



# Pipeline

Produced by the Public Affairs staff of the Philadelphia Water Department. For more information, please contact Editor Joan Anne Przybylowicz at 685-4900.

## Water Quality Update

*Cryptosporidium* (Cryp-toe-sporid-e-um) has been making headlines recently, unfortunately leaving some people to question the quality and safety of their drinking water. As Water Department employees, most of us have been asked for "inside" information.

It is important for people to know that drinking water is one of the *least*-likely transmitters of *Cryptosporidiosis*. There are many, more common ways a person can contract the disease, such as coming in contact with human or animal feces (diaper changing, pet caretaking), playing with or adopting a stray animal who may have the disease, or sexual activity involving contact with feces that might be infected with *Cryptosporidium*.

### • What is *Cryptosporidium*?

*Cryptosporidium* is a potential disease-causing parasite that is found in natural waters, such as lakes, streams, and rivers. *Cryptosporidium* is too small to be detected by the human eye; it must be seen through a microscope.

### • How does it get in treated drinking water?

Because researchers are just discovering the dangers of *Cryptosporidium*,

water suppliers do not yet have testing guidelines to follow for detecting it in our water supply sources. In Philadelphia, our water sources are the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers. However, the Philadelphia Water Department is taking aggressive action by monitoring both rivers and our treated water for *Cryptosporidium*.

### • Who is affected by *Cryptosporidium*?

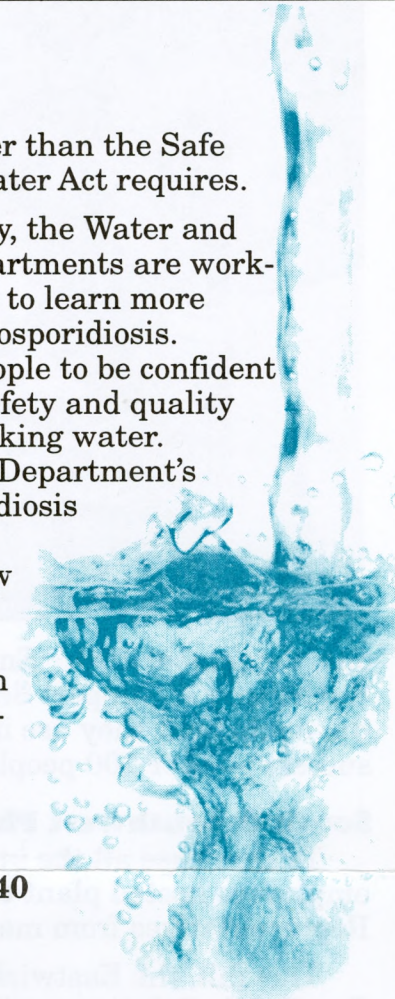
People in generally good health are not at risk of *Cryptosporidiosis* (the disease caused by *Cryptosporidium*). Very young infants, the elderly, and those with weakened immune systems, such as people with HIV/AIDS, chemotherapy patients, and people who have received organ transplants, are most vulnerable to the disease. *Cryptosporidiosis* symptoms often resemble those of the flu: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, and nausea. These usually clear up in a few days.

The Water Department and the Health Department both stand behind the safety and quality of Philadelphia's drinking water. Good water treatment filtration is the best-known defense against *Cryptosporidium*. Our water treatment plants operate their filters at a standard five

times greater than the Safe Drinking Water Act requires.

Currently, the Water and Health Departments are working together to learn more about *Cryptosporidiosis*. We want people to be confident about the safety and quality of their drinking water. The Health Department's *Cryptosporidiosis* Fact Sheet explains how people at a high risk of infection can take precautions. It is available to everyone.

Call 685-6740 for a copy.



## 1996 Holidays

*New Year's Day*  
Monday, January 1

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
(Observed)  
Monday, January 15

*Presidents' Day*  
Monday, February 19

*Good Friday*  
April 5

*Memorial Day (Observed)*  
Monday, May 27

*Independence Day*  
Thursday, July 4

*Labor Day*  
Monday, September 2

*Columbus Day (Observed)*  
Monday, October 14

*Thanksgiving Day*  
Thursday, November 28

*Christmas Day*  
Wednesday, December 25

## Plants Receive Awards

Congratulations to the employees of our Northeast and Southeast Water Pollution Control Plants, and our Biosolids Recycling Center for receiving nationally prestigious awards this past year.

The Northeast Plant employees received the 1994 Gold Award from the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies (AMSA) for meeting all National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirements and effluent standards throughout 1994. They also received a Gold Award in 1991. The Southeast Plant employees received the AMSA Silver Award for having only four effluent violations in 1994. They received a Silver Award in 1992 and 1993, and a Gold Award in 1990 as well. AMSA plays an exemplary part in the development and implementation of scientifically-based, technically-sound, and cost-effective environmental programs for protecting public and environmental health.

The Biosolids Recycling Center (BRC) received the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 1995 National Beneficial Use of Biosolids Award. The EPA chose BRC over other biosolid recycling facilities for its "outstanding contributions that have increased knowledge and facilitated beneficial biosolids use."

Kudos to plant employees for representing the Water Department and the City of Philadelphia so successfully on a nationally competitive level.

## Community Outreach

During the past several years, the Water Department has built working relationships with the communities and businesses that surround our many facilities. To understand our neighbors' needs and concerns, we meet with neighbors who live near our facilities on a regular basis. This fall, the Water Department sponsored tours and open houses at several facilities to let communities know that we do much, much more than just "make water."

