



HSVPOA Crew Rapid Response to Water Main Break

Description

Joe and I would like to give a big shoutout to the Hot Springs Village Property Owners' Association Water Line Maintenance crew that saved our day last Saturday afternoon/evening. Have you ever started brushing your teeth, had a mouth full of toothpaste, and then turned on the water faucet, only to find out that there was not any water?

Over the years, we have experienced several water main breaks on our street, so immediately that is where my mind went. With a minty fresh taste in my mouth, I told Joe and he went outside to scope out the situation. He returned and told me it looked to be a pretty bad break. The break appeared to be underneath our neighbor's driveway and it was actually causing the road to crack.

In the meantime, I had attempted to call the emergency number but was not able to get through at first. I found out later the reason why the call wasn't answered the first time. Apparently, the HSVPOA Water Department was already aware of the leak and the operator was busy with shift change, answering phone calls from other callers and trying to deal with the leak. In other words, they were already on the case.

As the saying goes, it wasn't but a New York Minute, and Chris Boutzale, Superintendent of HSVPOA Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants, was on the scene. He has worked for the Hot Springs Village Property Owners Association since February 1982. Currently, there are only two people at the POA with more seniority than Boutzale. In the past he has worked in all aspects of HSV water and wastewater facilities, having experience in almost every job in these departments.



Chris Boutzale, Water & Wastewater Plants Superintendent

Just as we suspected, Boutzale said the main break across the street from our home was under the driveway of a neighbor. There was a 12-foot long crack in the pipe. This necessitated the removal of the whole end piece of our neighbor's driveway. The POA will replace the missing concrete.

The main across from our house is a larger line which was originally installed for the purpose of servicing current and also additional future buildouts. The main rests on a bed of rock.

Upon the arrival of the crew, the water main was valved off. They isolated the shutdown of service to the smallest possible number of Property Owners.

Click the arrows on the slide show below to view the photographs.

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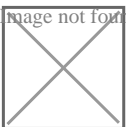
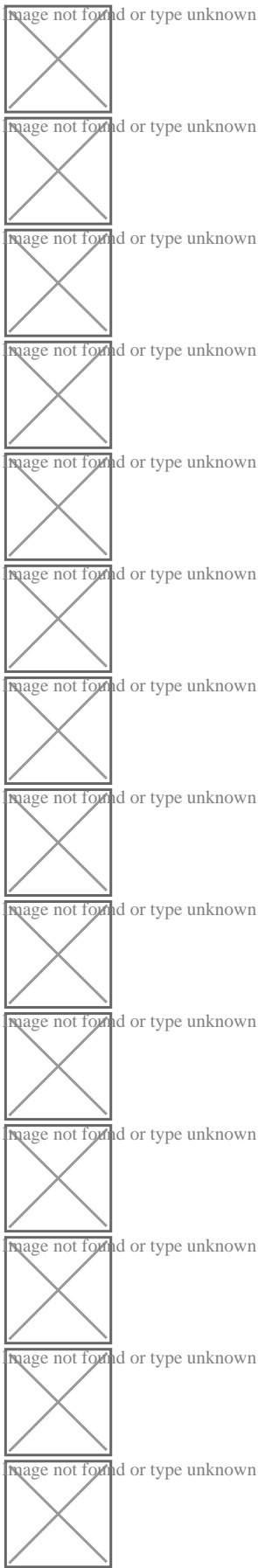


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water main break office

There are three on-call crews of three workers. These employees rotate. They are on call every third week. Boutzale also comes out on a lot of the bigger main breaks.

The Water Plant is staffed 22 hours most days and 20 hours a couple of days every week.

The water tank that serves this area was losing water at a rapid pace. In a one-hour time period, the water in the tank went down 20 feet. When the water tanks lose water this quickly it is alarming.



HSVPOA Water Tower Affected by Water Main Break

The tank lost 745,000 gallons in a two-hour time period due to the leak and subsequent flushing. The tank capacity is only 280,000 gallons, and it was losing water faster than it was being replaced.

SCADA Software System

The POA uses a computer program called Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition also known as SCADA. "This system of software and hardware elements that allows industrial organizations to:

