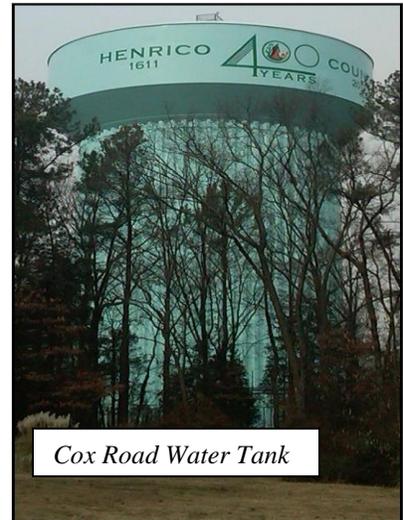


Department of Public Utilities

History

Sanitary Districts

In 1931, the first public drinking water and sewer utilities were established in Sanitary Districts for residents of Henrico County. Sanitary Districts were authorized by the Virginia General Assembly to provide urban-type public services including drinking water, sewage disposal, refuse collection, fire protection and street lights to densely populated areas having a definite community pattern. Services within the Sanitary Districts were paid for by the residents receiving those services and not by the residents of the county as a whole. The first two Sanitary Districts in Henrico County were established by the Board of Supervisors for the Westhampton and Sandston areas on December 1, 1931. On December 8, 1933, the third Sanitary District was established for the Highland Springs area. Much of the funding for construction of these drinking water and sewer systems was provided by grants from the Federal Public Works Administration. Deep wells were the source of drinking water and small sewage treatment plants provided wastewater treatment for the Sandston and Highland Springs Sanitary Districts, while drinking water and wastewater from the Westhampton Sanitary District were treated by plants owned by the City of Richmond. The City of Richmond annexed the Westhampton Sanitary District in 1942, and in 1943, the Sandston Sanitary District was significantly increased to support the wartime expansion of the Sandston Army Air Base. By the end of fiscal year 1956, there were 12 Sanitary Districts in Henrico County serving 14,900 water customers through 208 miles of water piping and 10,500 sewer customers through 153 miles of sewer piping. The first Sanitary Landfill was opened on Nine Mile Road in 1953.



A Department

An amendment to the County Manager Act by the Virginia General Assembly in 1956 authorized the County to establish a Department of Public Utilities under the supervision of a Director of Public Utilities appointed by the County Manager. On December 19, 1956, the Henrico County Board of Supervisors established a Department of Public Utilities with the primary mission of managing the water and sewer distribution and treatment systems throughout the county including the Sanitary Districts. The Department of Public Utilities was also charged with managing refuse collection and street lighting programs in these Sanitary Districts as well as all Sanitary Landfills in the county. Mr. W. M. Sterrett was appointed as the first Director of Public Utilities in 1956, a position he held until 1965. By the end of fiscal year 1965, there were 13 Sanitary Districts in Henrico County serving 25,900 water customers through 398 miles of water piping and 21,200 sewer customers through 368 miles of sewer piping.

A Unified Approach and “Pay to Dispose”

Mr. William S. Dewhirst served as the Director of Public Utilities from 1966 through 1976. Under his leadership, the county entered into a contract with the Sanitary Districts in 1968 to operate all of the respective drinking water and wastewater systems in the Districts as unified systems. This unified concept allowed for the transmission of water and wastewater from one Sanitary District to another without trying to equitably assess charges between the Districts, while also requiring the proper design of additions to the water and sewer systems to serve the total future needs of the county rather than only those needs within a District. This was the beginning of the regional water and wastewater systems we operate today. By the end of fiscal year 1976, there were 39,250 water customers being served through 596 miles of water piping and 36,375 sewer customers being served through 645 miles of sewer piping.

The second Sanitary Landfill was opened on Springfield Road in 1966. In 1968, refuse disposal areas for the Nine Mile Road and the Springfield Road Landfills were setup as a non-profit service organization with all refuse being weighed and charges being levied for the use of the facilities. These landfills were intended to be self-supporting, with all users, both private and public, paying their appropriate costs to dispose of refuse.

