

# NEWS

WATER DEPARTMENT  
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA



SEPTEMBER

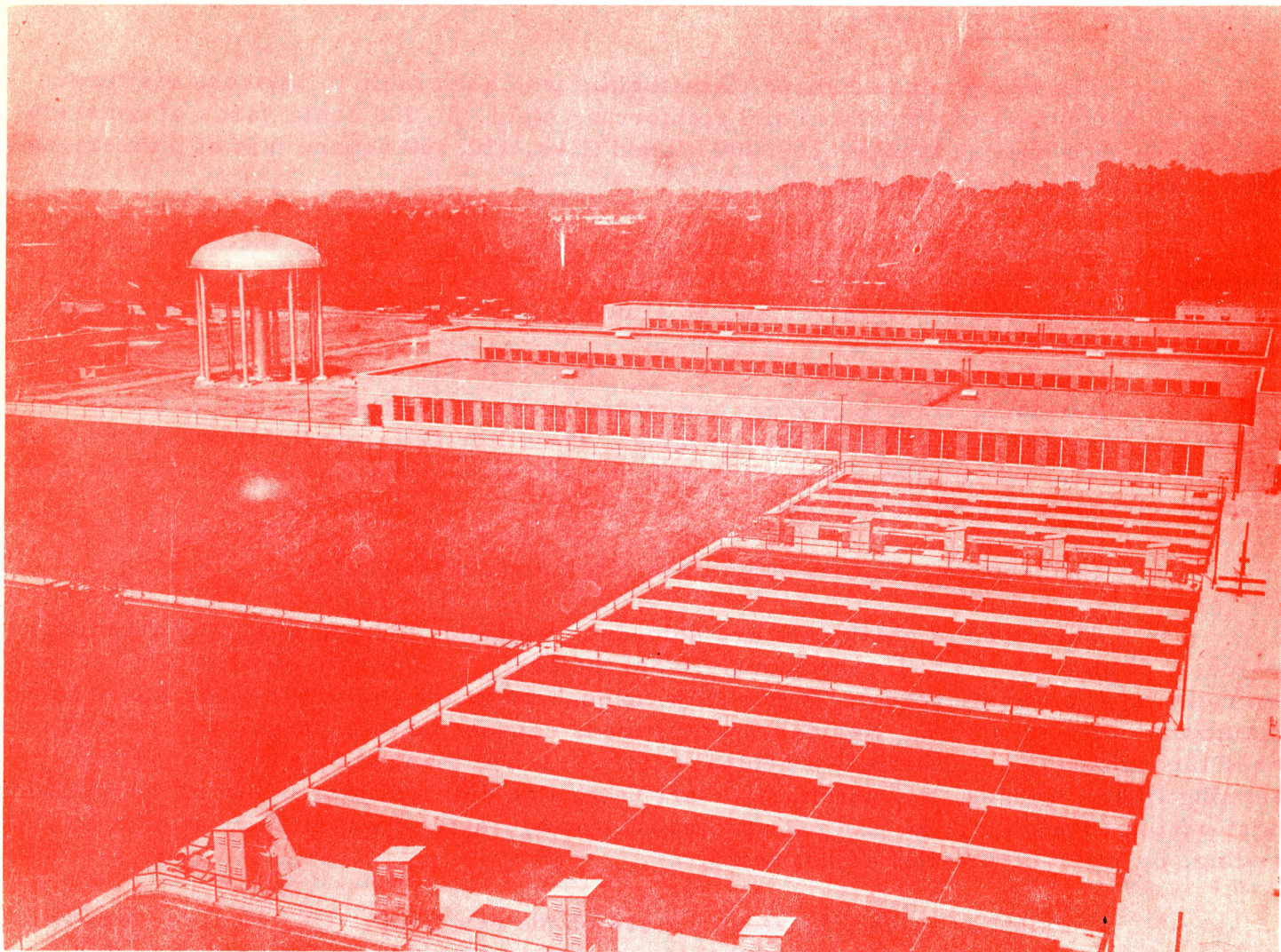
1959

WATER DEPARTMENT  
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

NEWS

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INTRICATE TORRESDALE PLANT  
TO BE OPENED BY MAYOR SEPT. 29

Several hundred distinguished visitors will see an amazingly complex creation when the new \$25 million Torresdale water treatment plant opens September 29.

The dedicatory ceremony, which will be held at 11:00 a. m., will be attended by Mayor Richardson Dilworth and several hundred Philadelphia officials, professional men and community leaders. Present too will be numerous prominent water works and engineering figures from outside the city.

