



### News from Public Works Board, Water Policy Board, and Municipal Wastewater Committee Meetings

- The Michigan's Adventure sewer connection project is halfway there. Michigan's Adventure's contractor, as of the end of October, has not yet commenced construction for their portion of the project, though there is plenty of time for them to finish up before the Park opens for the 2018 season.
- A raccoon was caught on a trail camera near the LaPres Trail nest boxes and is believed to be responsible for the very high predation rate seen on this trail.
- We completed harvesting soybeans and corn and are now cleaning up the grain center and putting equipment away for the season. We had excellent weather to quickly move through 2017's harvest. This year our yields were the best we have ever had. The average corn yield was 178 bushel/acre and the average yield for soybeans was 62 bushels/acre. As far as anyone can remember, these are a Wastewater record!
- This year the Wastewater participated in Consumers Energy's Demand Response Program. Prior to being approved to participate, we had to demonstrate to Consumers how much we could lower our energy usage by shutting off equipment. We demonstrated that we could cut our power consumption by 4 MW-hrs, and that has become the established goal that Consumers would like us to meet each time.



A Wastewater Record Harvest Year!!



- October 5 was a big day for the Cell 2 Improvements project. On that day we opened the valves and started filling the cell with raw sewage. It was the first time since 2009 that the cell had received water. For those who work here, the occasion felt historical, and almost half the staff came out to watch on that foggy morning as the sewage first flowed out of the fill pipes and began filling the cell. Commissioner Hughes was there with her camera to capture the event in pictures.



Cell two prior to filling.



They're Back!  
Photo courtesy of Brian Bialik

- Though they look innocent enough in their pastel packaging, flushable wipes are anything but cute when they clog pipes—a routine problem in wastewater collection systems and one which recently caused our maintenance staff a great deal of trouble. The ugly mass of rags below was only a small part of a massive clog (8 to 12 feet long) that lodged in a City of Muskegon flow meter. Dislodging the clog required bypass pumping, jetting, removal of the flowmeter, and a tug-of-war of titanic proportions. When the clog could finally be jetted free, it went down the pipe and took out the comminuters (grinders) at C Station. Please pass on the message: NO WIPES IN THE PIPES!



- Last October, the Board of Public Works gave MEMBA (Michigan's Edge Mountain Biking Association) permission to put in mountain bike trails on the northern part of Wastewater property. Now a year later, some may be wondering about the status of this project. MEMBA is working with Kay-Linn Enterprises to develop a fund-raising strategy. They have a website for fundraising, [www.mosquitocreektrails.org](http://www.mosquitocreektrails.org), and anticipate trail completion by the end of 2018! This should prove to be a great asset to the community.
- Now that the new cell two mixers and motor control centers have been installed, Grand River Construction was able to test them with the cell both empty and full. The motors are almost noiseless and ran beautifully!



Cell two's new mixers



- We had some excitement on October 31 at our grain center! The farm employees were doing their normal daily maintenance at the grain center when they caught the smell of smoke. They saw a flame in the grain dryer and immediately shut it down and called the fire department. I believe our employees' quick thinking and quick action prevented any measurable damage, as grain fires can get out of hand in no time. And, of course, we're extremely appreciative of our local fire departments for their heroic and exemplary service! It was great to watch them work together and see their comradery.



# Happy Holidays



- The end of the season Bluebird report was submitted to the Michigan Bluebird Society, and all the monitoring data from the 2017 nesting season has been entered into our database and on [NestWatch.org](http://NestWatch.org). Overall (both trails), Tree Swallows had a much lower nesting success than the last few years (35%). The Eastern Bluebird's overall nesting success was consistent with the last few years at 45%. House Wrens saw about a 50% decrease in nesting success in 2017, with only an 18% nesting success. The Muskegon County Wastewater successfully fledged 44 Eastern Bluebirds, 99 Tree Swallows, and 21 House Wrens.