

WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM ASSET MANAGEMENT – BRINGING RS&W INTO THE FUTURE

What Is Asset Management?

Asset management is a fundamental strategy that uses detailed information about the capital assets that make up a system to help minimize the total cost of owning and operating that system while still providing a high level of service.

Given the aging infrastructure that we are working with, the tightening of government regulations, and the difficulties involved with obtaining additional funding these days, it is vital that we improve our operational, environmental, and financial performance.

By coordinating data on the many components of our aging sewer and water systems, we will be in a much better position to determine how to approach future improvements and capital planning in order to continue to provide the best and most cost-effective service to our customers.

RS&W's New Asset Management System

RS&W has recently obtained and installed a computer-based asset management system which is helping provide us with the information we need to operate as efficiently as possible.

The software application brings together a wealth of information about a sewer and water system, and processes that data to provide maps, reports, and summaries in order to help effectively assess and manage the system.

In the past, old maps and paper records made it difficult and time consuming to maintain an up-to-date and accurate picture of the state of the sewer and water infrastructure.

Wayne County provided personnel, maps, and GPS (Global Positioning System) equipment that brought the locations of all of our sewer system manholes and pump stations into the computer, where they can be shown accurately on maps of The Hideout. The coordinates were also transferred to a handheld GPS unit to help locate the correct manholes when service is required.

RS&W personnel went out to each of the 29 pump stations and over 1,000 manholes in the system and performed an inspection which included high-quality digital pictures of each asset. Those pictures and inspection results were then brought into the computer.

Over the past few years, we have been using a robotic rover to inspect the sewer mains from the inside, and the video recorded during those inspections is also being incorporated into the asset management system. After repairs are made to the mains, new video is taken in order to make sure that the new pipes and connections look good and are free from leaks.

Once the inspection data is in the system, detailed information on individual assets is only a few mouse clicks away. Observations, comments, pictures, and video of any asset entered in the system can all be viewed easily.

Reports can be made that accurately summarize the status of the entire system or focus on individual sections. Those reports will then be used to prioritize future work to best serve our customers.

Also, maps can now be quickly printed in-house to assist RS&W personnel and contractors who are performing work on the system, and those maps will be based on the most current information available.

Moving ahead, we will next be adding the valves, hydrants, and pipes of the water system to our database so we have information on all of our water as well as sewer assets ready at hand.

Better Information, Better Decisions, Better Service

The main focus of our new asset management system is to help move away from a “fix when broken” approach and towards a strategy of proactively planned maintenance. As the system ages, having a coordinated strategy for improvement and repair becomes more and more necessary.

Using the data obtained through a very detailed investigation of our aging systems, improved asset management will help all of our community by guiding the decisions that will provide better water and wastewater service in a cost-conscious manner.

If anyone would like more information regarding these projects, please do not hesitate to contact our offices to learn more.