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# THE CORD REPORT

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The official quarterly newsletter of CORD Ohio



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### HELLO CORD MEMBERS

by Kevin Strang

I would like to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is Kevin Strang. I have recently joined the CORD organization as the new Director of Membership Development. I am excited to have the privilege to work for this fine group. I would like to thank everyone for being so welcoming.

HELLO CORD MEMBERS: 1

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5 INNOVATIONS AT  
WORK FOR CLEAN  
WATER: 3

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*"recently retired from the Ohio Rural Water Association, after 25 years... I hope to bring those experiences to help grow and strengthen the membership base of CORD."*

I am looking forward to meeting more of the membership and board members over the upcoming year.

As you may be aware I have recently retired from the Ohio Rural Water Association, after 25 years of service to our industry. I hope to bring those experiences to help grow and strengthen the membership base of CORD.

Should you have any questions concerning membership or would like to sponsor an event, or have a article you would like to see in our newsletter please feel free to contact me anytime at [Kevin.Strang70@gmail.com](mailto:Kevin.Strang70@gmail.com)

Sincerely,  
Kevin Strang  
CORD - Director of Membership





# Sewers, iPads, and drones among 5 innovations at work for clean water

by Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District

How do you innovate the lake?

Lake Erie is perhaps the most challenged of the Great Lakes, but with those challenges come opportunities for innovation. Sewers have been taken for granted as a significant technological advance, perhaps even since Cleveland installed its first sewers in the 1800s. Which is why it can be easy to overlook the vast amount of innovation at work and in design in the world of utilities.

Here are five examples we have working for clean water in the field that help to protect our Great Lake.

We are responsible for a regional stream network more than 420 miles long. When our Regional Stormwater Management Program launched in 2013, inspections of problem locations were documented on foot as workers physically walked the streams for planning purposes. But the most recent master-planning effort involves drone data collection. Aerial photography captures more raw images for site assessment, analysis and communication. Most recently, we covered 60 miles of the Cuyahoga River watershed with drone technology in less than two weeks.

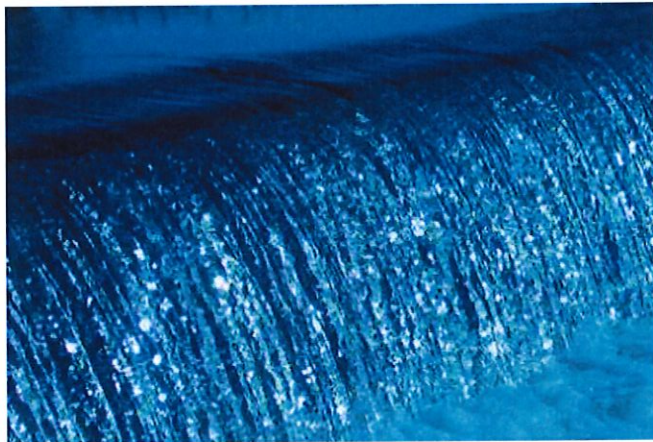


Microtunneling involves boring a tunnel underground rather than opening up a trench at the surface. That alone is intended to minimize disruption during construction. But our Dugway West Interceptor Relief Sewer also featured a rarely used technology known as curved microtunneling. It eliminated two access shafts at the surface, saving money and reducing impacts on the neighborhood above the project.

Our sewer maintenance and stormwater inspection and maintenance teams use iPads for GIS, asset location, and site investigations. Finding collection systems in the field in real time increases productivity, and the ability to report from the field improves response time.

We have a 25-year plan to reduce Lake Erie pollution by 4 billion gallons a year. Doing so is costly, but proper planning has given us potential to save money through innovative approaches. One is chemically enhanced high-rate treatment. Implementing CEHRT at our plants, like Westerly shown here, eliminates the need for extensive construction, reduces operation and maintenance costs, and meets our water-quality requirements through simultaneous disinfection.

Storymaps are mashups. They use GIS and a variety of web tools to communicate through visually appealing maps like mobile storyboards. One example captures progress and success of our Green Infrastructure Grant program, pinpointing project locations, project photos, and descriptions of benefits. Future construction will be documented for customers in a similar way.