Final preparations for the ceremony and the week long open house period (which will follow) are being made.

(continued on next page)



## TORRESDALE PLANT (Cont'd)

The new plant is a maze of materials which promise to impress visitors. It contains 9,000 tons of structural and reinforcing steel, 81,000 cubic yards of concrete, one and one-half million bricks, 268,000 glazed tiles, 130,000 square feet of plaster, and 8,000 cubic yards of drainage stone.

The intricate water flow through the plant is indicated by the 13 1/4 miles of piping, ranging from a few inches to 10 feet in diameter. Copper tubing adds another four miles. There are 1,200 valves and 48 sluice gates, while air tubing alone amounts to nearly two miles.

A tribute to the elaborate automatic controls are the 57 miles of electrical conduits and the 284 miles of electrical wiring. The filter beds use 11,510 cubic yards of sand and gravel. Serving the plant are 4,500 feet of railroad track. Mechanical equipment is worth several millions of dollars.

Push-button controls streamline the plant's operations.

Thus tons of chemicals are unloaded, weighed, fed and mixed by automatic devices. Sludge is removed continuously from the basins. The rate of filtration can be set centrally or at separate points. Water flow through the plant and to the clear water basin is automatically regulated. Besides the numerous console tables, gauges and switches scattered through the plant, there is a central control station manned by a chief operator. Warning lights, gauges, and automatic chart recording devices inform him of the situation in most parts of the plant. He can take prompt action to improve water flow, alter post chemical feeding, or make other vital adjustments.

Flexibility is an important feature of the new plant. Chemical feeders in the pre-treatment building are so arranged that, in case of trouble, one-half of the mixing and sedimentation basins could be cut off from water flow while the other half continues to operate.

Chemicals can be applied at various points in the plant.

A special advantage is continuity of production. Individual filter beds can be kept working with little interruption. Cleaning of individual filters is performed in a half-hour by a single operator at a console table.

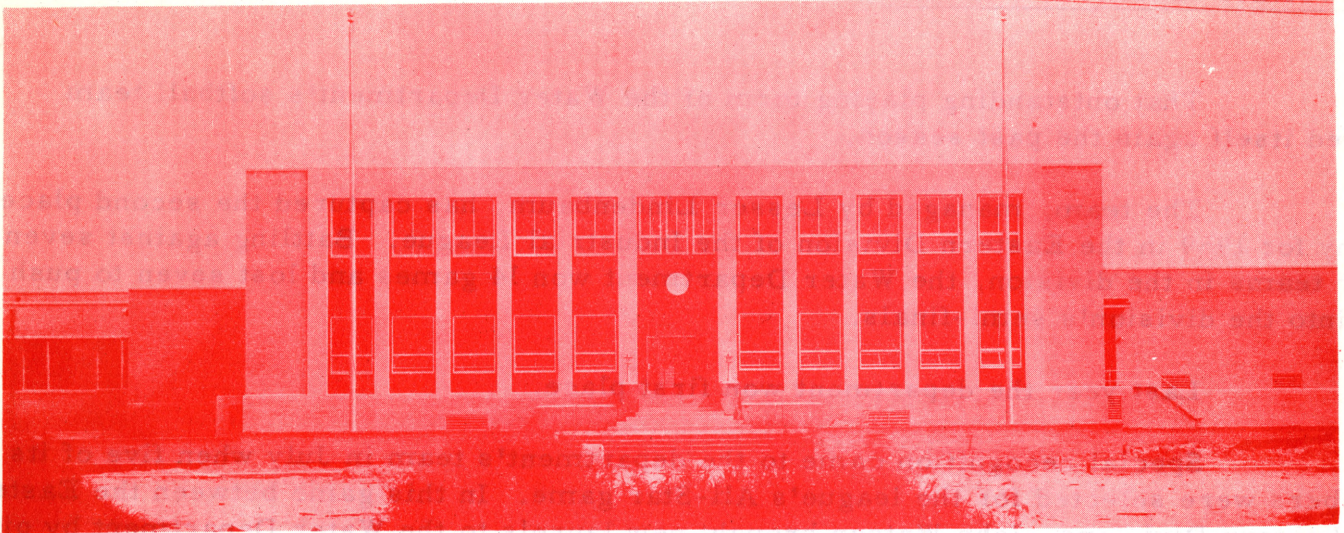
Bulk delivery of chemicals by rail car or truck under the pre-treatment building is another advantage. Purchase of chemicals in bulk, plus unloading with special equipment, increases efficiency and reduces cost.