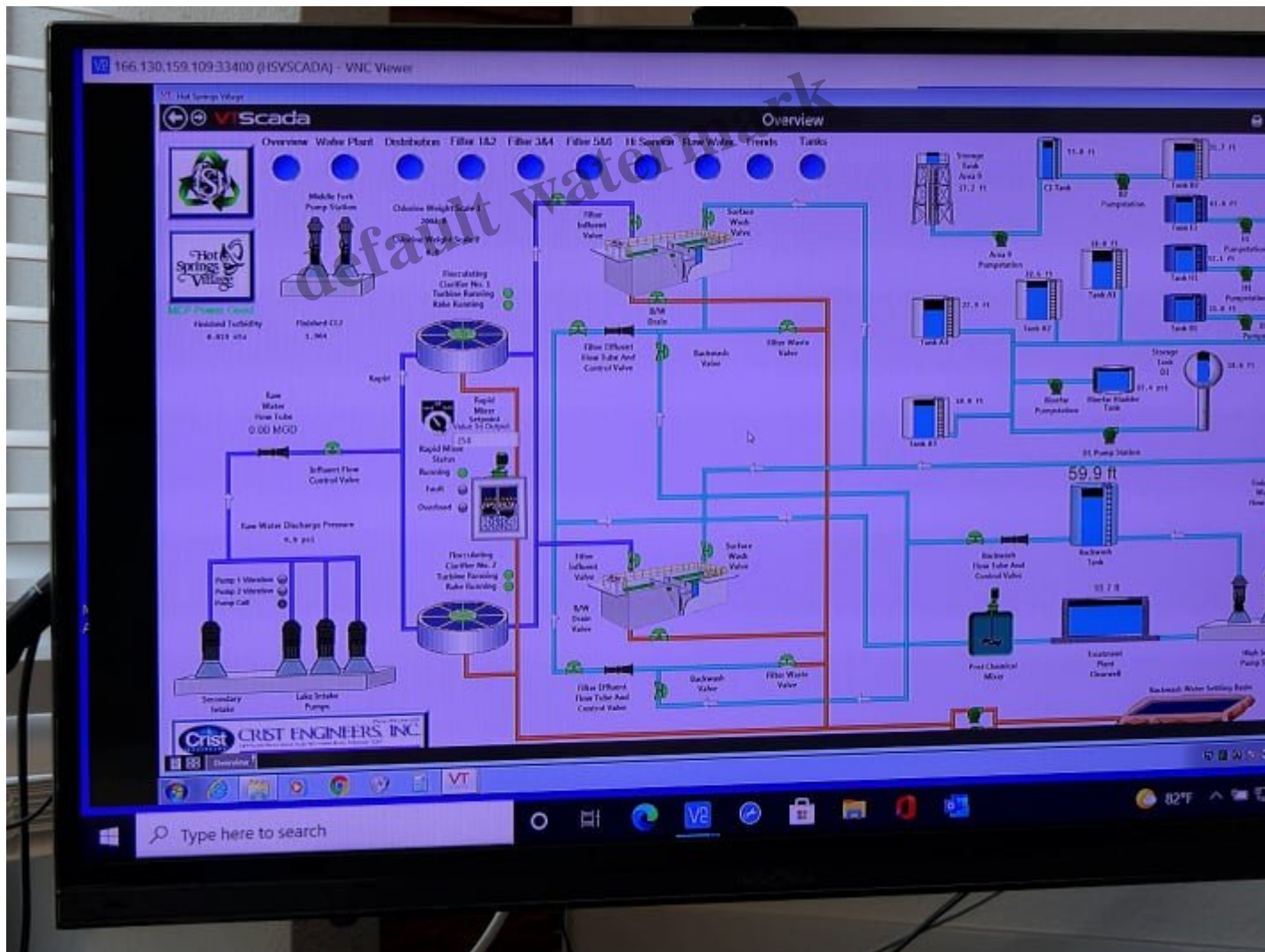
- Control industrial processes locally or at remote locations
- Monitor, gather, and process real-time data

- Directly interact with devices such as sensors, valves, pumps, motors, and more through human-machine interface (HMI) software
- Record events into a log file

“SCADA systems are crucial for industrial organizations since they help to maintain efficiency, process data for smarter decisions, and communicate system issues to help mitigate downtime.” Click [here](#) to read more about SCADA.

“I never leave home without the Water Plant,” explains the Superintendent. This is because the VT SCADA software is on his phone with him, wherever he goes. The SCADA system came fully online in the Village in February of 2014 but was being developed as early as 2012.

Boutzale showed us the VT SCADA screen, which displays the various components of the Village Water system. When something goes wrong, this computer program automatically starts generating phone calls to the Water Plant Operators. When the tank is lowered a certain amount, the program starts making phone calls to say, ‘you need to look at this.’



VT SCADA – Computer Software for HSV Water Treatment

POA Plans to Begin Line Replacement

On average, the Water Department responds to large water main emergencies approximately once a month. The response to smaller leaks occurs approximately once a week.

Currently, the POA has plans to begin the replacement of some of the water lines. This is in the budget and lines experiencing breaks are located at both the west and east sides of the Village. In order to maintain service to the water customers, the new line must be laid parallel to the old line and tied into the older system. This is harder to do, but it is how the POA keeps the water flowing to the customers during the new installation. This work is scheduled to be contracted.

Causes of Water Main Breaks

Some of the breaks are due to age. Many of the lines are laid directly on a rock bed. When lightning shakes the ground, the pipes can crack due to rubbing against the rock bed. This can result in a tiny leak, which grows larger over time.

Boutzale Shows Appreciation to Employees

The hard workers who repaired the large water main leak on Saturday, July 10, 2021, were Shawn McCoy, James Davis, Ryan Lavalle, and Matt Edmonds, along with Boutzale.

I want to thank the men from Line Maintenance for their hard work fixing the 8" water main on Saturday. It is hard to come in and leave family. Line Maintenance, thank you for all you do!

Chris Boutzale, Superintendent of Water & Wastewater Plants

James Davis "JD" Operates Backhoe at Large Water Main Break July 10, 2021

By Cheryl Dowden – Photos and Video by Joe Dowden (Published 7-14-21)

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