

PUTNAM COMMUNITY WATER CORPORATION

402 Bohl Drive

Marietta, Ohio 45750

To all members,

This revised short history of the Putnam Community Water Corporation is being reissued as information to new members and as general information to all water users.

Soon after World War II, Devola became a desirable area for home building, one of the main attractions being the access to central water supplies. Between 1945 and 1950, several homes were built on the Harry Devol and Guthrie Chamberlain farms. Water was supplied to homes in the Devol area by a small system installed by Mr. Devol. Homes on the Chamberlain farm were supplied mainly through existing irrigation lines from two wells on the Chamberlain farm. During this period, developers were connecting to the Chamberlain system and extending water lines to outside areas.

The area from Woodrow Street to Devol's Dam Road and from Ward Street to Archer Avenue (Chamberlain Drive) was served by the Harry Devol system, later incorporated and known as the Devola Water Association. The Chamberlain farm supplied water to the area from Riverview to Maple Shade Drive and from Lawton Road north through the Chevy Chase development.

As interest in the Devola area increased for home building, developers, homeowners, and water suppliers realized that the unregulated growth of the systems would eventually become a problem and would stop the growth of the area.

Under the guidance of Guthrie Chamberlain, developers, homeowners, and water suppliers on January 5, 1950, finalized papers with the state to form and incorporate the Putnam Community Water Association. A series of meetings were then held, and the problem of water for Devola was partially solved by the formation of a water board on January 24, 1951. All water users became members of the association.

A seven-member board was elected and given the responsibility of developing and operating a water system for the community. The members were elected with staggered lengths of service so that each year new members could be elected, but some experienced members would always remain. Within certain guidelines, the board was empowered to make all decisions necessary for the development and operation of a water system for the Devola area.

The members of the first board were Gilbert Cullen, James Bergen, Don Burkey, Walter Grasley, H.B. Vanderpool, Max Partlow, and Seldon Weihl. Gilbert Cullen was chosen as chairman by the board members.

This board and subsequent boards made a series of moves to put the water association on a business basis. Meters were purchased and installed in each home after arrangements were made to purchase water from the Chamberlain farm. Before meters were used, each member paid \$2.00 per month for unlimited usage. With the installation of meters, water was purchased and sold by cubic foot readings taken from the meters.

Meetings were held with the representatives of the Devola Water Association (Harry Devol system), and on May 13, 1951, that association voted to join the Putnam Community Water Association. The Devol pumping equipment was to be used as standby for emergencies.

Having the immediate problems under control, the board then turned its attention to the future. Regulations for developers and members were drawn up so that line placement and line sizes would meet with fire requirements. Water rates were set using the Marietta schedule for cubic foot quantities in 1951. The agreement for water with the Chamberlains gave the association the privilege of canceling the water purchase agreement at any time, but Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain obligated themselves for thirty years to the association. Because of state and government regulations and the necessity of upgrading their pumping and storage equipment, Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain encouraged the association to develop their own water system.

Before the decision was made to have an association-owned water system, the board investigated other possibilities. The city of Marietta was asked if there was a possibility of extending their lines to Devola. After serious consideration, the city decided that this would not be in their best interests. Talks were held with the county commissioners who are empowered to develop water districts, and with some government agencies. Neither the county nor the government expressed interest in the project. At this point, the board concluded that the future of the area would lie with an association-owned and operated water system.

Early in 1958, the developers of the Neubeck farm (Shawnee area) made a proposal that expedited the start of the water system. An agreement was worked out so that the association acquired land for a well field, a storage tank, and rights-of-way for water lines.

Three local banks agreed to loan the association the estimated amount of money needed to start the project. At this time, the association had no assets except for water lines buried in the ground. The confidence in the Devola area shown by the banks was greatly appreciated.

Two test wells were drilled in the Shawnee area. The well drilled on Seneca Drive tested at 238 gallons per minute with an acceptable drawdown. This was good enough to proceed with the water system planning. The engineering firm of Burgess and Niple of Columbus was retained to plan for the water system improvements.

By August 1961, plans and estimates were complete, and contracts were let to lay 5600 feet of 8" line, 1000 feet of 6" line, and 1400 feet of 10" line under one contract. A second contract was let to build a 200,000-gallon storage tank on the hill behind Shawnee Village. The elevation of this tank would assure most of Devola a water pressure of 90 psi and would assure adequate pressure to most of the higher elevations. To finance these contracts and related work (wells, pumps, pump house, piping, and electrical house), \$80,000.00 was borrowed in October 1961 from three local banks each having one-third of the loan.

Work was started on all contracts, and a second well was drilled at the Seneca site. The wells were equipped with 15 HP turbine pumps. On completion of the pump house and the reservoir, a signal control system utilizing the telephone lines was installed to control the pumps.

All contracts were completed, and the new system was put into service on June 1, 1962. The total cost of the first phase of the association water system was \$93,765.00.

With the start of the system, insurance rates were lowered in the Devola area.

By 1964, the wells were dropping off in capacity due to incrustation. Both wells were treated with acid to increase the flow of water through the screens. One well recovered to the original flow, but the second well remained marginal. Before the problem became critical, it was decided that another and better well field must be found.

