

HISTORY SHEET WEST CENTRAL CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

History of the West Central Conservancy District began as an end result of efforts to resolve sewer problems facing the citizens of the Avon area with Avon Utilities, Inc. being unable to meet Indiana Department of Environmental Management requirements as to its wastewater treatment plant operations during the mid 1980's. Since 1987, a sewer ban was in effect prohibiting new users from hooking on to the Avon Utilities, Inc. plant.

In December of 1989, the Washington Township Trustee attempted to purchase Avon Utilities Inc. in order to initiate actions to correct those problems facing Avon Utilities Inc., but upon further investigation, it was determined that the Township had no authority to purchase the utility.

The Township Trustee then contacted several individuals and professionals to address the problem and determined that the best action for the citizens of the Avon area was to form a not-for-profit corporation to spearhead the formation of a conservancy district. The conservancy district method was chosen because it would be an entity ran by a board of directors elected by the freeholders of the district and would also be able to operate at less cost due to being exempt from federal and state taxes.

The West Central Concerned Citizens, Incorporated (WCCCI) was formed by developers in the area to run sewer lines from their developments to the Avon Utilities plant at their own costs to ensure the development of their properties, then donate the lines to the proposed District at no cost and assign all rights it acquired by purchasing the Avon Utilities, Inc. to a newly formed District. The WCCCI was formed in late 1990 with David O. Finchum elected as President in November, 1990. The developers of the WCCCI were: Dave Finchum, Jane Auger, Larry Summers, Paul Hardin, Larry Cranfill, Bev Jones, Ken Sebree, Jack Lazaro and Mark Sanders.

On February 28, 1992, the West Central Conservancy District was formed by order of the Hendricks County Circuit Court. The Court further directed that the District would be divided into five (5) geographic areas with each area represented by a Director. These five Directors would manage the complete operation of the District through Board action. The first five Directors were appointed by the County Commissioners on March 9, 1992 and they were: Mark Sanders, District 1, Dave Finchum, District 2, James Crowe, District 3, Ken Sebree, District 4, and Bev Jones, District 5. The appointments were made with a staggered time of service and elections were to be held from this time on for a four (4) year term.

While the District has special taxing authority, other funding sources include user fees, wasteload allocation fees and investments and revenue bonds.

The District has effectively kept up with the exceptional growth within the geographic area. Beginning with less than 100 customers to an approximate customer base of 2,000 at year end, 1999. This base included residential users, approximately 119 commercial users and 1 industrial user. The plant itself was

PURCHASE OF ASSETS OF WHITE LICK SEWER, INC.

expanded from a 500,000 gpd operation to a 900,000 gpd operation in 1995 and again expanded in 1999 to a 2.4 million gpd plant capacity.

As the facility grew, so the responsibilities of fiscal and operational management, planning, employment demands and general responsibilities of environmental safety and public safety increased as the population grew. The operation began with one full-time employee to care for the plant operation with administrative and management responsibilities resting with the Secretary of the Board performing functions as directed by the Board of Directors and keeping up with the everyday business. The use of consultants assisted the operation in the areas of engineering planning and design of a system for future growth, accounting services to handle billing, banking needs and general accounting services, providing an audit trail of incomes and disbursements and legal assistance. In 1997, one additional person was employed in the plant to assist with the ever increasing workload and in 1998, an administrator was retained to assist in providing a general support role to the office in setting up an office environment, performing general business transactions, making operational decisions, providing supervisory functions and general direction toward goals established by the Board, providing coordination of effort with the consultants and establishing a budget based operation to manage expenses and work within anticipated income levels. In 1999, a third employee was hired for the plant because of increased responsibilities and emphasis given to an ever increasing collection system maintenance and monitoring program that simply had less priority because of required lab testing, reporting to state authority and operation of the plant collection and processing of waste.

In September, 1998, White Wick Sewer, Inc. and West Central Conservancy District initiated discussions as to the purchase of assets of the White Lick Sewer Plant and the collection system. As discussions progressed toward transaction conclusion, the District performed those tasks necessary to conclude the merger as well as implement regulatory steps necessary for the merger. White Lick

A very general description of the service area in 1999 was: from the north Township line at CR 650E south to CR 100N, CR 100N west to CR 300E, CR 300E south to 200S, CR 200S east to CR 1000E, CR 1000E north to SR 36, SR 36 west to CR 900E, CR 900E north to Township Line, Township Line west to CR 650E.

In 1995, the District made major improvements to the physical plant and increased the capacity of the plant. In 1996, a new administration building was constructed containing office areas and a Board Room. In 1997, additional property was bought for land application of sludge and in 1998, two additional acres were procured for future expansions of the plant as well as a new maintenance building was built containing, besides the maintenance area, office area for the plant personnel and a laboratory for testing requirements.

Sewer, Inc. had to receive approval from the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission to sell the assets of the utility and the West Central Conservancy District had to apply to the Hendricks Circuit Court to increase the service area.

Some of the considerations of the merger included:

- 1) White Lick owners were faced with a major expansion of the plant due to the plant nearing capacity. The cost of the expansion would have been passed to the customer base in the form of a substantial rate increase.

- 2) The customers of White Lick had no representation in the decision process affecting costs incurred by the customers. The merger would permit these same freeholders to elect a representative to protect the interest of the freeholders and the District.
- 3) Because of the proximity of White Lick to the West Central Conservancy District, expansion of the service area of West Central would eliminate duplicated services such as administrative and managerial needs, personnel needs, accounting and billing duplication of services and consistent planning to furnish service to a greater population at the best cost deleting a profit margin otherwise built into the formula.

The purchase of assets of White Lick Sewer, Inc. concluded in January, 2001.

Further information as to the current operation of the West Central Conservancy District can be obtained by viewing "ABOUT US" on this website.