

Public Services

The following is a recap of most of the major highlights (and low lights) of 2003 and a partial listing of projects Public Services plan to do for the up-and-coming year. Please bear in mind that we are not accounting for everything accomplished on 2003 and are not trying to list everything we intend to do in 2004. As anyone who has been in Manitou Springs very long knows things can and will change; hopefully, we will make those changes for the better.

The Manitou water situation got a real boost with the heavy snows of February and March and some good rain in the months following, filling our reservoir and letting us breathe a sigh of relief and relax restrictions.

2003 and 2004 At-A-Glance

- New telemetry has been installed to monitor flows into the lake, out of the lake and at the French Creek intake. By doing a little math we can calculate what we are getting in the way of flows out of South Fork and the other tributaries. We also put an automated gauge on the Crystal Hills tank so we can see at a glance what we are holding there.
- About 800 feet of new six-inch water main was installed on Fountain Place with two new fire hydrants, improving water service and increasing fire protection. Next year we hope to put more pipe in the ground replacing some of the older, leaking lines.
- The Water Department had about eighteen leaks (that were ours) last year, a one-and-a-half per month average. In 2004 we hope to start a more up-to-date leak detection program. This would allow us to, hopefully, catch them sooner before they get so big.
- Sewer back-ups were still a problem in 2003. Approximately 10 mains plugged with 4 of those actually going into citizen's homes and causing (in several cases) extensive damage. In 2004, with our approved additional staff member, we will start a routine cleaning schedule to, in most cases, help catch problems before they happen.
- Sewer funds have been approved for 2004 to replace some of the worst trouble areas. We want to show some new products that, when installed on the homeowner's main sewer line, could prevent back-ups into the house.
- We will attempt an accelerated meter replacement program, installing the new radio transmitting meters that should take operator error out of the reading program. This will result in more accurate reads and a more efficient system.
- A new roof was put on Soda Springs Pavilion in 2003. It is a new metal type that should last longer than regular asphalt shingles. Roofing projects in 2004 should include the Schryver restrooms and the Iron Springs Pavilion.
- New cabinets were installed in Memorial Hall kitchen as well as counter tops. I would like to replace the cabinets outside the kitchen, to dress up that area too, sometime during 2004.
- A xeriscape garden was put in at the front of City Hall. It is a work in progress that will only improve as the new plants get bigger. This shows that xeric (water saving) landscapes don't have to be "rocks and plastic"

- City Hall was painted during 2003. We will continue to paint and clean-up City facilities as needed.
- Canyon Avenue drainage project was completed; it is working well.
- Street overlays were done, spreading the work as equally as possibly around town. We will do the same and a little more in 2004. City crews put down over 100 tons of asphalt into pothole type repairs. The 2004 street repair will be more comprehensive with a better quality; thanks in part to the “asphalt zipper” purchase that will take place soon, with the approval of City Council.
- Public Services purchased a sign machine saving, 75 percent or more of the cost of ordering signs. Plus, we have the added benefit of less “lag time” between the ordering and receiving of the signs. The new Council nameplates are the latest thing to come off the machine.
- Staff has cut a lot of brush and tree limbs back from right-of-ways, and instead of filling our roll-off dumpster, it has been fed through our chipper. The resulting mulch has been recycled back onto our flower beds and other planted areas.
- On the subject of recycling, Public Services recycles all of our copper, brass and cast iron from the Water Department operations, as well as the aluminum cans or other scrap metals. We have recently started recycling our paper and cardboard. We will be ready, in the coming year, to start and help with other “green” efforts including citywide recycling efforts, if so directed. We want to see Manitou Parks as “organic” as possible and limit or eliminate the use of chemical sprays whenever we can.

Hopefully, this overview will give readers some idea of what we have been doing and what we hope to do. This, by no means, is all that we’ve been doing. I have just tried to condense a years worth of hard work by department staff to just a few paragraphs. Hopefully, I have not offended any of the staff by omitting work that was done and not recognized here.

My thanks to all the Public Services Staff for all their hard work and dedication and thanks in advance for all we will do in the up and coming year.

John “Kelly” McMinn
Public Services Director