



For Immediate Release  
April 27, 2017

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## Public Utilities Staff Accepts Award for Performance

Harrisonburg, Va. – The city’s Public Utilities Department was recently recognized for its work in delivering clean drinking water to its customers each day.

The Virginia Department of Health Office of Drinking Water awarded the Public Utilities Department’s Water Treatment Plant with the **2016 Excellence in Waterworks Operations and Performance Award**.

“Our staff members at the Water Treatment Plant work behind the scenes in providing one of the most important services to the city,” explained Mike Collins, director of the Public Utilities Department. “This award should be credited to their knowledge, commitment, and performance in always striving to meet the highest standards in our water quality.”

Customers expect clean drinking water each time the faucet is turned on but most don’t realize the process behind receiving clean water. These processes are operating each day (and night) of the year.

The process begins when the water is collected from its raw sources. Two raw water sources that the city currently utilizes are Dry River and North River. The South Fork of the Shenandoah River will eventually be added as an additional source once the infrastructure is constructed.

The raw water is conveyed through underground pipes to the Water Treatment Plant, where it is treated (purified and disinfected) before being tested for a number of safeguards. Once the water is in a drinkable state, it is conveyed by pipe to our customers or otherwise stored in one of the nine water tanks located throughout the city. These tanks serve as a storage facility when water use exceeds plant production.

Although this process seems fairly simple, there is a great deal of “stuff” that must be monitored and maintained. Chemical addition, mixing, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration, drought and weather conditions, water levels, pumps, pipes, water storage tanks, monitors, sensors, water quality, usage, natural contaminants, manpower to work around the clock, and state and federal mandates are all just a few of the components that must all be properly managed.

On an average day, more than 6.7 millions of gallons of water are consumed by residents and businesses in the city and parts of Rockingham County.

Collins explained, “I continue to be impressed with our Water Treatment Plant operators and the field utilities staff and the work they do to protect the quality of water in our distribution system. This truly is a team effort.”

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*Pictured above (left to right): Dennis McGuffin, Justin Smith, Charley Dove, and Nick Hottinger.*

*Not pictured: Cody Arbogast, Joshua Baughman, Ben Evick, Jeff McCauley, Zach Roy, Thomas Schroeder, and Bryce Whetzel. Also not pictured are the remaining members of the staff, who provide direct support in many other areas of the department.*

Congratulations to the members of the Public Utilities Department for receiving this recognition!

To learn more about Harrisonburg's drinking water, visit [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/water-quality](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov/water-quality).

***The City of Harrisonburg*** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 50,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).



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