401(k)-style plan; and make recommendations to the Legislature based on its research. The commission's recommenda-

recommendations are due on Jan. 6, 2012 and will be introduced as two identical bills in the House and Senate.

Supporters said the measure is an important step toward addressing the long-term funding shortfall facing the retirement system. KPERS projects a gap of \$7.7 billion between its anticipated revenues and benefits promised to teachers, judges, police, firefighters and other government workers through 2033.



"This is not a complete solution," said House Pensions and Benefits Committee Chairman **Mitch Holmes**, a St. John Republican. "We're not totally happy with this, but I think it's a step in the right direction."

Some legislators assume the study commission will recommend moving toward a 401(k)-style plan, in part because seven of its 13 members will be appointed by Brownback and House Speaker **Mike O'Neal**, a Hutchinson Republican, who support the idea.

Brownback has predicted that a study will result in a plan for at least a "hybrid" plan for new workers, giving them the option of joining a 401(k)-style plan.

Public employee groups and Democrats strongly oppose such a move, fearing it would make retirement benefits less lucrative and less secure. They argue that the retirement system has problems because the state has shorted its annual contributions for too many years.

Such groups were pleased the bill didn't mandate a 401(k)-style plan for new workers and still hope a study will highlight the problems associated with the idea, lessening political support for it.

"I just hope that the commission begins to work diligently and to address some of these questions," said **Jane Carter**, executive director of the Kansas Organization of State Employees.

According to a press release from the League of Kansas Municipalities, "Please note, however, that in order for these changes to occur several triggers must first take place in 2012. Nothing is set in stone. In fact, it is very likely that several changes will be made next year based on the recommendations made by the KPERS Study Commission. Thus, stay tuned for more updates."

Cross-functional team updates

Rate Structure

April 2011

For 2012 budget and rate setting, the process has been coupled with the combined rate project, so all rate setting and financial plan meetings have addressed both topics.

The Rates Cross-functional Team or a subset of the team met formally four times in April. Informal meetings and discussions occurred almost daily throughout the month. A Committee of the Whole (CoW) session with the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) took place on April 21, addressing potential 2012 rates for user charge and EDU, as well as the combined rate plan.

The BoCC and the County Manager's Office have provided some direction for both the 2012 rates and the rate combination, indicating that the 2012 rates should be as low as possible and that operating reserves should be restored to policy level (90 days) over a period of about six years and that the impact of the rate combination, beginning in 2013, should be spread over three to four years.

At the end of the month, the team began preparing for a May 12 CoW session with the BoCC that will again address both the 2012 rate and the combined rate approach.

Communication

April 4, 2011

The team discussed ideas for the following:

- Communication Plan for Rate Combination
- Back of the Bill Message
- Story idea list for Currently newsletter
- Hot Topics/Issues

Update on response to Public Outreach efforts: **John O'Neil** will speak to Olathe Economic Development Council. **John Metzler** will speak to the Leawood Economic Development Council.

Have a funny pet or kid story or
joke to share?



Send it to lori.sand@jcw.org for
inclusion in The Pipeline.
Just remember — keep it
clean!

Safety Committee updates

New Business

- The 2011 election of Officers and Committee Members was approved. Officers are:
 - **Frank Manners**, chairman
 - **Steve Drabant**, vice chairman
 - **Patty Haake**, scribe

Members (Alternate) are:

- **Joe Barnes (Troy Young)**, **Kevin Boggs (John Wilson)**, **Linsey Brashears (Mike Smith)**, **Bob Daniels (Richard Howe)**, **Steve Drabant (Mark Fujisaki)**, **Rob Fischer (Roy Ratcliffe)**, **Patrick Gardner (Andres Rodriguez)**, **Jason Martin (Steve Laws)**, **Clint McCammon (Mike Peppers)**, **Lonnie Ponder (Ryan Redinger)**, **Roger Sullivan (Tim Kopaska)**, and **Robert Vick**.
- Review of the revised Safety Manual will be conducted at the Tailgate meetings.

Accidents in March/April

- Construction/Pumps - no lost time
 - Employee using circular saw cut finger
 - Employee loading equipment strained back
 - Employee strained left knee
- Line Cleaning - no lost time
 - Employee injured eye while handling equipment
 - Employee strained left side while handling equipment
- Line Cleaning - lost time
 - Employee strained back and abdomen while lifting manhole cover

Discussion for June Safety Committee Meeting

- Safety Fair preparations

Upcoming training

- Backing training
- Internal training for Standards and Hazard Identification

Other topics discussed

- Discussion for mandatory use of T lifts for lifting manhole covers was discussed and reviewed with superintendents.
- Discussion regarding a preventative training seminar geared to reduce and/or prevent soft tissue injury.

Next meeting

June 1, 2011, 9 a.m. in Nelson, MM10 Bldg., Rm. 101

GO GREEN JOHNSON COUNTY

Be there — on the square!

Wednesday, May 25th, 2011
11:00—1:30
County Court Square at
111 S. Cherry, Olathe, KS
66061

Featured Activities and Events

- Exhibits by local environmental groups, County and City departments and county green vendors
- Life size puppet show by Stone Lion Puppet Theater
- Live performance by Eco Elvis
- Live animals on display from Ernie Miller Nature Center
- Door prizes
- Organic lunch available



Contact Julie Coon, Johnson County Environmental for details: julie.coon@jocogov.org or 913-715-6938

Mark your calendars for June 8, FTN's Fun in the Sun Kick-Off Event



In an effort to boost participation, this year's Feed the Need Event Day will be held on Wednesday, June 8 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Courthouse Square.