## FAMILY DAY AT TORRESDALE

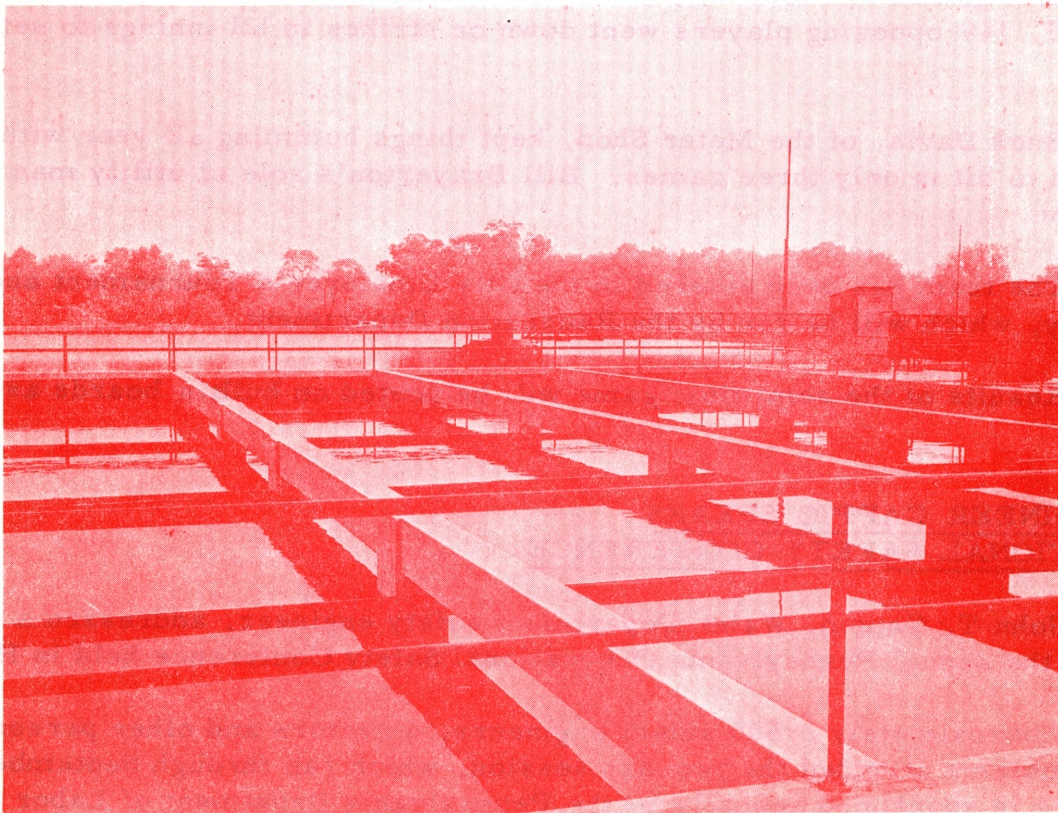
Water Department Employees: You are invited to bring your families to Torresdale during the Open House period, September 29 - October 4. A special Water Department "Family Day" will be set aside, with a special program. Date to be announced later.



## TORRESDALE WATER TREATMENT PLANT



The filter building of the new plant has 94 rapid sand filter beds. Each will handle normally three million gallons of water daily. The filters are operated by semi-automatic controls.



The slow mixing basins (foreground) mix chemicals and water for 45 minutes, forming snowflake like "floc" to which heavy particles adhere. Particles sink in sedimentation basin (background).



## SOFTBALL TEAM CAPTURES INDUSTRIAL LEAGUE TROPHY

That outstanding playing form of the Water Department's softball team showed itself again the past season.

The team, managed by Lesser Lindenbaum, has captured the second place trophy for 1959 in the Eastern Division of the Industrial League. Battling against seven other teams in the division, the Water Department won 14 games and lost seven to push its way into the division's semi-finals.

Last year the department won first place.

Special recognition came to the department's team in July when five of its members were selected for the league's All-Star game. In this game between the Eastern and Western Divisions, John Watson brought new laurels to the Water Department by pitching three perfect innings and hitting the only home run of the game. Other participants were John Craney, outfield; Leon Williams, catcher; Mario Evangelist, 3rd base; and Lesser Lindenbaum, manager for the occasion.

During the regular season, John Watson lived up to the record of the All-Star game. He won 14 games and lost three, while breaking his strike-out record of 1958 by 28 men. In all, 149 opposing players went down on strikes in 121 innings to set a new league record.