An Era of Major Expansion and KHB

In 1977, Mr. Patrick J. Brady, P.E. was appointed as the Director and he held that position through 1999. During his tenure, the Department managed the planning, design and construction of the first Henrico Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant and related facilities with a treatment capacity of 30 million gallons per day. Construction for this project began in 1979 and was completed in 1989 at a cost of approximately \$170 million. Approximately 75% of the cost was paid by federal grants. By 1993, the first expansion of the wastewater plant was needed to meet capacity and new nutrient removal requirements. An expansion from 30 to 45 million gallons per day in wastewater treatment capacity was completed in 1997 with a final cost of approximately \$40 million.



The Keep Henrico Beautiful Committee was organized in 1980. The purpose of this committee was to improve the environmental quality of Henrico County through the development of a comprehensive educational program to reduce littering. The Board of Supervisors appointed citizen volunteer members representing the five magisterial districts to the committee.

In 1985, the Office of Industrial and Strong Waste was established to monitor and assist businesses discharging to the wastewater collection system. Reflecting the rapid growth of the county, a record 2330 water and 2226 sewer customers were added to the systems in fiscal year 1988. In 1994, County Manager Virgil R. Hazelett, P.E. negotiated an historic Water Agreement with the City of Richmond to convey 80 million gallons per day of Richmond's water rights in the James River to Henrico and to gain support for construction of a drinking water treatment plant in Henrico. The Water Agreement requires Henrico to purchase a portion of its drinking water from the City until July 1, 2040. Frank L. Miller, P.E., who served as the first Assistant Director of Public Utilities from 1977 to 1999, became the Acting Director in 2000.

By the end of fiscal year 2000, there were 78,400 water customers being served through 1247 miles of water piping and 75,100 sewer customers being served through 1235 miles of sewer piping.

Securing Our Drinking Water Supply

Mr. Arthur D. Petrini, P.E. was appointed Director in 2001 and continues to hold that position today. The current Assistant Director, Mr. William I. Mawyer, Jr., P.E., also joined the Department in 2001.



Under Mr. Petrini's direction, the county's first drinking water treatment plant and related pumping and piping facilities were completed and began operating in April 2004 for a cost of approximately \$185 million. The Water Treatment Plant opened with a treatment capacity of 55 million gallons per day. In 2005, the second expansion of the Water

Reclamation Facility from 45 to 75 million gallons per day in treatment capacity was completed for a cost of approximately \$80 million. In 2015, the first expansion of the Water Treatment Plant from 55 to 80 million gallons per day in treatment capacity was completed for a cost of approximately \$12 million.

In August 2010, years of negotiations were concluded when the Henrico Board of Supervisors authorized the design and construction of the Cobbs Creek Regional Water Supply Reservoir to be located in Cumberland County. This reservoir will secure the long range water supply needs of Henrico County and its regional partners, Powhatan and Cumberland Counties, until 2060 by providing a safe yield of 47 million gallons per day. Construction of the 1100 acre reservoir began in July 2015 with completion and filling of the reservoir anticipated in 2021 for an estimated cost of \$280 million.

The mission of the Department of Public Utilities continues to be to provide drinking water, sewer disposal, street lighting, refuse management and recycling services for the residents of Henrico County. The Department of Public Utilities consists of eight

divisions: Administration, Business, Design, Construction, Operations, Water Treatment, Water Reclamation and Solid Waste. With 375 employees, these divisions manage the drinking water treatment and distribution systems as well as the wastewater collection and treatment systems for 96,000 water and 93,000 sewer customer accounts. The Department also provides wholesale drinking water and wastewater services to Goochland and Hanover Counties through interlocal agreements. The Department manages 1600 miles of water piping, 1500 miles of sewer piping, 34 pumping stations, 13,000 fire hydrants and 38,000 valves with an annual Operating Budget of \$80 million. The Solid Waste Division serves 85,000 curbside recycling and 45,000 curbside refuse collection customers while also managing the Keep Henrico Beautiful Program.

Major Milestones:

1931 - 1933: The first Sanitary Districts were authorized in the Westhampton, Sandston and Highland Springs areas.