A wide variety of food will be available as well as several different activities, including JCW's gently used accessories sale. Last year, the department raised more than \$500 during the event selling strawberry shortcake and used handbags.

JCW's plan for What would YOU do?

Continued from Page 1

"The county is purchasing an online COOP management system later this year," Crossley said, "and we will be able to utilize those things you have in place today to make that system more robust for all county departments to use."

As the JCW Leadership Team discussed the action that should be taken, they discovered that further training is a necessity for the Sunset staff. They realized that 24 hour numbers for Facilities and ITS need to be given to staff members who could be in the building before or after regular office hours in the event of an emergency. O'Neil also suggested that In Case of Emergency signs be posted throughout the building. He asked **Celeste Chaney** as the onsite safety coordinator and **Frank Manners** to prepare a short presentation for Sunset staff at the June staff meeting.

Several different circumstances were added to the scenario and the group continued to work the plan to a successful conclusion of the two hour exercise.

The group noted that communication with staff and customers is covered once the emergency numbers are available to staff. A strong partnership with other departments was also cited as a strength from which JCW can draw upon if short-term relocation and/or reassignment of duties becomes necessary. Certain equipment purchases were listed as potential improvements.

"Plans are often not as relevant as they were three or four years ago," Crossley noted. "That's why these exercises are so important. People expect the government to be resilient. We must be prepared to protect life and property and do the best we can."

Special thanks to the planning committee who planned and managed the exercise. They were Chaney, Crossley, **Adam Crowe**, Manners, **Matt May**, and **Marie Seibel**.

Go Green Earth Day Celebration planned in Olathe

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Participating in the kick-off will be **Karl Brooks**, administrator of Region 7 EPA, and **Ed Eilert**, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners.

The Go Green event features fun for the whole family and is specifically held during the lunch hour for working individuals. The free entertainment will feature exhibits by local environmental groups, county departments and county "green" vendors, including: Deffenbaugh, Extreme Recycling, Grainger, Habitat Restore, Kansas City Heartland Habitat Restore, JoCo Board of Commissioners, JoCo Corrections, JoCo Environmental, JoCo Parks and Recreation, JoCo Stormwater/Public Works, JoCo Transit, KC Food Circle, KSU Composting Table, Laser Equipment, MARC – Solid Waste, MARC – Transit, Metropolitan Energy Center, Ricoh, Smurfit, Staples Advantage: the Eco Easy Button Team, Stone Lion Puppet Theater, and Westar Energy.

There will be a performance by Eco Elvis from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and the Stone Lion Puppet Theater will entertain the crowd with roaming performances, including a variety of larger than life puppets of native species, and a 17 foot tall Great Blue Heron. Attendees will also be treated to a live wild animal exhibit from the Ernie Miller Nature Center.

There will be free door prizes and a delicious organic lunch from which proceeds will benefit Feed the Need to support Johnson County food pantries.

June Celebrations

Wastewater Anniversaries

6/29/1981	30	Paul Turner pumps crew leader
6/10/1985	26	Janet Jacobs GIS technician
6/11/1985	26	Lloyd Newman industrial electrician
6/15/1987	24	Rosann Lucas management analyst
6/5/1989	22	John O'Neil general manager
6/11/1990	21	Steve Miller sewer inspector
6/28/1994	17	Troy Young engineering technician
6/3/1996	15	Kevin Reicheneker cleaning crew leader
6/1/1999	12	Martin Meyer cleaning/inspection crew member
6/18/2001	10	Susan Pekarek wastewater treatment project engineer
6/3/2002	9	Lisa Davis director, customer relations
6/9/2003	8	Ruben Vazquez cleaning/inspection crew member
6/7/2004	7	Lugenia Bronson customer service team leader
6/7/2004	7	Heather Bolander customer service representative
6/8/2004	7	Celeste Chaney operations supervisor
6/20/2005	6	Larry Jiskra cleaning/inspection crew member
6/7/2005	6	Robert Daniels treatment crew member
6/19/2006	5	Rosemary Surber permits technician
6/19/2006	5	Andres Rodriguez industrial electrical crew member
6/21/2006	5	Brandon Worley treatment crew member
6/16/2008	3	Robert Fischer automotive technician
6/25/2008	3	David Ferdinand treatment crew member

Birthdays

Dennis Edrington treatment crew leader	1
Lisa Davis director, customer relations	1
Jesse Bustamante HVAC technician	6
Ronald Rutledge truck driver	12
Derek Long industrial electrician	16
Frank Manners training and safety coordinator	17
Andrew Super assistant superintendent collections	18
Darrell Thornbrugh assistant director of collections	19
Ramona Brooks treatment crew member	20
Lori Sand director, communications	20
Andres Rodriguez industrial electrical crew member	22
Matt Matthew engineering technician	22
Roger Sullivan cleaning crew leader	23
Jerry Wallander line construction crew leader	23
Samuel Kingsolver treatment crew leader	26
Timothy Kopaska cleaning/inspection crew member	26
Joshua Hastings construction crew member	26
Martin Meyer cleaning/inspection crew member	27