Buck Davis, of the Meter Shop, kept things humming all year with his sweeping bat. He failed to hit in only three games. Bill Brayerton's role of utility man saved the day on one occasion.

The team has been entered in the City Employee's Tournament and the Gold Medal Tourney, which will be run by the Recreation Department.

Results of the semi-final game will be posted on bulletin boards as soon as available.

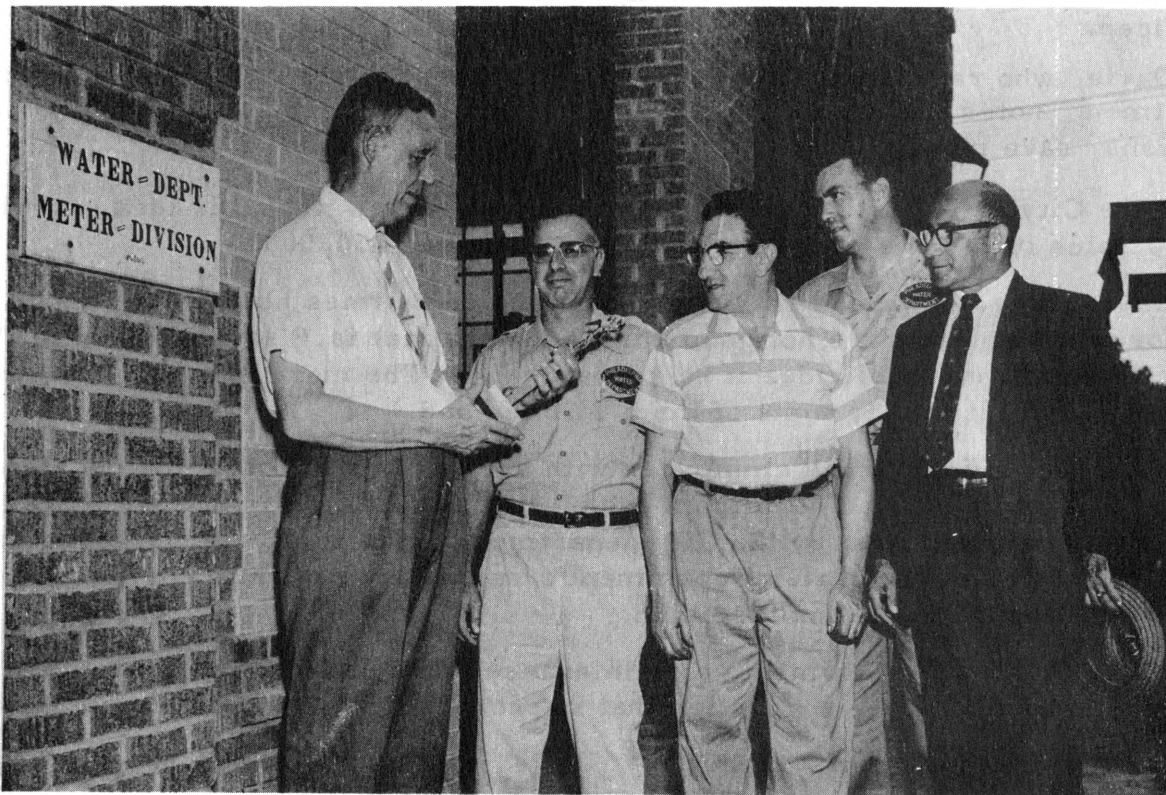
## SAFETY ENGINEER CAPPIO SPEAKS TO OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY CONFERENCE

John T. Cappio, Water Department safety engineer, addressed a seminar Wednesday at the annual Pennsylvania Occupational Safety Conference held in Harrisburg.

Approximately 2,500 safety engineers, directors and other persons concerned with safety problems attended the two-day session, which ran through September 9 and 10. The conference is sponsored annually by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

Mr. Cappio talked about the problems of safety "Prevention and Production" in relation to the operations of public utilities. An employee of the Water Department for two and one-half years, Mr. Cappio was safety engineer at the Baldwin-Lima-Hamilton Corporation for two years.





**METER SHOP CHAMPIONS**  
**RECEIVE TROPHY FROM ARNOLD**

Deputy Commissioner Gerald E. Arnold presented a well deserved trophy to the Meter Shop's champion bowlers Wednesday, September 2.

The team had captured the intra-departmental championship for the preceding season.

On the team were Alfred Gionta, Russell Thomas, Louis Farabelli, Milton Schultz, and Winston Williams.