## **CORD 2018 EVENTS**

**2018 WINTER REGIONAL MEETING SPONSORED BY  
NORTHWEST REGIONAL  
FEBRUARY 9TH**

**2018 SPRING REGIONAL MEETING SPONSORED BY  
LE-AX WATER  
WEEK OF APRIL 9TH 2018**

**For more information on  
membership and member  
benefits please feel free to  
contact CORD's Director of  
Membership, Kevin Strang.**

**Contact Information:  
kevin.strang70@gmail.com**





# A Regional Solution for a Rural Problem

Many rural communities risk polluting groundwater with failing residential septic systems or aged wastewater treatment plants that are too costly to upgrade. For many years, the Village of Bairdstown faced this issue. With local streams showing evidence of pollution, the Ohio EPA directed the community to correct the problem by constructing a centralized sanitary sewer system. The Villages of Bairdstown & Bloomdale asked to join The Northwestern Water and Sewer District (The District) to help them comply with EPA regulations. Rather than build a local treatment plant for the Village, a new regional water reclamation facility was being constructed in Bloomdale, replacing the existing aging plant. Knowing a combined project could be addressed efficiently and more cost-effectively,

The District brought the villages together to solve their wastewater issues. The District was able to secure grants from the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) and the Ohio EPA to pay for approximately 60% of the cost of this combined \$5.8 million project. Following a year of construction, Bairdstown residents will be tapped this fall into a new sewer system that connects to the new wastewater treatment plant in Bloomdale. Bairdstown is the last village in Wood County to get public sewers. These projects will eliminate one pollution source in the Lake Erie Watershed.

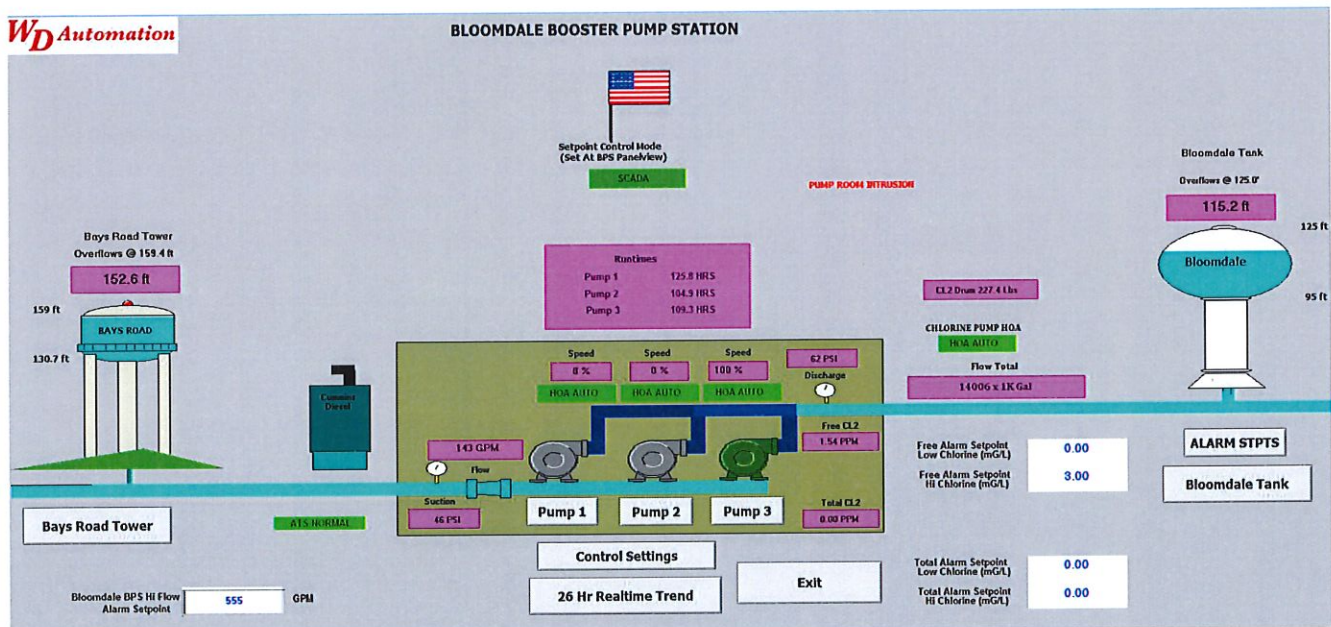




# Saving Resources, Time and Money by Investing in Technology

The Northwestern Water and Sewer District's telemetry system is a key component of our information infrastructure for maintaining operational efficiency and controlling labor costs. Our staff is responsible for over 150 remote sites spread across almost 600 square miles of service area. The telemetry system, also known as a SCADA system (for "Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition"), provides remote monitoring and control capabilities that allow our staff to ensure normal water and sewer operations, without having to visit remote equipment on a daily basis.

