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Village breaks ground on WWTP

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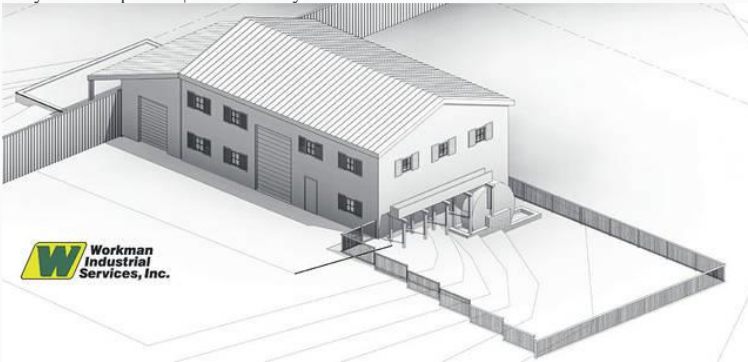
Galena officials expect new plant to open late fall

By Gary Budzak - gbudzak@aimmediamidwest.com



Galena Mayor Thomas Hopper takes a picture of his youngest son Zachary breaking ground on the village's new wastewater treatment plant.

Gary Budzak photos | The Sunbury News



The Village of Galena's new wastewater treatment plant will look like an old grist mill and provide effluent reuse for ball field irrigation. CTI Engineering, Mack Industries, Suez, and Workman Industrial are involved with the long-awaited project.

Courtesy image | Village of Galena

The growing Village of Galena broke ground Monday on a new wastewater treatment plant at 188 Harrison St.

"When I became Mayor in 2000, we were talking about this project," said Thomas Hopper at the ceremony, where his son, Zachary, dug up some dirt with a backhoe. "We need to do this expansion very badly. This gets the future of the village moving along."

The \$5.4 million project will use the latest in membrane technology to provide high quality effluent, yet look like something from the village's past.

“The village was founded in 1809 as a mill seat because there is a 9-foot elevation difference between Big Walnut and Little Walnut creeks,” Hopper said. “So, we are pretty excited that the plant will look like an old grist mill, and the effluent water will flow over a working water wheel. Rather than a big industrial-looking building next to Ruffner Park, we’ll have something really unique.”

Big Walnut Creek feeds into Hoover Reservoir, which is the City of Columbus’ drinking water supply.

“This plant is at the end of its useful life,” said Village Environmental Engineer Thomas Marshall, of the present Miller Water Reclamation Facility. “Mayor Hopper has worked hard to make this happen. A lot’s going to happen quickly.”

By using prefabricated tank walls, the plant is expected to be completed in late fall.

“With nearly 700 new homes already on the way, we had to increase our wastewater capacity. It’s not an exciting thing, but it’s a very necessary thing,” said Village Administrator Jeanna Burrell, who also leads the village’s sewer utility. “We are also planning for the future, so the 250,000 gallon-per-day plant will be built on a 500,000 gallon-per-day footprint. So, as more development occurs, we can just add equipment to increase capacity.”

The village had a population of 687 in the 2010 Census, but development is happening in Galena, just as it is throughout eastern Delaware County. Hopper said the Retreat at Dustin will have 120 homes, and another 142 homes are going in at Arrowhead Lake Estates (with water connection from Sunbury to Heathermere). On May 21, village council accepted the Estates at Blackhawk’s phase C infrastructure, and street crack sealing is about to begin.

“Sewer engineering work continues on the Miller Farm development,” states a recent village newsletter. In addition, Del-Co Water Company has replaced all the old cast iron pipe, and with a new transmission line from Sunbury down Old 3C Highway and Harrison Street, the entire village will see increased water pressure. “A new water tower on Vans Valley Road will be constructed when the Miller Farm development (on Sunbury Road) reaches build out,” the village said. The State Route 3/Walnut St./S. Galena Rd. lane improvement/traffic light project is also out for bid.

It’s a far cry from Galena’s past, which was dominated by the Galena Shale and Brick Factory on Holmes Street, from 1893-1983. Gene Fuller, who used to run the factory, said in a presentation this spring that Bedford shale and clay found nearby made for excellent brick and tile. At one time, the factory employed 150 people and was capable of making a million hand-molded bricks per week — cored, solid and colored. The company survived the Great Depression and a devastating fire in 1935, thrived during the war years, and weathered several rises and falls in the construction industry before the plant folded in 1983. The Hopper family then made bricks there from 1987-1995. The nearby Galena Brick Trail, part of the Ohio to Erie Trail network, follows a former rail bed used to transport the brick.

In other Galena news, Hopper awarded a Mayor's Proclamation to resident Roy Merchant, for coordinating the Memorial Day program for more than a decade. Local accounting firm Mattison, Yoder & Company, LLC also had an open house. Upcoming dates to mark in your calendar are the 4th of July Flea Market from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Miller Park; ninth annual Galena Summerfest 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Aug. 25 on the Village Square; and you can learn more about the village's history at the Galena Museum, open 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. the first and third Saturdays of the month at the Village Hall, 109 Harrison St.