**BOWLING LEAGUE STARTS**  
**NEW SEASON THIS EVENING**

The Water Department Bowling League will begin its 1959-60 season this evening at the Bowlerdrome, 30th Street and Allegheny Avenue.

It is expected that there will be eight teams, with four players each, to compete for the department championship.

## PERSONNEL OFFICER DESCRIBES HOW TO TURN AN IDEA INTO GOLD

Your ideas may be worth money to you, according to Ervin Davis, Water Department personnel officer.

Mr. Davis, who recently took over administration of the cash awards suggestion system for the department, notes that all City agencies are looking constantly for fresh ideas to improve operations, save money, or better services.

Under the City's suggestion system, an employee with a workable idea can win from \$25 to \$500, plus 1% of all savings to the City that exceed \$50,000.

Mr. Davis notes, however, that employees are sometimes hesitant to submit their suggestions for fear the ideas are not good enough. "The fact is," said Mr. Davis, "that anyone can think of a really valuable idea if he keeps trying. The more new ideas an employee offers, the more likely it is that some of them will be good."

The personnel officer urges employees with suggestions to obtain the necessary forms from his office, fill them out and send them back. "We'll take it from there," he added. The suggestion will be evaluated first by the City department which it affects. If it meets the test of practicability and value, the Water Department's suggestion committee will forward it to a central City awards board for a final decision.

Last July, Stanley W. Cywinski, a maintenance superintendent at the Northeast sewage treatment works, won \$100 for a suggestion that improved Water Department operations.

What kind of ideas are acceptable?  
Ideas that -

- (1) make an operation easier, faster, safer, more efficient
- (2) do away with unnecessary paper work or avoid delays
- (3) eliminate duplication of work
- (4) save time, money or material
- (5) improve service to the public
- (6) increase the City's revenues
- (7) improve the health, morale or welfare of other employees.

Why not telephone or call at the Personnel Office for a suggestion blank today? Room 1225, City Hall Annex. Tel.: Automatic 2706; Bell ext. 228.

## THREE EMPLOYEES RETIRE AFTER LONG CITY SERVICE

The end of long public service is in sight for three employees who will retire this month.

John Cox, 66, of 1543 Church Street, will complete 29 years of service with the Water Department. He is a labor foreman at the Torresdale water treatment plant.

Frank Roggero, 65, has been with the department for 12 years. A water distribution repairman in the distribution section, he lives at 9950 Ferndale Street.

Hiram Shera, 84, joined the City service in 1941. He has been working as a carpenter in the building maintenance section. He lives at 2522 S. Dewey Street.

The department extends its best wishes to these faithful employees.



## AVOID THAT RUSH - REGISTER NOW

The deadline to register for the General Election is Monday, September 14. If you haven't registered yet, now is the time to do it. Those registration lines will really be long on Monday.

If you are in center city, you can register at the Registration Commission headquarters, ground floor, Commercial Trust Bldg., 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday; 9 a.m. to noon Saturday. Also in Room 170, City Hall, until 4 p.m., or during business hours at Lit's, Gimbel's, Wanamaker's, Snellenburgs, Strawbridge & Clothier.

## WALTER RINGER WINS AWARD FROM WATER WORKS OPERATORS

An outstanding honor in the water works field was won by Walter C. Ringer, the department's superintendent of water quality control, on August 10.

Mr. Ringer received the Ivan M. Glace Award from the Pennsylvania Water Works Operators' Association during the group's annual convention at State College, Pa. The association cited him for "distinctive achievements and contributions to the water works profession."

Mr. Ringer, who has been with the Water Department (and its predecessor the Water Bureau) for 29 years, conducted the City's early efforts to improve the quality of its water. He was instrumental in placing water quality research work on a professional basis in the period 1942-46. Associated ever since with laboratory studies of local river water, Mr. Ringer was placed in charge of a new division about a year ago. The division sets standards and procedures for the Water Department's various testing Laboratories. It also watches over supplies from up river sources.

A professional engineer, Mr. Ringer studied at the University of Pennsylvania. He took a "temporary" job with the City in 1930, and remained. Married, he has three children. He lives at 3221 West Queen Lane.

## LAST MINUTE REMINDER: THRILL SHOW TONIGHT

Is tonight going to be a dull evening: Don't let it . . . . . There's the fifth annual Hero Scholarship Thrill Show at the Philadelphia Stadium to banish all those office cares.

Celebrities . . . . . acts of daring . . . . . band music . . . . . a fireworks display. It's a three-hour program, starting at 7:30 p.m. General admission, \$1.00; reserved seats, \$2.00; patron box seats, \$5.00. There is plenty of room.

