



DWSD ORGANIZATION OPTIMIZATION PROJECT UPDATE

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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The goal is to provide effective communication by DWSD employees to the organization about the Optimization Project. To achieve that goal, selected DWSD employees from job design teams participate in this newsletter. The Communications Team consists of the following employees:

Cheryl Porter
Project Manager

Brenda Jamison-King
Field Services Team

Ivala Marie Allen
Finance/Administration
Team

Gregory Smith
IT/Support Team

Valerion Farr II
Water Team

Sanjay Patel
Wastewater Team

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Editor-Writer



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Pilot Kicks Off in East Yard

The East Yard workforce received a hands-on introduction to Organization Optimization on Monday, Sept. 9. Volunteers from various locations, along with the current staff, began to assess how to possibly improve their service to customers and upgrade their own work procedures. Observation and evaluation by the EMA facilitators will assist team members with the upcoming evolution of Asset Maintenance.

Initial activities saw similar changes made at West Yard Pilot: the immediate implementation of two-man crews for the repair of boxes and service leaks, and the cross-training of team members for mini-excavator operation. Morning meetings that include the entire staff are at 7:30 a.m.; work assignments are distributed and the previous day's activities are reported. Comments from team members are also welcomed at that time. It is early yet; the status quo is still

being analyzed to see what can be improved and what methods are already working. It was found that the return of a Yard Dispatcher position was needed to help curtail work order repetition, manage utility staking, and assist crews by radio or phone.

The potential Field Service Technician duties will be incorporated among existing titles to expand and modify employee duties. Some employees are looking forward to positive changes and the opportunity for new challenges. The team now has a chance to improve how DWSD delivers maintenance services to the customers.

By Brenda Jamison-King
Optimization Project Communications
Team Member



Pilot launches at Springwells

- How do you get on a Pilot Team?

The Pilot Team will consist of staff volunteers who are selected.

To continue the move towards positive change within DWSD, the Springwells Water Treatment Plant implemented a pilot program on August 26. A total of 34 employees make up the Springwells Pilot Team.

Progress

Meetings are held each morning at 7:15 a.m. to identify needs, improve workflows and efficiencies. Water technicians coming off midnight shifts (11:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m.), maintenance techs, chemists, an engineer, and plant manager attend the meetings. The meetings have been credited with improving communication between the team and management.

Due to the many manual processes at Springwells, it has been brought to the Steering Team's attention that there is a need to increase the staff.

Training

Cross training has been implemented at Springwells. According to Keiyonna Jackson, "cross training is meant to relieve maintenance personnel of most PMs (preventive maintenance work orders) that water technicians can do. Cross training will free up maintenance technicians to do CMs (corrective maintenance work orders)." Pilot team shift assignments have been made with intent to pair complementary skilled workers. Knowledgeable water technicians are assisting new water techs to acquire process familiarity, and a maintenance technician was assigned to the afternoon shift (3:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.) to do PMs and train water techs.

Needed changes and issues

A training issue has risen with the electrical and instrumentation control technician (EICT) position involving qualification for certain functions. In the past, there were both electricians and instrumentation technicians, which are now EICTs.

There are some technology requirements needed to help improve key performance indicators:

- Modify the Data Control System/Programmable Logic Control systems so high lift pumping and filtering can be monitored from both the High Lift pump station and the Laboratory.
- Update the OPT 10 software so that the required monthly operational report (MOR) for the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is automatically generated.
- Rehabilitate plant-wide chemical tank level monitoring, for reliable measurement and alarm.
- Install alarm systems to alert staff to issues at remote locations.
- Add operational enhancements for chemical feed systems.
- Enable computer access (for productivity and efficiency):
 - To create and close work orders
 - To access Workbrain
 - To look up parts

Initially, some Springwells team members were reluctant to train pilot team members out of their classification due to fears that they might lose their jobs. Team members want more clarification on the new job descriptions and information on when will the new titles be implemented. Overall, most team members are on board with Organization Optimization and are comfortable with the continuous changes and progress.

By Ivala Marie Allen
*Optimization Project Communications
Team Member*



Are you ready for change?

In the past year, DWSD has gone from a large number of employees to a smaller number through attrition, i.e., layoffs, dismissals, retirements, and resignations.



Employees are being bombarded with unfamiliar words and terms like “To Be,” “As Is,” “current state,” “future state,” “transition state,” “perfect storm,” “pilot,” “stakeholders,” “outsourcing,” and “continuous improvement.” We are trying to wrap our heads around these new catch phrases, and their meanings.

Transparency?

Transparency is supposed to be a clear view of “everything” – but if you don’t know what you are looking at, then there is no clarity or understanding of what you see. Here is an example: An experienced engineer is explaining in detail a wall-size electrical diagram, but without an understanding of the symbols and terms, the details are lost to the average person. Many DWSD employees are only seeing and understanding part of the picture; their own perception of what the picture is.

