



Continued from front page story: "Millennium Technologies..."

The focus of management efforts at the new facility will shift from treating waste products to harvesting or reclaiming organic materials for their energy value. Sewage solids and greases will be processed using anaerobic digestion to produce and capture methane gas. This gas will then be used to meet a portion of the facility's energy budget. A second benefit of anaerobic digestion is that the volume of sludge which must be trucked to a landfill for disposal is significantly reduced.

A change in the method of disinfection for the effluent waste will address a potential safety issue associated with the use of chlorine gas. In the new facility, chlorine gas will be replaced by liquid hypochlorite. Although liquid hypochlorite will be more costly, it is more easily contained in the event of line malfunctions. This alternative also totally eliminates the possibility of a chlorine gas leak that could affect areas near the treatment plant.

Energy efficiency and the use of renewable/recycled construction materials will be a primary guide in a design of the facility's operations building. To gauge the effectiveness of this effort, designers have been instructed to achieve, at a minimum, silver level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification as outlined by the U.S. Green Building Council.

Concepts that will be a part of the final design include the use of: recycled or rapidly renewable building materials; water and energy efficiency; accommodation of alternative transportation methods; and optimizing indoor environmental quality.

The new facility will provide for more effective management of wastewater flows, in part, due to the automated control system that will be used. Currently, much of the system operating data acquisition and process control is handled manually. The new facility will be equipped with electronic control systems that will provide operators with more real-time data and the ability to respond more quickly to changes in operating conditions.

The new operating system will also enable the City to consistently provide a higher quality of effluent discharge to the Pee Dee River.

Current plans call for the final design phase of the new plant to be complete in mid-2009, with construction beginning in 2010.

### SCRAP METAL COLLECTION WEEK March 23 – 27, 2009



The Performing Arts Center is under construction.

## BARNES STREET COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER OPENS FOR YOUTH AND SENIOR ACTIVITIES



The new Barnes Street recreation center is now open for teens and seniors.

The City of Florence dedicated its newest recreational facility, the Barnes Street Activity Center, on October 15, 2008.

City Manager David Williams welcomed more than 150 visitors to the new facility and introduced special guests, as well as recognized various groups in attendance. Councilman Billy D. Williams spoke of the new facility and gave visitors an insight into the programs and activities that would be taking place in the new activity center. Councilman Williams, along with fellow Council members Bobby Holland, Ed Robinson and State Rep. Terry Alexander, cut the ceremonial ribbon and released balloons, officially opening the new center.

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## Florence City Council

Stephen J. Wukela,  
Mayor

Billy D. Williams,  
District 1

Edward Robinson,  
District 2

Frank J. Brand, II,  
District 3

William C. Bradham, Jr.,  
Member-At-Large

Octavia Williams-Blake,  
Member-At-Large

Steve Powers,  
Member-At-Large

The Mayor and City Council serve four-year terms. City Council meets the second Monday of every month at 1 p.m. in Room 604 at the City-County Complex, 180 North Irby Street, Florence, SC.

[www.cityofflorence.com](http://www.cityofflorence.com)



City of Florence  
City-County Complex  
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## MILLENNIUM TECHNOLOGIES HELP PROVIDE UPGRADES FOR NEW WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITY

The majority of wastewater treatment plants throughout the United States use treatment processes and technologies that were commonly employed between 1950 and 1980. This also holds true for the City of Florence plant.

However, since the 1980s, energy costs and development densities adjacent to the City's plant site have increased significantly. In addition, regulation and oversight by both South Carolina and federal agencies have become much more stringent. These changes will affect the design of buildings and treatment processes that are selected for use at the City's new wastewater management facility.

Because winter temperatures are relatively mild in the South, it has been common to design treatment processes in open-air tanks. While economical, open-air tank designs allow odors, which can occasionally be strong and offensive, to escape from the treatment processes. The City's new facility will have covered



The current wastewater facility is located on National Cemetery Road.

tanks that allow these gases to be captured and treated. These odor-control systems will allow the new facility to be a better neighbor to residential and commercial areas.

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Inside the Barnes Street Community Center

Continued from front page story: "Barnes..."

The City, over the past several months, has renovated the old Baroody Beverage Company building into a new community activity center that can support neighborhood recreational programming in an effort to provide alternative activities with a wholesome atmosphere. The center is designed around a large open space activity area, a fitness area, television and game room, computer room, restroom facilities and administrative offices for Department of Leisure Services staff. The City, in an effort to promote and encourage downtown development, has developed this facility adjacent to the downtown area. This area, due to its central location, allows accessibility to all Florence citizens.

The large open space activity area, or small gymnasium, will allow the City to expand its existing community-based athletic programs. Children and teens now have an indoor facility to use for such activities as cheerleading, double-dutch rope jumping, basketball and volleyball.

