

# Florissant back in favor with health department



The Florissant Water & Sanitation District is pulling the district out of debt with the new smart meters that record accurate readings of the amount of water each customer uses. Bob Faux and Chris Penland, board members, take the readings on a volunteer basis.

Pat Hill  
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BOB FAUX

After being sanctioned for noncompliance with state water-quality standards, the Florissant Water & Sanitation District is back in the good graces of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

With a new board dedicated to improving water quality and reducing debt, the CDPHE awarded the district a



improve the infrastructure with a WesTech Microfloc filtration system.

In the past, many of the district's 94 customers were turning on faucets that delivered brown tap water tainted by nitrates, iron and manganese. While the water was deemed safe, nonetheless, the state mandated that the district upgrade the aging system.

"We'll replace pipes and filtration systems inside the building," said Barb Faux, who, with her husband, Bob Faux, is on the board of directors. As well, the improvements include three holding tanks outside the

facility.

"The neat thing is that, as a board, we went to the Woodland Park Water Department, and saw the same system on a much larger scale," Faux said. "It's a wonderful system and that's what AquaWorks' Adam Sommers has designed for us."

Sommers, an engineer, is expected to select a contractor for the project by the end of the month, with construction slated to begin in April.

It's been a long haul for the board, which was appointed by Teller County commissioners after the state clamped down on the district. Today's board members, in addition to the Fauxes, are: Cathy Valdez, Ginger Bruvold and Chris Penland. Valdez and Bruvold were the only two retained from the previous board.

Among the infractions cited by the state were, in addition to a substandard filtration system, were sloppy records, no monetary reserves or financial audits and an illegal election.

The new board started the upswing with the installation of smart meters, which are read by Bob Faux and Penland. "We're actually billing customers for what they're using," Faux said. "We were getting false readings for years."

With accurate readings, district customers are paying more for their water while helping to put the district in the black. "We're managing our debt better because we have taken out a consolidation loan, lowered our payments and spread them out over a longer period," Barb Faux said.

Bob Faux added. "It's taken a long time to get to this point, but it's nice," he said. "The best part is that the customer is going to have very good water."

If the water infraction weren't bad enough, the district was also cited by the state for its wastewater treatment system, which was unable to meet pending discharge permit limits.

For now, the board has its collective fingers crossed that the CDPHE will look favorably on its application for another \$950,000 grant to replace the wastewater lagoon system. "The lagoons are an archaic system," Barb Faux said.

If the district wins the grant, construction is a year or two out.