

March 2009

The Hartselle

Connection

Serving Hartselle's People, Building for Hartselle's Future

Sanitary Sewer System Upgrades Completed

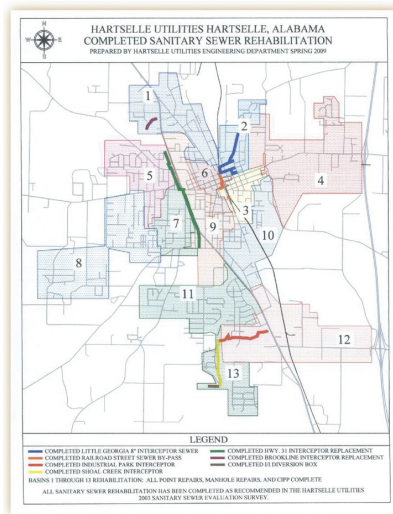
In 2001, Hartselle Utilities began a detailed study for a daunting project: to rehabilitate or replace 42 miles of sewer lines running beneath the city. At that time, parts of the sewer system were over 60 years old, and broken pipes, damaged manholes and faulty sewer connections allowed outside water to enter the system. Infiltration, from groundwater, and inflow, from surface water (commonly referred to as I/I) took up capacity in the system and frequently caused wastewater to overflow out of the system. These overflows created a health hazard and threatened the environment in Hartselle, and the HU board approved an aggressive upgrade program to correct the problems.

The project was divided into four phases. The first three phases addressed I/I problems; Phase 4 centered around HU's 23-year-old wastewater treatment plant.

Work on the project began in 2002, with 13 basins requiring repairs. During the next six years, HU replaced or repaired 1,968 manholes; 490,604 feet of gravity sewer lines; 53,182 feet of force main lines; and installed an I/I Diversion facility at the plant.

On January 12, 2003, HU entered into a voluntary Consent Order with the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) to complete the sewer upgrades by 2008. The projects were based on a schedule adopted by the HU Board in 2001.

"We are happy to report that Phases 1, 2 and 3 of our sanitary



sewer system upgrades were completed by August 2006, well ahead of compliance with our Consent Order with ADEM," says HU General Manager Ferrell Vest. "Phase 4 of the plan began in 2007, and work on the wastewater treatment plant continues."

The overall I/I project cost just over \$5 million. With assistance from Rep. Bud Cramer, HU received three EPA Special Needs Grants totaling \$2.8 million to help finance the project. HU was required to provide matching funds for the grants, which it did through a combination of funds on hand and low interest loans from the ADEM State Revolving Fund (SRF).

"Had we not asked for the money from the federal government," Vest says, "we would not have received the grants. We still would have had to correct the problems in the sewer system, but our customers would have had to directly foot the bill for the entire project."

In 2006, HU received the national PISCES award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the sewer system improvements. The PISCES, which stands for "Performance and Innovation in the SRF Creating Environmental Success," recognizes "systems that achieve significant environmental and economic benefits with an innovative and effective project," according to ADEM, which nominated HU for the award.

Hartselle Leaders Going to Washington With Annual Legislative Agenda

In early March, representatives from several Hartselle organizations will return to Washington to ask members of Congress for help in securing federal funding for ongoing community projects.

The group is scheduled to include Mayor Dwight Tankersley, Hartselle Utilities General Manager Ferrell Vest, HU Board Chairman Mike Gunter, HU Superintendent of Sewer System Operations Robert Wright, and members of the City Council, County Commission, Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce, Hartselle Development Board, Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Morgan County Economic Development Association. They plan to meet with Rep. Parker Griffith, Rep. Robert Aderholt, Sen. Jeff Sessions, and Sen. Richard Shelby.

The Hartselle representatives will present a Federal Legislative Agenda which outlines federal funding priorities for the Hartselle area. Transportation projects continue to top the list for this year, including the ongoing project to extend and widen Highway 36 from

Vaughn Bridge Road to I-65 and improvements to Thompson Road.

The second item on the Legislative Agenda is funding for continued improvements to HU's wastewater treatment plant.

"We have focused on rehabilitating the current 23-year-old wastewater treatment plant," explains Vest, "but due to what appears to be new permit issues, we are having to regroup and relook at the process. We may have to redesign some of the facility to meet emerging permit limitations ADEM has asked for."

