

Annual Fire Hydrant Inspections

Beginning September 7th, YCUA will perform its annual winterization of the over 3,000 fire hydrants in its system, including a check of their operation for fire protection. The procedure involves an employee completing an inspection of the internal workings of each fire hydrant, making repairs,

and removing water from the hydrant barrels to prevent freezing. YCUA will also flush or run each fire hydrant to make sure that it will operate properly during an emergency.



A tagged fire hydrant, indicating that it has been inspected and winterized.

As part of this process, each fire hydrant is tagged with a ribbon to indicate that the winterization has been completed. The color of the ribbon changes each year and, this year, the color red was selected.

Area residents should be advised that, as crews flush fire hydrants, there may be some discoloration of the water. If rust-colored water is experienced, simply run the cold water tap for a few minutes to let the water clear. Please keep in mind not to wash any light colored

> clothing until the water is running clear.

The rust coloring is caused by a natural buildup of minerals in the water system.

The fire hydrant inspection program helps ensure that all of our fire hydrants are ready in the event of an emergency. If

you have any questions about the program, please contact YCUA Director of Service Operations Michael Shaffer at 484-4600 ext. 311.

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YPSILANTI COMMUNITY UTILITIES AUTHORITY

- Jeff Castro, YCUA Director

From The Director

As winter approaches, it's important to remember that freezing temperatures can put the water pipes in your home at risk. Severe winter weather can cause your pipes to freeze and even possibly burst. These tips can help you safeguard your water pipes against freezing:

•Locate the main water supply and water heater valves in case you need to access them quickly in an emergency.

•If a sink is against an outside wall, open the under-sink cabinet doors to allow the circulation of warm air from inside the home.

•Wind drafts during severe cold can increase the chance of pipes freezing. Near exterior walls, windows, and in crawl spaces, seal drafts and wrap pipes with insulation or heating tape.

•During severe winter weather, keep a faucet open slightly and dripping.

•Learn the location of your water meter and take the above precautions to keep it from freezing, especially if your meter is located in an unheated basement or crawl space.

•Consider keeping your basement heated and installing window weather stripping.

•Shut off water supply values if you plan to be away from home for an extended period of time.

In the event that you experience a burst pipe in your home and your main shut off is not working properly or you have trouble locating or closing it, please call YCUA at 484-4600. - Jeff Castro, YCUA Director

YCUA's semiannual newsletter dedicated to enhancing water and wastewater services.

YCUA's Complete Distribution System Materials Inventory

The 2018 revisions to the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act, 1976 PA 399 require that water supplies develop and maintain a Complete Distribution System Materials Inventory (CDSMI). The purpose of the CDSMI is to characterize, record, and maintain a comprehensive inventory of distribution system materials, including service line materials on both public and private property. methods including hydro-vac, air-knifing, hand digging, etc.), trenching, televising, and in-home inspections. YCUA will record the actual material observed for each point described below, even if the material was as expected.

Each service line requiring verification must have the following three or four points physically verified (numeric bullets refer to the numbered location in the illustration

above):

1. Interior portion of the service line up to the first shutoff valve or 18 inches inside the building, whichever is shorter;

2. Curb stop to building, a minimum of 18 inches from the curb stop; and

3. Main to curb stop, a minimum of 18 inches from the curb stop.

Maintenance of an accurate inventory of distribution materials supports effective asset management planning, lead service line replacement efforts, and notification of those served by a lead service line. Pursuant to Rule 325.11604(c)(ii), YCUA must submit a CDSMI to the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) by January 1, 2025.



To date, YCUA has identified 100% of public side and 88% of private side water services. YCUA will need three or four points of physical verification for each service line. Physical verification methods may include potholing (by a variety of

4. Lead connector (gooseneck/pigtail), if present. In this context, a gooseneck or pigtail is a short section of material, typically not exceeding two feet, which can be bent and used for connection between a rigid fitting (corporation stop) and the service line piping.



Photo by OCG Saving The Ocean on Unsplash.

YCUA: Proud Environmental Leaders

Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority has always been proud of being an industry leader in abating negative impacts on our environment. One of YCUA's main focus areas is reducing the damaging effects of plastics in our waterways, which are alarming. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) projects a 40% increase in plastic production growth within a decade. Currently, 18 million tons of plastics enter our oceans annually. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, by 2025, for every three pounds of fish, there will be one pound of plastic. The types of plastics most commonly discarded are packaging material, bottles, grocery bags, and take-out items such as straws and eating utensils. Most of these items are not recyclable as their composition negates that process.

YCUA has an aggressive recycling program that moves its facilities as close to zero waste as possible. Staff prefers the use of aluminum, glass, and reusable containers such as coolers and various lunch bags. Shipped and received items are monitored as well to assure that plastic waste does not enter the environment as a pollutant.

Please take a moment to check the items in your home or connect with your refuse carrier to see what items are acceptable for recycling. You may also visit the EPA's website at *www.epa.gov/americarecycles*. Please join YCUA in protecting the planet and making it a better place for all, now and in the future.

