THE CITY OF ROCKFORD ILLINOIS, USA

Office of Mayor Lawrence J. Morrissey
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 18, 2013

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Tim Holdeman
Water Superintendent
Phone: 987-5738
E-mail: tim.holdeman@rockfordil.gov

CITY OF ROCKFORD WATER DIVISION ACHIEVES FULL COMPLIANCE

ROCKFORD – April 18, 2013 – The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) notified the City of Rockford Water Division last week that it has met all the requirements of its Compliance Commitment Agreement (CCA). The City entered into the CCA in 2005 in response to water system violations stemming from radium in the drinking water.

In 2003, the IEPA changed the drinking water standards for radium from 50 to 5 picocuries per liter. As a result of this change, the City of Rockford had five wells exceeding the new water quality standard. The IEPA subsequently issued three violations for exceeding the drinking water standards for radium and for deficiencies in the infrastructure of the water system.

In 2007, the City of Rockford took action and authorized a $75 million Water System Improvement Project to correct the violations and rehabilitate key elements of the water system. The Project included construction of 10 filtration plants to remove iron and radium, pumping equipment upgrades to improve water system pressure, and renovating ten of the oldest well houses.

The City was required to sample the water from each of the new filtration plants to demonstrate compliance. The last filtration facility of the Project was completed in June 2012. Four consecutive quarterly samples with radium levels below the new standard were required to complete the last milestone of the CCA.

Public Works Director Timothy Hanson commented, "These new filtration plants provide our community safe and clean drinking water, today and for generations to come."

During the Project the City of Rockford took advantage of the State Revolving Loan Fund, a low-interest loan program for water and wastewater projects. Rockford ended up getting $44.1 million in low interest loans and over $5.3 million in grants. The project was completed for less than the $75 million budget.

City of Rockford Water Superintendent Tim Holdeman said "When we started the project we were receiving about 300 dirty water complaints a year from our customers. Over the last year we have received just 12 complaints. Those results are incredible!" Holdeman says it was a combination of flushing the water mains and adding filters to the wells that created the dramatic improvement in water clarity.

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