ADEM has asked HU to begin limiting the amounts of nitrates

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TVA Fuel Cost Adjustment for April: -7%

The FCA affects only the electric portion of your HU bill. It is adjusted quarterly and can be a credit or debit to allow TVA to recover, when necessary, increases in purchased power and fuel-related costs. The FCA for January was -6%.

Washington ... continued from front

emitted by the plant, but the current facility is not designed to remove nitrates from wastewater. In addition to a design study to address this issue, HU is requesting funding for improved sludge handling at the plant.

“Both the transportation project and improvements to the wastewater treatment plant could be our number one priority,” says Mayor Tankersley. “They are both vitally important for Hartselle’s continued growth.

“The projects we present to our delegation stay pretty much the same from year to year, and our priorities have not changed,” Mayor Tankersley continued. “Transportation has been at the top of our list for at least the last five years, and the wastewater treatment plant was listed right behind transportation last year.”

Other projects on the Legislative Agenda include the Morgan Center Business / Industry Park, a city-wide wireless network, an emergency outdoor warning system, a security fence at the Hartselle-Morgan County Regional Airport, downtown flood zone mitigation, and new firefighting equipment.

Barkley Bridge Construction to Begin

A pre-construction meeting for the new Barkley Bridge was held in January, says Jeff Johnson, director of the Hartselle Department of Development, and construction will begin March 1. Reed Contracting Services was awarded the contract, and the company will have 90 working days to complete the bridge and connecting Longhorn Pass Extension.

The new bridge will replace the 80-year-old Hammitt Street Bridge, which for many years has been the only above-grade crossing over the railroad tracks in Hartselle. The 80-year-old wooden trestle bridge has a weight limit of 6,000 pounds; school buses, fire trucks and ambulances cannot cross the bridge. The new concrete Barkley Bridge is designed with safety in mind, says Johnson, and will better handle the intermittent flow of traffic when trains travel through downtown.

CSX is the owner of the old Hammitt Street Bridge, and will continue to be responsible for the maintenance, and ultimately, the removal of the bridge.



Hammitt Street Bridge

The Energized Guyz Visit Crestline School

“Open your eyes, be energy wise!”

In December, second and third graders at Crestline Elementary promised to use energy wisely as they watched superhero Nikki Neutron defeat arch-villain The Sneaker, a known energy waster. Neutron and Sneaker were portrayed by actors from the National Theatre for Children, a Minnesota-based educational theater company on tour this year to teach children the importance of saving energy. Their visit to Crestline was arranged by Hartselle Utilities and TVA.



Jerome York, left, and Haley Chamberlain, actors from the National Theatre for Children, play a variety of characters in *The Energized Guyz*.

The high-energy performance kept the children engaged, said HU Customer Service Manager Terri Harris.

“The goal is to educate our next generation of consumers – to teach them about using resources wisely. The program covered energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation, and the kids had a blast.”

Sanitation & Recycling Pickup

Your sanitation and recycling pickup charge appears on your monthly bill from HU as a service to the City of Hartselle.

If your regularly-scheduled pickup day falls on an official city holiday, generally your sanitation will be picked up the following day, or on the following Monday should the holiday fall on a Friday. A complete sanitation schedule is available on the city’s website at www.hartselle.org or by calling the Street Department at 773-2643.

For sanitation and recycling billing questions, call City Hall at 773-2535.

Free Home Energy Audits Available

For tips on ways to save money on energy, HU customers are encouraged to complete a free *energy right* Home E-Valuation audit. This survey can be completed online at www.energyright.com, or customers can call HU at 773-3340 and a paper copy of the audit will be mailed to you.

Residents who complete the survey will receive a detailed report with suggestions on ways to save energy and money, along with a free energy efficiency kit, which includes compact fluorescent light bulbs, gasket seals for outlets, water-saving faucet aerators, and a filter whistle that whistles when it is time to change the heating and air system filter.

New Faces at HU

HU welcomes three new employees. Ben Atchison replaces warehouseman Charlie Oden, who retired in December.



Ben Atchison

New meter readers are Blake McNutt and Slade Sparkman. They replace Jonathon Warner, who has gone to work for the Hartselle Fire Department, and Mike Sparks,



Blake McNutt



Slade Sparkman

who was promoted to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.



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