Kendra Oliver of Public Affairs shares information with Tony Radocaj of the Bridesburg Civic Association.



### Bridesburg & Port Richmond

On September 25th, employees of the Northeast Plant gave neighbors a plant tour and a brief update on the Plant's grit, screenings and scum disposal plan. On October 7th, the Water Department participated in Bridesburg's annual Community Pride Week celebration, with Captain Sewer recruiting new members for the Captain Sewer Club.

Recently the Water Department made the front page of the *Bridesburg Guide Newspaper*, and to our delight it was for good news: "The Philadelphia Water Department Plans to be a Better Neighbor." The article highlighted news from *NEws*, the quarterly newsletter we send to the Bridesburg and Port Richmond communities.

### 29th & Cambria

The Water Department held an open house for neighbors and employees of our 29th Street facility on Saturday, September 30th. Employees of Customer Service, Metering, Distribution, Emergency & Support Services, Machine Shop, and Load Control demonstrated the equipment they use in their daily operations. The Open House was a big success — over 100 people attended.

day, September 30th. Employees of Customer Service, Metering, Distribution, Emergency & Support Services, Machine Shop, and Load Control demonstrated the equipment they use in their daily operations. The Open House was a big success — over 100 people attended.

### South & Southwest Philadelphia

To showcase all the improvements at Southwest and the Biosolids Recycling Center (BRC), employees hosted plant tours for residents of South and Southwest Philadelphia on Saturday, October 7th. Representatives from many community and environmental groups came out and toured the plants.

This fall, the Eastwick and Southwark libraries in South and Southwest Philadelphia are displaying biosolids exhibits. Our Public Relations unit coordinated the exhibits featuring our biosolids compost, EarthMate, highlighting its beneficial uses.

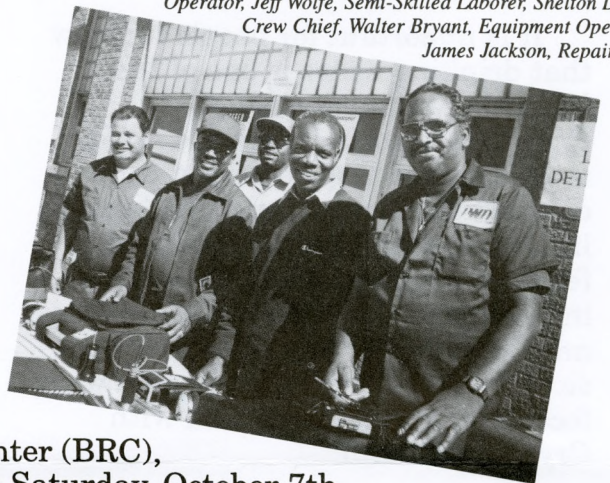


Plant Manager Bill McKeon takes Northeast Plant neighbors on a guided tour.

Captain Sewer recruits new members for the Captain Sewer Club at Bridesburg Pride Day.



Leak Detection Team from L to R: Paul Turchi, Equipment Operator, Jeff Wolfe, Semi-Skilled Laborer, Shelton Davis, Crew Chief, Walter Bryant, Equipment Operator, James Jackson, Repairman.

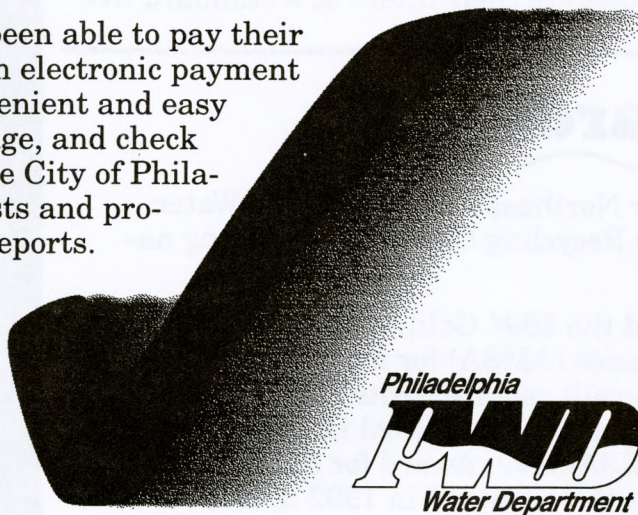


## ZipCheck Makes Bill Payment Easier for Customers

As of July 1, our customers have been able to pay their water and sewer bills by ZipCheck, an electronic payment transfer program. Zipcheck is a convenient and easy way for customers to save time, postage, and check writing costs. ZipCheck also helps the City of Philadelphia lower its check processing costs and produce faster, more accurate financial reports.

The Philadelphia Water Department, PECO Energy, PNC Bank, and Philadelphia Suburban Water Company participate in the ZipCheck program. They share the responsibility of mailing information about the ZipCheck program, greatly reducing printing, advertising, and mailing costs.

PWD mailed ZipCheck information to its 500,000 customers in the October water and sewer bills. Water Revenue estimates that 10,000 to 25,000 customers will participate in the program in the first year. The ZipCheck program has no sign-up, transaction, or cancellation fees, and costs customers absolutely nothing.



## Library Tip

**How to keep up with your professional journals:**

George Collier, of the Water Department Library, suggests that you photocopy the table of contents from every publication you receive. Review the titles of the articles and circle the ones of interest to you. Attach the copy to the cover of the publication, or store them all together. It will serve as a quick reference guide to the important articles in each publication.