YCUA a Partner in \$10 million COVID-19 Wastewater Surveillance Grant Program

In partnership with the University of Michigan Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and School of Public Health, YCUA is one of 19 teams in a statewide project monitoring the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 in public sewer systems. This project is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and is part of Michigan's allocation of a \$50 million federal grant under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES).

These efforts, expected to run through July 2023, coordinate local public health departments with counties, universities, and other institutions across the state to establish a standardized network of COVID-19 wastewater testing programs that have the potential to be an early warning system for the spread of the virus within a specific community or outbreaks on college campuses and other densely populated facilities.

Testing wastewater for viruses such as SARS-CoV-2 can be an effective tool

for monitoring transmission of COVID-19 within a local community or at individual facilities. The virus is shed in human waste, including people who are not ill or have not yet become ill. The virus can then be detected by testing samples taken from sewers and wastewater treatment plants, with results often being available earlier than human clinical samples. These results can then inform local public health officials to prevent further spread within that community.

The University of Michigan team has been working for several months in collaboration with Stanford University on optimizing methods and interpretation. Their research shows a correlation between SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater and COVID-19 in the community. They hope to apply their findings

Photo by CDC from Pexels.

by sampling and analyzing at wastewater plants in the vicinity of the university including the Ann Arbor wastewater plant and YCUA. As part of this study, samples are taken daily by YCUA staff in an effort to link the concentration of SARS-CoV-2 in wastewater to create a model to infer COVID-19 prevalence in the human population. The samples are analyzed daily for SARS – CoV-2 N1 and N2 gene and the results are shared with the county health departments and MDHHS.

MDHHS provides project support to participating local health departments, including how to integrate local wastewater data with other types of COVID-19 surveillance and public health responses.

As part of the program, Michigan will leverage its existing network of laboratories involved in monitoring the state's beaches for E. coli. These labs are equipped to test for viruses like the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 and are capable of supporting local wastewater testing efforts.

YCUA is very proud to be a part of this ground breaking work in addressing an important public health issue.

Restoration Procedure

Excavations in Paved Surfaces

As you are likely aware, YCUA often excavates in roads, driveways, and/or sidewalks to maintain and repair water supply and wastewater pipes and associated infrastructure. Permanent restoration of the disturbed road, driveway, or sidewalk typically does not happen immediately following YCUA's work on the water supply or wastewater utilities.

There are two factors that affect the timing of any paving restoration program. The first is that the Michigan Department of Transportation, whose policies and procedures are almost universally accepted by all other road agencies in the state (including the City of Ypsilanti and the Washtenaw County Road Commission), dictates that asphalt paving can only occur in this region between May 5 and November 15 of any given year. The majority of road excavations, particularly those caused by failures in the water supply system, occur outside of the paving season limitations, which will inevitably result in a delay before permanent restoration can occur. Secondly, due to a number of factors, particularly lack of control of the moisture content of the backfill material, the Authority must allow some time to lapse between the pavement disturbance and the permanent restoration in order for the backfill material to settle and compact.

As soon as weather allows in early spring, YCUA staff completes concrete repairs that are not connected to a public road. This work is limited primarily to sidewalks but occasionally includes sections of concrete driveways that do not abut a curb or road surface. YCUA also bids two road repair contracts each year. The first contract includes repair of cuts made between June 1 and November 30 of the prior year with those pavement replacements typically being completed between May 1 and the fourth of July holiday. The second contract includes repair of cuts made between December 1 of the previous year and May 31 of the current year with those locations restored between September and November.

Did You Know?

This spring, YCUA implemented a program to repaint the 3,157 fire hydrants that the utility services. As of September 1st, staff has completed painting 2,301 hydrants. The Authority has concluded painting until next spring to focus on its hydrant winterization program. Rest assured if your hydrant was not painted this year, YCUA's goal is to have it done next year.



It's Time To Winterize!

The time to prepare your home for winter is before the freezing temperatures and snow arrive. Follow these tips to help prevent frozen pipes in your home:



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Disconnect outdoor hoses and make sure hose bibs are not dripping.



Insulate pipes in unheated areas or seal off unheated areas.



Find your water meter shutoff so if a break does occur, you can turn off your water service quickly.

If you have an in-ground sprinkler system, contact your irrigation professional about scheduling an appointment to have your system thoroughly winterized.



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If your home's water will be turned off for winter, there should be heat to protect the meter as well as the plumbing.

YCUA recommends that customers winterize their homes just in case there is a complete power outage.

"Get the Lead Out" Webpage Now Online

YCUA is taking a proactive approach to identifying lead service lines with our "Get the Lead Out" program. We



have launched a new webpage geared toward helping residents understand how lead can enter drinking water from the wearing away of materials in a building's lead plumbing and how to identify the type of service in your home. Visit *www.ycua.org/qualitywater.htm*

for more information.



YCUA is closed on the following dates:

November 11 - Veterans' Day November 25 & 26 - Thanksgiving December 23 & 24 - Christmas December 30 & 31 - New Year

We wish our customers a safe and enjoyable holiday season!



Need more information?

Please visit us at www.ycua.org or call 734-484-4600

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