The District is currently upgrading the communication system used to pass the data from the remote sites to our main office. Some of our existing sites were deployed in the mid 90's using radio technologies. These systems are showing their age and we are migrating to newer network-based data transport systems. As we upgrade the platform, we are also replacing existing monitoring hardware with newer, lower-cost equipment. When complete, the upgrade will provide greater reliability and enhanced security for all of our telemetry data.





# Year-end review of legislative efforts by Governmental Policy Group

2017 marked the first year of the 132nd Ohio General Assembly. The past year has been extremely active for the Coalition of Regional Districts (CORD) as we are already tracking over 40 pieces of legislation that could impact 6119 districts. While not all of these bills will move, it is important to monitor them closely throughout the entire legislative process, as they could be passed quickly at any time.

In addition to monitoring dozens of bills that could impact our members, CORD has been actively engaged in numerous bills that gained momentum this past year. First, after months of working with stakeholders, The Ohio EPA introduced a reform measure aimed at improving water quality in the state. Their proposal ( SB 2) included changing the 401 water certification process as well as a provision requiring water systems to develop asset management plans. SB 2 was passed and signed by the Governor over the summer. CORD was once again required to oppose legislation (HB121 and SB 95) that would alter how public entities select piping material for projects. The highly contentious issue has been debated during the previous General Assemblies, and despite advocates attempts to rewrite their proposal, there are still serious concerns that any change to the selection process could make it more difficult for local systems to select a piping material and make them vulnerable to lawsuits. We were also helpful in developing legislation (HB276) that aims to increase protection for utility workers who are threatened on the job. We were able to work with the bill's sponsors ( Rep. Rezabek and Greenspan ) to ensure that all water and wastewater utility workers are included under that bill.

Last year State Auditor Dave Yost's office invited CORD to review legislation aimed at fighting fraud by developing guardrails for credit cards used by public entities. After over a year of work on the proposal, legislation (HB 312) was introduced. HB 312 brings uniformity to credit card use by public entities throughout the state and ensures that public dollars are protected. The bill moved quickly through the house, Where it passed with unanimous support prior to the legislators recessing for the winter holidays. CORD was also asked to be involved in developing legislation that would establish a method to determine fair market value of a system after it is acquired by a private entity. Proponents for the measure (HB 422) claim that fair market value needs to be determined in order to set appropriate rates after and acquisition occurs. We were to have been invited to the table prior to the bill being introduced to ensure that the language would not negatively impact our members.

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# Year-end review of legislative efforts by Governmental Policy Group

In addition to engaging in legislation, CORD also closely monitors the administrative rule-making process. Changes to the Ohio Administrative Code can have a significant impact on our members. Most recently the Ohio EPA has developed administrative rules regarding requirements for certified operators working in public water systems and wastewater treatment facilities. Included in the rule making package is a provision that limits the amount of laboratory, pretreatment and engineering experience counted toward the necessary experience required to obtain certification. The proposed revisions threaten to prevent highly qualified individuals from entering the operator profession, which will make it more burdensome for utilities in Ohio to find operators CORD submitted comments on two separate occasions ( May17 September17 ) voicing its opposition to these changes. The Ohio EPA most recently held a webinar where they reviewed additional revisions as the result of the comments that were submitted. During that webinar the Ohio EPA indicated that it will be filing the rules with JCARR in the near future.

Looking ahead to 2018, CORD will need to continue to work on the bills mentioned above, as many of them remain in the committee process and will receive further debate in the coming months. In addition to those bills we also anticipate CORD will be asked to engage in additional issues that will be introduced in the near future. One issue is the legislation intended at protecting utilities and other "critical infrastructure" against damage caused by protesters. This measure is being developed in response to situations that have occurred in other states where the protesters vandalized or tampered with critical infrastructure facilities. Situations have been cited where organizations are training the protesters and paying them to engage in such activities. The proposed legislation will enhance the penalties associated with such crimes. We also fully anticipate that the Ohio EPA will attempt another reform measure. While the details have yet to be shared, we will need to review any such bill closely to ensure 6119's are protected.