The Barnes Street facility also includes exercise and fitness areas. These fitness areas are designed for a variety of activities, such as indoor cycling, yoga, Pilates and step classes, in an effort to help participants reach their personal fitness and wellness goals. Classes will also be available for participants with an emphasis on healthy heart programs, nutritional guidance and weight management. Plans for the wellness program also include periodic opportunities for participants to have blood pressure checks and cholesterol screenings, as well as other health-related screenings.

The City's goal with the new activity center is to provide various health and fitness programs that develop the mind, body and spirit through physical exercise, health information and recreational activities.

## CITY DEPARTMENTS MOVE TO NEW LOCATION

Did you know the City's Planning and City Water departments have moved?

The City of Florence Urban Planning and Development and the City of Florence Utility Finance Division can now both be found at 218 W. Evans Street.



The new City department location.



## RECYCLING PROGRAM BENEFITS CITY

Since 2005, the City of Florence has operated a curbside residential recycling program that collects newspapers, magazines, any other white paper, tin cans and aluminum and #1 and #2 plastic. Up until 2005, the City engaged a private contractor to handle this service for the City.

Since taking over, the City has been able to determine that participation levels and tonnages collected have shown a steady increase. In addition, citizen complaints about service issues have declined and, in general, the program has been very successful.

However, there is a common misconception that municipal recycling programs, such as the City's, generate a profit and that this profit is the driving force behind recycling efforts. It is important to note that, in actuality, municipal recycling is not profitable. From a sheer economic standpoint, collecting recyclable products commingled with garbage and disposing of them in landfills is significantly cheaper than running separate routes to collect and market the recyclable products. This is due to the fact that the market value of recycled products does not generate enough income to outweigh the collection, sorting and transportation costs associated with recycling.

Despite these economic factors, however, there are other reasons why recycling efforts are valuable and should be maintained. First, recycling does reduce the quantity of landfill material. Reduced amounts of landfill solid waste extend the capacity of existing landfills and reduce the future need for new landfills. Because of this, there are federal and state mandates that require municipalities to reduce quantities of landfill materials. Curbside recycling and yard waste composting (another form of recycling) are the two primary means utilized by the City to meet these standards and requirements.

Natural resource preservation, education and energy conservation are certainly relevant issues in today's environment. Recycling positively impacts all three of these important issues, and while the local cost may be higher, this extra expenditure is a good steward investment when viewed in terms of future generations.

The City also offers a biannual scrap metal collection for City residents. The spring 2009 collection is scheduled in conjunction with the Great American Cleanup in an effort for the City of Florence to encourage City residents to clean up and dispose of these junk metal items at home and in neighborhoods. The scrap metal collection offers residents an opportunity to dispose of

household scrap metal items, including old appliances, during the weekly curbside collection and is scheduled for March 23-27, 2009. The Great American Cleanup will take place on the Saturday following this collection and will be a collaborative effort of various organizations and neighborhood groups to clean up rights-of-way in the City.

For questions regarding the Scrap Metal Collection Week that is scheduled for March 23-27, 2009, please contact the Public Works & Utilities Department at 665-3236. With questions regarding the City of Florence Great American Cleanup, scheduled for March 28, 2009, please contact the City Manager's Office at 665-3113.



All City residents should recycle.

## TENNIS COURT UPGRADES ON THE HORIZON FOR FLORENCE RESIDENTS

Florence will soon have more tennis courts, 24 to be exact, with the construction of a new City tennis complex.

The complex will feature 24 courts and include a tennis activity center with outdoor decking. The center will also include a lounge area, student study area with computers, restrooms, locker rooms, meeting and office space and a pro shop. The project target area is located east of North Cashua Drive. This proposed location is ideally situated for easy access and participation by all Florence residents. This complex would serve as the home facility for the Florence Tennis Association (FTA), hosting league play, open/free play, special instruction and developmental tennis clinics. The FTA also has plans to develop an after-school educational tennis outreach program for City youths.

In 2006, the Florence Tennis Association and the City of Florence began discussions regarding the possibility of providing additional tennis courts for Florence residents. Dr. C. Edward Floyd generously donated 24 acres of the old Clemson property, located between Hwy. 52 (Lucas St.) and North Cashua Drive, for this project. In addition, FTA members also spoke with

NUCOR about the possibility of a land donation for a public access road to the complex, and NUCOR has agreed to provide three acres for the construction of a public access road off North Cashua Drive.

In December 2006, the FTA made a presentation and request to City Council for the proposed tennis complex. At that time, City Council approved a feasibility study for the construction and operation of a tennis complex. The City received a \$44,000 grant from the Drs. Bruce and Lee Foundation and contracted consulting firm Wood + Partners, Inc. of Hilton Head Island for master plan design services of the proposed complex. Florence County, through infrastructure funds of County Councilwoman Jennie O'Bryan, also committed \$522,000 for the construction and utilities for the public access road needed for the complex.