Tonight - September 11



AN ACCOUNT OF FAIRMOUNT PUBLISHED IN LONDON, - 1840

By N.P. Willis, Esq.

" The Water-works of Philadelphia rank among the most noble public undertakings of the world. The paucity of water in the city first set to work the sagacious mind of Dr. Franklin, who, by will, bequeathed a portion of a long accumulated legacy to bring a greater supply of this necessary element from Wissahiccon Creek. This was found, after a while to be insufficient; and a plan was proposed, and carried into operation, to form a reservoir on the east bank of the Schuylkill, from which water was to be thrown by a steam-engine into a tunnel, conveyed to a central position, and raised by a second engine to a higher reservoir, which supplied all the pipes in the city.

" An experience of ten years satisfied the corporation that a sufficient supply could not be obtained by this method. The steam-engines were liable to frequent accidents, and the derangement of one stopped the supply of the whole city. After several other futile experiments, the present extensive yet simple water-works were proposed, and three hundred and fifty thousand dollars voted at once by the city corporation for the commencement of the undertaking.

" The Schuylkill opposite Philadelphia is about nine hundred feet in breadth. It is subject to sudden freshets (an American word, unknown in this use in England, and meaning an overflow of a river current), but its average depth is thirty feet at high water. It was necessary to back the river up about six miles; and a dam was then created by cribs and masonry, running diagonally across, with several ingenious contrivances to prevent damage by ice and spring freshets. A overfall of one thousand two hundred and four feet, forming a beautiful feature of the scenery, is thus created, and a water-power upon the wheels sufficient to raise eleven millions of gallons in twenty-four hours.



" The reservoirs, elevated above the top of the highest house in the city, crown the ornamental hill which overhangs the river at this place; and water can thus be conveyed to every quarter of Philadelphia, and made to spring, as if by a magic touch, in the highest chamber of the inhabitant. It is of a deliciously soft and pleasant quality; and those who are habituated to wash in the "city of brotherly love", are spoiled for the less agreeable lavations afforded by other towns in America.

" Fair Mount is a beautiful spot; and standing, as it does, just on the skirt of the town, it serves the additional use of a place of pleasant and healthful public resort. The buildings containing the pumphooms have considerable pretensions to architecture; and the facades and galleries extend along the river, forming a showy object from every point of view, but from the absence of any grande design in the whole, failing of a general fine effect, and presenting what a Londoner would call rather a teagardenish appearance.

" Steppes and terraces conduct to the reservoirs, and thence the view over the ornamented grounds of the country seats opposite, and of a very picturesque and uneven country beyond, is exceedingly attractive. Below, the court of the principal building is laid out with gravel walks, and ornamented with fountains and flowering trees; and within the edifice there is a public drawing-room, of neat design and furniture; while in another wing are elegant refreshment-rooms - and, in short, all the appliances and means of a place of public amusement.

" It may as well be remarked here, that this last advantage is less improved in America than it would be in any other country. The Water-works of Fair Mount, though within fifteen minutes' walk of every citizen's dwelling in Philadelphia are (comparatively to its capacities) unfrequented. In several visits made to them in fine weather, we scarce saw more than three or four persons in the grounds; and those seemed looking for other company, more than enjoying the refreshing fountains and lovely prospects around them.

" As a people, we have no habit of amusement in America. Business and repose are the only two states of existence we know. How far Europeans have the better of us in this respect - how much our morals improve, or our health suffers, from the distaste for places of public relaxation and resort, are questions the political economists have not yet condescended to settle."

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Editor's Note: Philadelphia's second and third water works, which were built at Fairmount between 1815 and 1822, are today the City Aquarium. These graceful old edifices are still one of Philadelphia's most pleasant sights, overlooking a part of the river which has been greatly improved in recent years. The Sunday crowds which now come to Fairmount indicate that Philadelphians have at last caught the "habit of amusement."

Future issues of the NEWS will describe other portions of the Water Department's colorful history . . . . a history that begins in 1801 with the first use of steam pumps for water distribution purposes.

## HOT OFF THE FIELD WIRE

### From Harry Yohle, Meter Shop:

Gus D'Orio became a proud grandfather for the fourth time .... Joe Roche is back from Europe ..... saw all of his kinfolk in Germany .... A party is in the offing for Meter Shop employees .... host will be Joseph Skudar at his summer home in North Wildwood ..... It's flowers for Dick Reckeweg who's going into that business ..... David Joseph is home after a long period in the hospital.

