



## EAST BERLIN AREA JOINT AUTHORITY

As far back as 2001, discussions began on the anticipated end-of-life of the old sewer plant, and the need to replace it. At first, no expansion of the sewer plant beyond the Borough's needs were considered. Then discussions lay dormant for a few years.

When C.W. Test bought the Buttercup Farm for development on the outskirts of the town, C.W. Test and Hamilton Township supervisors approached the Borough Council in October of 2004 to possibly supply the sewer needs for the proposed development. This created a lot of discussions over a long period of time. During the discussions with Hamilton Township Supervisors the Borough learned Hamilton Township's preference of using a joint authority to handle the situation, because they did not want to operate a sewer and water system.

The East Berlin Borough Council under the advice of legal council unanimously approved an agreement with C.W. Test on December 6, 2006. The East Berlin Borough Council and the Hamilton Township Supervisors signed Intermunicipal Agreements and Resolutions and thus the East

Berlin Area Joint Authority was created pursuant to the Municipal Authorities Act, 53 Pa.c.s. §5601 as amended. On October 15, 2007, the Articles of Incorporation were filed with the State of Pennsylvania and the East Berlin Area Joint Authority became an official Authority. At that point, the Borough and the Authority became two separate entities. The Authority is responsible for the administration and operation of the water system and sewer system including the construction, maintenance and rate-making. The organizational meeting of the East Berlin Area Joint Authority was held on November 1, 2007; at 7:00 PM; at the East Berlin Borough office at 128 Water Street.

The appointments to the East Berlin Area Joint Authority were staggered with 1 to 5 year terms. The East Berlin Borough Council appointed 4 members; 3 were from the water and sewer committee of the Borough Council and one private citizen. The 5th member was appointed by Hamilton Township. The first appointed board members from the Borough were Charles M. Eisenhart for one year, Gregory Green for two years, John Lerew for three years, Gerald L. Mummert for four years, and from Hamilton

Township, John C. O'Brien for five years. The East Berlin Area Joint Authority Board members were not compensated for their efforts and hard work to maintain and operate the Authority; and, to date, are still not compensated. The East Berlin Area Joint Authority held their monthly meetings the first Thursday of each month at 7 PM at the Borough Hall. The Authority has since relocated their office to 103 Locust Street.

## SEWER SYSTEM

The Authority proceeded with the required planning and approval processes for the expansion of the new state-of-the-art sewer plant. The plans also included other improvements to the sewer network and the connection for the C.W. Test development. The Authority entered into this agreement due to the financial benefits to the Borough. C.W. Test's participation would account for approximately 60% of the projected cost for the sewer plant. Along with the sewer project cost benefits, substantial water resources were deeded to the East Berlin Area Joint Authority by the Buttercup Farm developer. So when, the Buttercup Farm property is finally developed, they will be using East Berlin Area Joint Authority facilities and contributing to the water resources.

Bids were requested in 2008, but due to economic conditions, bids were higher than expected, and C.W. Test was not able to obtain financing for their portion of the project; thus ending their participation in the project. The citizens of the East Berlin Borough would have been in debt for over eight million dollars if it wasn't for the planning of the past Borough Council working with the Buttercup Farms developer-C.W. Test.

On January 5, 2009, representatives from

Representative Will Tallman's office, Senator Rich Alloway's office, the Department of Environmental Protection, PennVest and Reading Township met with the East Berlin Area Joint Authority Board and their engineers-Buchart-Horn, Inc. to discuss funding for replacement of the East Berlin sewer plant, based on Department of Environmental Protection and Susquehanna River Basin Commission requirements. The outcome of that meeting determined that the project was favorable for funding by the Department of Environmental Protection and PennVest because of its regional nature and immediate need. The proposed sewer plant would serve the Buttercup Farm area of Hamilton Township and the Borough of East Berlin.

On October 1, 2009, the papers were signed for a loan of \$4,153,407.00 and a grant for \$3,950,000.00 for a total expense of the new sewer treatment plant of \$8,103,407.00.

On October 2, 2009 at 1:00 p.m., the groundbreaking ceremony was held for the new state-of-the-art wastewater treatment plant. State Senator Rich Alloway was the guest speaker at the ceremony.

The project was given 14 months to complete. In addition to the construction of the new sewer plant; the project also involved demolition of the old sewer plant in the same area and the small pumping station on the west side of town. New sewer piping was laid on Water Street, and new water and sewer service was installed to nine properties on Schoolhouse Lane, which previously had wells and on-lot sewer systems.

The new wastewater treatment plant was designed by Buchart-Horn, Inc. and was built by Johnston Construction Company, the electrical work was

done by Garden Spot Electric, Inc. and Gregory Contractors laid the piping for the sewer lines. The new wastewater treatment plant was subsequently completed in December 2010. The ribbon cutting ceremony was held April 14, 2011 to celebrate the opening of the wastewater treatment plant.

This new treatment plant uses biological nutrient removal technology and a sequencing batch reactor process to remove nitrogen and phosphorus from the sewage to meet the PA Department of Environmental Protection's standards as part of the Chesapeake Bay Tributary strategy. This new system will not only clean wastewater better but also reduces the energy cost of operating the system.

## **WATER SYSTEM**

East Berlin's original water system was installed in 1896, and much of the original cast iron piping still remains. The early utility piping was installed in the two state roads that cross the Borough; they are Route 234 (King Street) and Route 194 (Abbottstown Street and Harrisburg Street).

The East Berlin Area Joint Authority's drinking water is supplied from four wells and stored in two elevated storage tanks. The Authority is currently working on getting a fifth well up and running. This well is located outside of town off of Route 194, on the farm behind Nell's Shurfine grocery store. The Authority maintains the fire hydrants in the Borough and is continually checking and maintaining the upkeep on them. The Authority will be installing isolation valves for the hydrants. Occasionally, some of the hydrants are replaced, to ensure they are in proper working order.

The East Berlin Area Joint Authority's Capital Improvement Plan for the upcoming years is to replace old asbestos cement piping in the water system, replace old water mains, some of which are over 100 years old and under-sized, replace 50 year old elevated storage tank to increase the storage capacity, and replace outdated telemetry for well and tank controls.

The Authority monitors and sends out an annual report of the previous year water quality, required by the Department of Environmental Protection, usually with your April billing. This report states the test results and the limits for the chemicals and possible contaminants in the water system. In the last two years, the Authority has started replacing the old water meters with automatic radio reading meters. This will eventually replace the existing card system, which in turn, will reduce postage expense.

The employees of the East Berlin Area Joint Authority work very hard on a daily basis to provide top quality water to your tap. Our constant goal is to provide our customers with a quality and dependable supply of drinking water. We ask that all our customers help us protect our water resources, which are the heart of our community, our way of life, and our children's future.

