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December 2023

Message from Deputy Director Jesse Stewart

Infrastructure is a top priority for water, sewer, stormwater, and street lighting utilities, regardless of the size or location of their service area. Over the past few months, our Department has been focused on vertical infrastructure. Two of our largest ongoing projects (the New Water Reclamation Facility and City Creek Water Treatment Plant) require significant attention, collaboration, and coordination within the Department and with outside stakeholders. Vertical infrastructure projects are often of significant public interest because they are highly visible. However, we must be equally concerned with subsurface infrastructure, which isn't usually top of mind to the average member of our community.

SLCDPU's service area contains hundreds of miles of water, sewer, and stormwater pipelines. Yet, people don't regularly think about this infrastructure because, when it is

working as it should, it is nearly invisible – it's quite literally out of sight and, therefore, out of mind. For this reason, our customers can sometimes take that infrastructure for granted. They don't always think about what happens behind the scenes (or more appropriately, under the ground) when running a washing machine, brushing teeth, or simply filling a glass of water.

I'd like to take a moment here to recognize the entire SLCDPU team. Their efforts to support our current infrastructure, to ensure our systems are working as they should, and to plan for the future enable our community to run our washing machines, brush our teeth, and fill glasses of water without a second thought. Put more simply: our team spends a lot of time thinking about subsurface infrastructure, so our customers don't have to.

Our subsurface infrastructure does enter the spotlight when it is time for us to repair or replace it. For example, the sewer main serving the Sugar House area is currently being replaced. This sewer main is over 100 years old. Since its installation, Sugar House has grown considerably. The project that is currently underway is upsizing the sewer main so that it will support Sugar House today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.

This is no small project. When I describe this project as "impactful," I truly mean that in every sense of the word. Our team identified the need to upsize Sugar House's sewer main several years ago. Salt Lake City voiced their agreement. In collaboration with our partners throughout the City, we were able to work together to schedule our sewer main project to coincide with other transportation projects in the area. Conducting these projects in tandem reduces the length of disruption to local traffic patterns and is a more efficient use of our resources. We've done this to minimize the actual impact to people in the area, but that impact still exists.

The word "impact" is tricky. When it comes to infrastructure projects, "impact" is often perceived as bad news. However, it's worth noting that these short-term, negative impacts frequently lead to positive and permanent impacts. In the case of the 2100 South sewer upsize, the inconvenience we feel now will lead to a sewer system that can (and will) accommodate our community for years to come.

SLCDPU has over 200 active projects throughout the service area. I mentioned just a few of them above, but there are so many others taking place, both above ground and below. I enjoy sharing details about all of these projects, so our community is aware of what we do to ensure our ability to serve drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, and street lighting needs.

Droplet's Phrase of the Month

**Hey Droplet - why does SLCDPU talk about "televising"?**
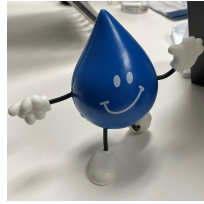
When we discuss "televising" lines, we aren't talking about airing sewer or stormwater lines on broadcast TV! Televising sewer and stormwater lines is an efficient way to inspect the internal condition of the line. Special cameras have been developed for this exact reason. Our crews send a camera into the underground line. The crew member remains aboveground and remotely drives the camera through the line, watching the video footage through the process. This visual inspection allows our team to identify any blockages or issues with the pipe, and to prioritize any work needed to address them. Televising allows us to efficiently utilize our resources, directing work to the most pressing issues.

SLCDPU's Utilities & Services

Get Involved!

- **Join the team!** We're hiring. Explore career opportunities and submit your application on Salt Lake City's Careers website.

Join Our Team
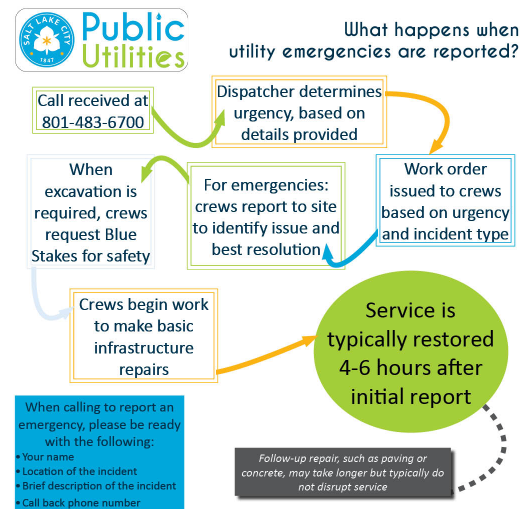
Did you know that SLCDPU Emergency Dispatch is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year? Sometimes callers may be directed to leave a voicemail if many calls are received at the same time. Voicemails are shared with the team, including supervisors, and are reviewed and addressed as quickly as possible. Using the info above to leave a brief and informative message helps our team to quickly assess and respond to issues when they arise.

Project Updates

Salt Lake City's Department of Public Utilities manages a number of construction projects to maintain and improve our system. Many of these projects are smaller in scale but we've highlighted a few of our larger projects below. If you're interested in learning more about other SLCDPU projects, please visit our website.

- **2100 South Sewer Upsize:** traffic control on 2100 South between 1400 East and Highland Drive has been removed for the holiday season. We are focusing on the eastern half of this project and will work west back toward 1400 East.

Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities | Salt Lake City

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