### From Shirley Henry, Delaware Division Pump:

It's back to work for Chief Ed Sweeney after a two-weeks vacation..... William Ehmann still convalescing after an operation on his foot.

### From Mario Celoni, Design (Mains & Sewers):

Vacation memories are everywhere ..... Al Traceoff still smiling about Havana, Cuba .... Mario Celoni raving about Massachusetts food and Ray Finkelstein about mosquitoes at the shore .... Al Strouse still planning to settle down in Florida ..... Ed Brandy still spending his time ballroom dancing down at Cape May ..... and so it goes.

It's back to college for the four engineering students working in Design this summer .... John Casanto is off to Penn State .... James Hurchaller to Swarthmore ..... James Allen and James Sykes, Jr., to Villanova.

### From Rocco Giannini, Design (Mechanical):

James Barrance had a wonderful boat trip .... sailed from New York to Quebec, Halifax and Bermuda.

### From Harry S. Myers, Schuylkill Pumping Division

Carl Fink had nice weather (for a change) on his Wildwood vacation .... A. Stanley is back from the shore .... John Dunn has been ill ..... his fellow employees wish him a quick recovery.

## HIRE 21 NEW EMPLOYEES FOR VARIETY OF POSITIONS

The Water Department welcomed 21 new employees during the past month. They occupy a wide variety of positions in the department's scattered installations.

The list includes:

Clarence Altson, automotive mechanic at the Logan garage; William Mathis, pumping station mechanic helper in the Schuylkill pumping division; George Christo, machinist, Northeast sewage treatment works; John J. Waraska, steamfitter, plant maintenance division; George Smith, laborer at the Belmont water treatment plant, Annette Johnson, bookkeeping machine operator, administrative division Dorothy Weischedel, switchboard operator, administrative division; Robert Albergotti, clerk-typist, Logan garage; Ann H. Colter, clerk-typist, administrative division; Alexander Poole, laborer, Belmont Plant.



CITY AGENCIES ISSUE  
SEVERAL NEW PUBLICATIONS

Philadelphia's story is being told graphically with the appearance of several new publications at City Hall.

The Office of the City Representative has issued "Philadelphia in Fall", a colorful seasonal folder, which lists places of interest, important events, amusements, and other intriguing aspects of our city. Intended mainly for the hotel, convention and tourist trade, the folder is available free to anyone who calls at the City Representative's Office, Room 201, City Hall. That office has also issued a folder in color listing various film and speaker services available to the public.

Of special interest are two brochures in color published by the Records and Public Health Departments. Replete with pictures and other attractive illustrations, the booklets tell of the work of the two departments during the past four years. Copies may be obtained from the departments or from the Office of the City Representative.

WATCH FOR WATER DEPARTMENT BOOKLETS

Several booklets intended to explain Water Department operations will soon be issued to the public. These include "Torresdale - the Push-Button Water Treatment Plant", a 16-page brochure with pictures; "The Story of Philadelphia's Water", a 16-page brochure in color with pictures; and an 8-page brochure on the department's new load control system. An attractive annual report will also appear in the near future.

The first two booklets should be ready for distribution by the end of September.

MURRAY MCPHERSON RESIGNS  
TO TEACH AT ILLINOIS UNIV.

Murray B. McPherson resigned as water and sewer research engineer September 1 to take a teaching job at the University of Illinois.

Mr. McPherson was with the department for two years. Previously, he taught at Lehigh University. He is a civil engineering graduate of Bucknell University and studied hydraulics at Iowa State and Columbia Universities.

Cont'd from page 10

Charles W. Ruddock, laborer, Torresdale water treatment plant; Frank P. Sydnor, Jr., laborer, Torresdale plant; Arthur Bartlett, chemist, testing laboratory; Frank J. Fala, cement finisher, building maintenance; Violet D. Mulligan, clerk-typist, administrative division; Norman J. Prezworski, machinist, Southwest sewage treatment works; Barbara L. Luton, clerk-typist, distribution section; Charles A. Parks, laborer, Torresdale plant; Roosevelt Watson, laborer, Torresdale plant; Nellie A. Roberson, clerk-typist, Belmont laboratory.

#### ELEVEN EMPLOYEES MOVE TO HIGHER DEPARTMENT JOBS

Eleven Water Department employees were promoted during the month of August and early September. A number of them reached higher supervisory levels.

