



HARRISONBURG VA FRIENDLY BY NATURE



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Harrisonburg Public Utilities honored for Excellence... again!

HARRISONBURG, Va. – It's a story that never gets old – Harrisonburg Public Utilities and the City's Water Treatment Plant staff are being honored once again for their dedication to quality service and safe, reliable water.

The City's Water Treatment Plant has received the 2020 Silver Water Treatment Plant Performance Award for Excellence in Filtration and Backwash. The recognition, from the Virginia Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water, is bestowed for achieving Virginia's optimization program goals.

It's an award Public Utilities has been receiving for so long, nobody can even remember when it started. It's just second nature for the team to go above and beyond in making sure City residents and businesses can rest assured every time they turn on the tap.



(Above) Operator Kyle VanOrden with the Harrisonburg Water Treatment Plant works at a filter system. The team recently received a Silver Award from the Virginia Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water for their work.

"The Water Treatment Plant staff works diligently to produce the best quality water our facility is capable of – not for recognition, but for our customers," Water Treatment Division Superintendent Dennis McGuffin said. "Whether it's something as simple as brushing your teeth in the morning, or as crucial as firefighters putting out a blaze, the whole Public Utilities team is committed to making sure your water is always there when you need it."

You may not think too often about how water gets to your faucet. But the Public Utilities team has someone thinking about it every minute of every day – nights, weekends, holidays... you name it.

The process begins at the source – currently the Dry River and the North River. Another source, the South Fork of the Shenandoah River, will come online in the next few years. The raw water travels through underground pipes until it reaches the Water Treatment Plant, where it is purified and disinfected before being tested for a number of health indicator parameters.

There's also a lot to pay attention to along the way. That includes 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. This past year, you could add maintaining the City's water supply 24/7 while navigating the hurdles COVID-19 threw in the way to the list of challenges.

"I can't say enough about the effort of our Water Treatment Plant employees – especially with everything they have faced over the last year due to the pandemic and making sure there was always people available to keep our water supply flowing," Harrisonburg Public Utilities Director Mike Collins said. "They truly are the unsung heroes of civil service."

An average of more than six million gallons of water a day heads to thousands of customers throughout Harrisonburg, or to one of a number of water tanks across the city. In addition, the Water Treatment Plant team must maintain infrastructure and assets valued at more than \$25 million.

Learn more about everything Harrisonburg Public Utilities does to serve Harrisonburg residents and businesses at www.harrisonburgva.gov/public-utilities.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to almost 55,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.



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