1943: The curbside refuse collection program began.

1953: Sanitary Landfill #1 opened on Nine Mile Road.

1956: The Department of Public Utilities was established by the Board of Supervisors.

1966: Sanitary Landfill #2 opened on Springfield Road.

1968: Sanitary Districts were combined to form unified water and sewer systems.

1978: Sanitary Landfill #3 opened on Charles City Road. Nine Mile Road Landfill closed.

1979 – 1989: The Henrico Wastewater Treatment Plant (30 million gallons per day capacity) and related facilities were constructed.

1980: The Keep Henrico Beautiful program was organized.

1987: Henrico's Comprehensive Plan recommended construction of a water treatment plant in Henrico to meet future drinking water needs.

1991: The curbside recycling program began, serving approximately 6000 homes.

1993 – 1997: Expansion of the Water Reclamation Facility from 30 to 45 million gallons per day capacity.

1994: County Manager Virgil R. Hazelett, P.E. negotiated an historic Water Agreement with the City of Richmond to convey 80 million gallons per day of Richmond's water rights in the James River to Henrico and to gain support for construction of a drinking water treatment plant in Henrico. The Water Agreement extends until July 1, 2040.

1999 – 2004: The Henrico Water Treatment Plant was constructed with a capacity of 55 million gallons per day.

1999 – 2005: Expansion of the Water Reclamation Facility from 45 to 75 million gallons per day capacity.

2008 – 2012: Replacement of all 90,000 water meters in the county. New meters were equipped with a radio transmitted Automated Meter Reading technology.

2010: The Board of Supervisors authorized design and construction of the Cobbs Creek Regional Water Supply Reservoir to be located in Cumberland County. Construction to be completed in 2021.

2011: Implementation of an Automated Voice Response system to enhance customer services with 24 hour per day phone access to account information.

2014: The Springfield Road Landfill stopped landfilling refuse and opened the County's first refuse Transfer Station.

2012 – 2015: Expansion of the Water Treatment Plant from 55 to 80 million gallons per day capacity.

2015: The Board of Supervisors awarded the first of two construction contracts for the Cobbs Creek Regional Water Supply Reservoir to be located in Cumberland County.

Awards

The Department of Public Utilities' efforts have not gone unrecognized. The list below outlines many of the Department's achievements recognized by various associations and organizations:

1997: Water Reclamation Facility received a Gold Permit Compliance Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

1998: Water Reclamation Facility received a Silver Permit Compliance Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

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2000: Water Reclamation Facility received a Gold Permit Compliance Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

2002: Public Utilities received first AAA bond rating from Fitch Rating Agency.

2005: Water Reclamation Facility received a Silver Permit Compliance Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

2006: Water Reclamation Facility received a Silver Permit Compliance Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

2006: Water Treatment Plant received Water Fluoridation Award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

2007: Water Reclamation Facility received a Gold Permit Compliance Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

2007: Water Treatment Plant received Excellence in Waterworks Operations Award from the Virginia Department of Health.

2007: Water Treatment Plant received Bronze Performance Award for Excellence in Media Filtration from the Virginia Department of Health.

2008: Water Treatment Plant received Silver Performance Award for Excellence in Media Filtration from the Virginia Department of Health.

2008: Water Treatment Plant received Water Fluoridation Award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

2008: Public Utilities received second AAA bond rating from Standard and Poor Rating Agency.

2009: Department of Public Utilities received National Environmental Achievement Award from the National Association of Clean Water Agencies recognizing efforts on the Virginia Biosolids Council.

2009: Water Treatment Plant received Water Fluoridation Award from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention.

2009: Water Treatment Plant received Silver Performance Award for Excellence in Media Filtration from the Virginia Department of Health.

2009: Water Treatment Plant Chief Operator Vincent Lofton received Operator of the Year Award from the American Water Works Association, Virginia Section.

2010: Water Treatment Plant received Bronze Performance Award for Excellence in Media Filtration from the Virginia Department of Health.

2011: Water Treatment Plant received Water Fluoridation Award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

2012: Water Treatment Plant received Water Fluoridation Award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

History of the Department of Public Utilities

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