



Our treasured Bonita Lakes is a relaxing destination for more and more people. The staff at the Freshwater Treatment Plant recorded more than 200,000 cars entering the park in the last year. Some of those visitors were renting pavilions and other areas of the park. Even with extremely low prices, more than \$6,000 in revenue was generated through rentals. The front lake at Bonita had to be lowered because of problems

Public Works

with the dam. Plans are to repair the dam and return it to a full pool by the end of 2003.

The new, one-million gallon water storage tank on Highway 39 North has gone on-line, increasing both water pressure and water supply for firefighting. Also completed was the construction of a 30-ton capacity lime silo at the B Street Plant. While pumping more than two billion gallons of safe drinking water to residents, our staff maintained the strictest controls, resulting in our water treatment operation once again receiving the highest rating possible from the Mississippi Department of Health's Capacity Assessment Program. Our system is ranked in the top 2.2 percent of the 1,300 water systems in the state.

Repairing potholes, fixing drainage problems and removing and pruning trees are some of the jobs that are the lifeblood of the Street Division. Taking on something a little more unusual, the building maintenance staff installed 36 carousel horses in the "Around Town, Carousels Abound" public art project. Other crews prepared streets for resurfacing, replaced the sidewalks around the new downtown apartments on Front Street, cut grass along roadways and ditches and sprayed for



mosquitoes. In a very busy year, which is the norm for the Street Division, more than 1,300 work orders were completed.

The Engineering Division, which was moved from Community Development to Public Works, coordinated the 10th Avenue project to connect Windmill Drive to Old Country Club Drive. The project included construction of new curb and gutter, street and storm drainage structures and additional water and sewer lines. The \$320,000 project was built to serve two new subdivisions under development. Our engineering staff also designed a sanitary sewer line along Windmill Drive to Hilltop House, a project completed by city crews.

Staff at the Wastewater Treatment Plant treated 2.6 billion gallons of sewage last year. In addition, a major project is the construction of the East Meridian Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is expected to be in operation next year and which will be able to treat up to one million gallons of wastewater a day from NAS Meridian. Another major project is the installation of a new screw pump. Construction has begun, and the project was scheduled to be finished by the end of 2002.

A \$100,000 grant from the Department of Environmental Quality has allowed the Sanitation Division to target and clean up 269 illegal dump sites in the city. Under a contract with Waste Management, the company hauled more than 13,500 tons of garbage, bulky waste and compostables. Just as important, 20 percent of



residential waste was not dumped into the waste stream because of our curbside recycling program.

The Fuelman fuel card system through the Municipal Garage continues to keep down fuel costs and save time for employees because they can fill up their vehicles at many gas stations. To keep the city's fleet of vehicles on the road—as well as equipment of the Meridian Transit Authority—our mechanics completed thousands of jobs, including repairs to engines, bodies and drive trains.

Lines Maintenance Division crews completed more than 2,000 work orders, including repairing water line and valve leaks, making water and sewer taps, installing fire hydrants and installing new water and sewer lines. One crew replaced nine lift station pumps and made repairs to 10 other lift stations. Our crews also flushed about 350 miles of sewer lines; assisted in unstopping storm drains and culverts; and helped in the overlay program by adjusting manholes, valve boxes and storm drains.

The city's drinking water meets or exceeds all state and federal requirements, according to our third annual Consumer Confidence Report on water quality, mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency. Our Utility Accounts staff also changed out about 200 water meters in the third year of a program to convert to a system that allows meter readers to touch the meter lid with an electronic probe that automatically reads the meter. This system eliminates human error and saves time for the meter readers.

Opposite page: Officials and neighborhood residents prepare to dedicate the new north Meridian water tank; above: A crew from the Lines Maintenance Division lays a sewer line at the Linwood Subdivision.