Having knowledge of the Chamberlain wells and assuming that they were in a strong aquifer, the board decided to search for a well field in that area.

In April 1966, negotiations were started with Mrs. Chamberlain Ness to purchase five acres of ground necessary for a well site. After checking available locations, five acres were optioned between Lawton Road and the river. An agreement was made in December 1966 that the association would drill a test well and exercise the option if the well was adequate.

In April 1967, a well was drilled on the optioned land. The well was drilled to a depth of 70 feet and had 39 feet of water standing. The well was tested at 500 gallons per minute with a drawdown of 5 feet indicating a strong aquifer. The purchase of the five acres was finalized.

The association became debt-free in January 1967 making all revenues available for more improvements.

A well house was built with the operating floor above the highest known flood level and a 40 HP turbine pump with a 400-gallon-per-minute capacity installed. A line was laid to the main on Lawton Road and a connection made to the system at this point. The new well was put into operation on November 19, 1967.

The EMCA was given permission by the association to use all ground not needed for the water system. Facilities for baseball, football, tennis, and basketball were installed, and adjoining acreage was purchased by the EMCA for the swimming pool and park.

In August 1970, a second well was drilled, an addition to the existing pump house was built, and a 60 HP pump was installed having a pumping capacity of 600 gallons per minute. In 1966, ground was purchased at the top of Sylvan Way for a storage tank. A steel, above-ground tank was erected and on June 5, 1970, was filled to its capacity of 230,000 gallons of water.

In 1976, two additional wells were drilled and a combination pump house, office, and storage building erected. The wells were equipped with 600 gallons per minute turbine pumps. A second supply line was laid to Lawton Road. The cost of this project was \$95,000.00.

The amount of water used in Devola requires the use of one pump at the river well field; all other pumps are held in reserve. The use of these reserve pumps is alternated to assure equal wear.

The existing distribution system is being continuously upgraded to eliminate inadequate supply and to form a loop system so that in case of breaks only small portions of the system would be out of service for repairs.

For protection against contamination, each well is equipped with a chlorine feeder to inject chlorine when the well is in operation, water is tested on schedule by the Marietta laboratory, a

periodic full analysis of the water is made for harmful chemicals, and the system and water are regularly checked by the Ohio EPA.

In thirty-four years of operation, there have been two water rate changes: in 1958 the minimum was raised from \$6.00 to \$10.00, and, in 1979, it was raised to a \$12.00 minimum.

Where possible, all inside meters have been changed to outside remote reading.

It is the conclusion of the board that for many reasons the operation of the water system will, in the near future, have to be operated by a full-time manager. This eventuality has been discussed at the last several annual meetings and, as an outcome, the board has been empowered to proceed in the hiring of a manager to operate the system on a permanent basis.

On February 27, 1985, a part-time manager was appointed to operate the system and to train a full-time manager.

Members of the board are:

James Bergen - Chairman - Operator's license

Joe Helm - Vice Chairman - Operator's license

Harry Freeman

Don Burkey

Randall Metcalf

Dayton Goddard

Kim Hodge

Others:

Jack Rose - Secretary

Alvin Ford - Maintenance

Frank Leonhart - Meters

James Bergen - Part-time Manager

*James W. Bergen, Chairman*

To all members of the Putnam Community Water Association

#### A REMINDER

The Putnam Community Water Association was formed twenty-six years ago as a non-profit community effort to be operated by its members through an elected seven-man board. It was recognized that each member would have to assume a degree of responsibility to make the system work properly as the individual board members would only have so much time to devote to developing and running the system.

The Board must necessarily use its limited time for operation of the parts of the system that affect all water users. The wells, pumping equipment, water treatment, reservoirs, and mains are the vital components of the system, and every effort is made to keep these parts of the system in operation at all times. Beyond that, the board also plans and contracts for buildings, pumps, wells, mains, reservoirs, etc.

The past severe winter has caused some of the association members inconvenience due to frozen service lines. The responsibility for thawing these lines was discussed at the February meeting. It was pointed out by the board that no responsibility has been assumed for frozen water services by the association. It would be physically impossible for the board members to devote enough time for supervision for this type of problem.

In all cases, as much information as was available was given to the people with problems.

Because of the growth of the system and its complexity, less time is available for individual problems; therefore, self-help becomes more and more important.

The board must urge each water user to check his own situation to see if the curb valve can be located and if valves will shut off inside the house.

A short history of the association has been issued twice to all members, and each new member is given a copy. As pointed out in this history, there is no repair crew connected with the system. In case of emergencies, outside help must be assembled and supervised by a board member. This is the reason for a request for patience until repairs can be made. Everything possible is being done to upgrade the old parts of the system. New mains have been laid and are in place for hook-in where old lines may go bad, but it is the responsibility of the water user to check his own situation and make plans for his own water service. Members with questionable services should act before an emergency arises.

As a matter of record, the Putnam water system had no cold-related breaks in mains as did many cities.

*James W. Bergen, Chairman*