Uncertainty

There is an uneasy atmosphere of uncertainty that is choking the remaining members of the DWSD community. We

often look to our supervisors and managers for direction and perhaps some insight, but they too seem confused, frustrated and unsure about our future here at DWSD. When it comes to Organization Optimization, look for the coffee hours sponsored by the Steering Team. Look to them for answers to your questions and to clarify uncertainties that you may have.

Accomplishments, despite problems

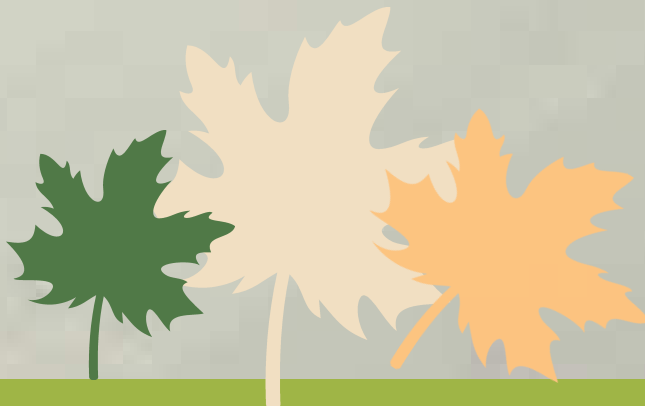
Sure, we have shortcomings, poor equipment, and communication issues; but in all the years of working for DWSD, we, the employees, have contributed to all minor and major accomplishments of the Water and Sewerage Department. The simple truth is: “yes,” work will continue to be here. “Yes,” there will be jobs and advancements... but they will come with challenges and responsibilities. It will be up to employees to challenge themselves, to be more than statistics.

Decide if you want in, and if so, wake yourself up and dust yourself off, and gather your self-esteem. It’s a new day, with different rules. We can always blame someone for something, but that does not excuse us from making ourselves better. We are all in this struggle together to win. We all want a better future!

*By Gregory Smith
Optimization Project Communications
Team Member*

-- What impact did last year's assesment process have on services?

As with all assessments, the goal is to improve services and reduce costs. In our case, the assessment and Organization Optimation will help maintain current rates or reduce rate increases, and reduce or eliminate our Federal permit violations. The assesment will also help DWSD operate more effectively and efficiently.



**Interview with
Brenda
Jamison-King**
*Optimization
Project
Communications
Team Member*



Why did you volunteer, and what did you see as a benefit in being involved with the Optimization Project?

I wanted to understand the project first hand, and to take part in positive change.

What are your expectations of this project as it moves through the piloting phase of the project?

I had no expectations, didn't know what to expect, but I want to receive change with an open mind.

What impact do you think this project will have on the department?

It could be positive, but only if employees embrace the changes established within the project so that DWSD can continue to deliver quality service in the future.

Do you think DWSD staff is receptive to the project?

There are still employees that don't trust what is happening or don't believe that these new changes will be for the betterment of the department. They also don't believe that our opinions will be taken into consideration when it comes to change. So there is some employee resistance.

**Interview with
Valerion Farr II**
*Optimization
Project
Communications
Team Member*



Why did you volunteer, and what did you see as a benefit in being involved with the Optimization Project?

I volunteered for the opportunity to take part in change, and be a voice for those employees that are diligent and respect the business of delivering quality service to our customers.

What are your expectations of this project as it moves through the piloting phase of the project?

I expect this phase of the project to be a learning process. I suspect that certain proposed changes may have to be re-engineered to fit our way of doing business as a water and wastewater utility.

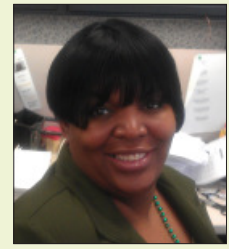
What impact do you think this project will have on the department?

The goal is for this project to have a positive impact, but it will depend on communication, implementation, and the ability to adapt to change by administration and the workforce to ensure quality service.

Do you think DWSD staff is receptive to the project?

Although there are some that are receptive and optimistic, there are also many that still reject change for many reasons, with both valid and invalid points of view.

**Interview
with Ivala
Marie Allen**
*Optimization
Project
Communications
Team Member*



Why did you volunteer, and what did you see as a benefit in being involved with the Optimization Project?

I wanted to take part in positive change, and have a personal understanding of the changes instead of them being interpreted to me incorrectly later. I also felt that, with my experience, I could be a voice of reason regarding the restructuring of job classifications and staff reduction.

What are your expectations of this project as it moves through the piloting phase of the project?

Understanding that this project is about change, I would expect that the proposed changes (restructuring) resulting from the team efforts of DWSD staff will be implemented.

Why do you think it was necessary to have a newsletter published, talking about the Phase II job designs, piloting process, and implementation?

The newsletter is a way to resolve rumors and miscommunication, and it gives a more clear understanding that DWSD employees are the driving force behind this project.

Do you think DWSD staff is receptive to the project?

There are employees who feel that this project will have a negative impact on their future employment with DWSD; that there is a hidden agenda. Therefore, some employees still carry a lot of resistance toward the Optimization process.