James J. Johnson, of 6228 Algard Street, moved into the new Torresdale water treatment plant as maintenance supervisor. Mr. Johnson, who was previously a foreman at the Belmont plant, joined the old Water Bureau in February, 1947, as a filter equipment mechanic. He received training in maintenance of electrical equipment at an Atlantic City vocational school and in the U. S. Army Corps. This training will doubtless come in handy at Torresdale with its 340 miles of electrical conduits and wiring.

The laboratory of the Belmont water treatment plant has a new supervisor in the person of Ira W. Thompson, who was promoted from Chemist. Mr. Thompson, who entered the department in February, 1953, studied chemical engineering at the University of Pennsylvania. He worked as a chemist for the Rare Metal Products Company, Atglen, Pa., from 1946 to 1953. He lives at 220 West Coulter Street.

Three employees were promoted from water distribution foreman to assistant water distribution supervisor. They are Edward F. Goebel, 8408 Chippewa Road; Michael D. Elia, 2521 South Claymont Street; and Donato Caruso, 9226 Puritan Road.

Other promotions follow:

Earnest F. Smith, from laborer to equipment operator, distribution section; James R. Hughey, from laborer to equipment operator, distribution section; Vincent A. Altomari, from public works inspector I to grade II, construction section; John P. Carr, from chemist I to II, Queen Lane laboratory; Rosetta Lindsay, from clerk-typist I to grade II, Belmont laboratory; Peter D. Holmes, from boilermaker to structural materials inspector, central stores section.



## SAFE DRIVING HINTS

Marathon driving is a deadly enemy of the motorist on vacation. Many motorists traveling on limited time and financial resources try to pack the maximum amount of driving into their vacation, thus greatly increasing chances of a traffic accident.

The driver who tries to set up an endurance record on his vacation trip runs the risk of extreme fatigue which reduces alertness and speed of reaction to danger.

These suggestions are offered:

- (1) Start on your trip early in the morning so that you can stop early. It is a safe rule to drive not more than seven hours a day. Longer driving stints are dangerous.
- (2) During your trip, stop every two hours for rest and refreshment. In this way, your driving efficiency remains at a maximum level throughout the day.
- (3) If more than one passenger in your car can drive, take turns at the wheel.
- (4) Drowsiness and "highway hypnosis" are constant threats to the motorists on long trips. To avoid them, converse with others in the car or listen to snappy music on the car radio. Also avoid heavy meals during your trip.
- (5) Above all, let moderation be your guide. It is better to cover fewer miles on your trip and return home safe and sound.

Taken from "The Car" AAA paper

### PASSED ON BY A CONTRIBUTOR

We squander health in search of wealth,  
We scheme and toil and save,  
Then squander wealth in search of health,  
And all we get's a grave.

We live and boast of what we own,  
We die and only get a stone.

## DUTIES OF CITY OFFICIALS - THE CITY SOLICITOR

Editor's Note: Some of the Mayor's broad powers were described in the last issue of the NEWS. This week a brief sketch is given of the City Solicitor's duties, since that official is a member of the Mayor's Cabinet.

Moving on the top policy making level, the City Solicitor is the chief legal officer of the municipality. A member of the Mayor's small Cabinet, he is advisor and representative of the City government in all civil aspects of the law as well as with respect to certain investigatory and enforcement functions.

This representation extends to all officers, departments, boards and commissions of the City. Since the City Solicitor is the only officer appointed by the Mayor with the advice and consent of a majority of the City Council, he is also the representative and counselor of the municipal legislative body.

The City Solicitor, who heads the Law Department, has the following basic responsibilities:

- (1) Legal Advice: He advises all branches of the City government on legal aspects of their operations.
- (2) Litigation: He represents the City in all suits or other legal action for the collection of debts, taxes, etc., due the City and in all actions involving claims against the City.
- (3) Contracts, etc.: Bonds, contracts and other legal instruments to which the City is a party must be prepared and approved by the City Solicitor.
- (4) Enforcement: No small part of his job is the enforcement of various City codes (fire, housing, plumbing, zoning, etc.) and the performance of investigations relating to these. With the approval of the Mayor, he may also investigate other violations of City ordinances, or of State statutes.
- (5) Drafting: As advisor to the Council and departments, the City Solicitor drafts hundreds of ordinances annually. He also prepares and maintains the comprehensive Code of General Ordinances.

Over and above these basic duties, the City Solicitor is the legal champion of the community's interests. He presents the City's point of view before courts and regulatory commissions whenever a question arises affecting the public interest of Philadelphia.



# News

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PHILADELPHIA WATER DEPARTMENT ..... SEPTEMBER ISSUE 1959

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE ..... SEPTEMBER 28



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