

Academy Water and Sanitation District Board meeting, March 20

# Bomb-cyclone power outage threatened district operations

By Natalie Barszcz

On March 20, board members of Academy Water and Sanitation District (AWSD) heard that efforts to regain power in the district had been noticeably slow and could have had environmental repercussions during the widespread Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA) power outage that affected thousands across the region during the March 13 winter storm. Storm havoc

The board heard a detailed account from Anthony Pastorello, operations manager for AWSD. Considering the numerous events that occurred during the recent power outage that affected the district for 2 1/2 days, he said:

- The new lift station pumping AWSD wastewater over the hill to Donala Water and Sanitation District's collection system couldn't operate for 2 1/2 days due to the power outage. The wastewater collected in AWSD's lagoon instead.
- He contacted MVEA during the storm to explain that the facility would overflow hazardous waste into the creek if the power could not be restored.
- Donala brought its portable generator to AWSD's lift station during the power outage, plowing the long steep driveway in the process, only to find that the connector plugs were not compatible.
- By the time power returned, the wastewater lagoon was three-quarters full and had half a day's worth of capacity left before a spill.
- Had Donala lost power for a longer period, its generator would not have been available to lend.

Pastorello said if overflow occurred and if the creek were contaminated, AWSD would face liability issues with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Residents also faced the possibility of an extended period without any drinking water. Pastorello explained that be-

fore all storms of any nature, he pumps water to fill the potable water tank. This time, there were about 1 1/2 days left of water in the tank when the power was restored. Director Ron Curry said he posted a web notice for residents to cut back on water use, but he didn't hear any comments from residents.

Board members expressed their dismay that MVEA gave a lower priority to AWSD than the surrounding neighborhoods whose power was restored in as little as four hours.

Mark Morton of GMS Consulting Engineers said research is underway to explore the possibility of switching the generator plugs at the station to ensure compatibility with Donala's generator.

Pastorello recommended exploring the possible purchase of a 150 kW three-phase portable generator for the facility to keep the lift station running to prevent overflow issues and operate the deep well in future power outages. The board consensus was that buying a used generator would be more practical than trying to rent one. They also agreed that the kind of storm recently experienced on March 13 had not occurred often in the past 25 years.

### Deep well exploration

Pastorello explained the findings of the deep well analysis that showed it was losing 50 percent of the expected pumping volume. Diagnostics showed the motor could be in bad shape or that the casing is damaged. A camera check is scheduled to reveal the condition of the pipe and find a solution to the problem.

### Lagoon project progress

Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (UM-CRWWTFF), which is run by Donala, is equipped to meet current state standards for ammonia, phosphorus, and nitrogen. ASWD's current lagoon treatment system could no longer meet these standards, so it has been decommissioned, and the old lagoons are being pumped

clean. Morton said once the lagoons are fully thawed, pumping will begin in coordination with Terri Ladouceur, chief waste plant operator at UMCRRWTF. See [www.ocn.me/v15n9.htm#awsd0728](http://www.ocn.me/v15n9.htm#awsd0728) and [www.ocn.me/v15n11.htm3awsd1027](http://www.ocn.me/v15n11.htm3awsd1027).

### Attorney sought

A search continues for an attorney for the district who understands real estate and special district requirements and is also able to negotiate. Two potential candidates are being considered and the aim is to stay local to keep the fees down.

The board moved into executive session at 6:46 p.m. to discuss personnel issues. After the board returned to open

session, members approved 4-0 a \$1,500 bonus for Pastorello for his exceptional efforts during the three-day power outage.

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The Academy Water and Sanitation District board meets at 6 p.m. on the third Wednesday each month at the Donald Westcott Fire Station, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Contact Operations Manager Anthony Pastorello at 481-0711 or see the district website [www.colorado.gov/pacific/awsd](http://www.colorado.gov/pacific/awsd).

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).

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Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, March 11

# Board approves homeowners' association's easement request

By James Howald

At its March 11 meeting, the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) board approved a request from The Cove Homeowners Association to be granted an easement allowing its tenants to have limited access to property that belongs to WWSD. The board also heard operational reports from staff.

### Board allows access for residents of the Cove

District Manager Jessie Shaffer presented to the board a request from the Cove Homeowners Asso-

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