The tennis complex master plan design and funding mechanisms were presented by City staff to City Council in November 2007. City Council approved funding of \$5 million for the construction of the proposed complex. This funding will provide a public access road into the complex, 24 courts, a tennis activity center

and parking. The Drs. Bruce and Lee Foundation has committed \$1.5 million of the total funding required for the construction of the tennis activity center.

The City has contracted with B.P. Barber for the engineering and design services for both the public access road and the tennis complex. The access road construction has been publicly bid and a contract has been awarded. Construction is scheduled to start in March 2009. Final specifications and design for the tennis complex are being completed and are scheduled to be publicly bid in April 2009. Construction would begin on the tennis complex in July 2009, with the scheduled completion date in March 2010.



The proposed new tennis complex will benefit players.

## CITY TAKES ACTION ON ABANDONED HOUSES

This year, the City of Florence is making the cleanup of unmaintained vacant properties and the removal of abandoned houses in residential neighborhoods a priority. It is well-documented that dilapidated and substandard structures and unmaintained vacant lots contribute to the creation of an environment for disinvestment, leading toward crimes against property and illegal drug use, which in turn, significantly diminishes the livability of neighborhoods.

In February, Florence Mayor Stephen Wukela called for City staff to move with all deliberate haste to review all current codes and ordinances; to make recommendations for amendments to those codes in order to increase their effectiveness; and to take enforcement action against certain property owners under the ordinances that are currently in place. This call for action is in direct response to property owners who have failed to respond to prior requests in the past.

"We are going to rule those people to show cause why those properties are in the condition they're in and to order them to remedy the situation," said Mayor Wukela, as quoted in *The Morning News*.

For years, the City has believed that the blighting influence of unmaintained properties causes a high incidence of crimes against property and illegal drug activity.

In this renewed effort to combat the issues associated with unmaintained properties, the City is going to identify the major factors influencing the growth of this nuisance; assess its influence on existing and future uses and development; make a determination of existing conditions; and define a strategy that removes the nuisance and reaffirms the integrity of the neighborhood as a safe and pleasant place to live.



An abandoned property within the City.

These goals can be attained only through community action and involvement. To this end, the City is not only initiating enforcement actions through its community service department, but also establishing a community-wide comprehensive planning effort through its urban planning and development department.

## NEW PUBLIC NOTIFICATION METHODS FOR SEWER OVERFLOWS REQUIRED BY SCDHEC

The City operates the wastewater collection and treatment system serving Florence and much of the surrounding metropolitan area. For a number of years, wastewater system operators, including the City, have been required to notify the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) whenever an overflow or spill of wastewater occurs that:

- Reaches the surface waters of the state
- Poses a threat to human health or the environment
- Exceeds 500 gallons

This requirement is still in effect, and City staff complies with the reporting policy whenever a spill does occur. However in July 2008, SCDHEC expanded the policy, believing that citizens have the right to be informed about wastewater discharges which may affect water quality in community streams and waters.

Therefore, in addition to the SCDHEC notification, wastewater system operators, including the City, are now required to issue a press release to local area print and broadcast media for any overflow of untreated wastewater equal to 5,000 gallons or more of wastewater

that has the potential to affect public health. For the City, these notifications are released through the City Manager's office and are usually made available to the media on the first business day following the City's response to the spill.

The City's sewer system serves approximately 19,500 taps over a 200-square-mile area. The system is comprised of more than 400 miles of sewer lines and 93 sewage pumping stations. Given a system of this size and mechanical complexity, it is inevitable that overflows will occur from time to time. However, the Utility Department staff uses preventive maintenance and rapid response to minimize the number and size of spills that could possibly occur. Since the public notification policy has been in effect, the City has experienced a total of 10 overflows which required public notification. *The Morning News* normally runs these announcements on the day following notification.

If you have any questions or would like further information about sewer overflow notification, please call 665-3236.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **March 28, 2009**  
Great American Cleanup
- **March 28, 2009**  
Florence Youth Softball Association at Freedom Florence  
Maple Park Dixie Youth Baseball League at Maple Park
- **April 4, 2009**  
McLeod Park Dixie Youth & Dixie Boys Baseball Leagues at McLeod Park  
PAL Little League Baseball Program at Northside Park
- **April 6, 2009**  
PAL Florence Track Club practice begins at West Florence High School
- **April 10, 2009**  
Good Friday  
City Offices Closed
- **April 24, 2009**  
Relay for Life
- **April 25, 2009**  
Christmas in April
- **May 11, 2009**  
Dixie Majors Baseball League at South Florence High School



The Florence Fountain at Radio Road.