



Operations Department Memorandum

TO: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director
FROM: Jeremy Jensen, Director of Operations
RE: September 2024 Department Monthly Report

OPERATIONS

Every year, as summer begins to wind down after the Labor Day holiday, focus shifts from mowing and cleaning to addressing repair projects. This year was no different, and our focus in September was on making needed repairs on our trail systems. In the case of the Batavia Prairie Path, repairs were made on the asphalt approaches to the Kirk Road bridge. After many years, the asphalt had sunk in spots approaching the bridge, causing depressions that made the transition off the bridge onto the approach a bit rough. Staff had to remove weakened sections of trail, patch and compact the material to ensure a safe transition off of the bridge. Along with this, patches were made to several of the seams along the trail at Arbor Creek. During the process of paving, seams occur when asphalt is added to the material spreader and a new section is pulled. Due to this fact, over time these seams can separate and need to be patched to keep trail sections smooth for both cyclists and runners alike. If left unattended, these gaps in the pavement can present a hazard to preserve patrons.

Operations spent last month repairing several water lines throughout the preserves, mainly the Big Rock and Paul Wolff Campgrounds, with various other leaks throughout the District. Many electrical repairs and setup were completed at both campgrounds and Fabyan, as well as Burlington Prairie, in preparation of the bison. Repairs are also being made at the staff residences, such as roof repairs and furnace replacements.

New Signs Made

The sign department prepared signs for the Carpentersville Dam removal, the Foundation Golf outing, Referendum Signs. A new sign is in the process of being made for the Fabyan West and the 7-acre woodland donated last year by the Treiber Family.

Fleet

In September, a total of 23 Vehicles and 16 pieces of equipment were service or repaired. Services include but are not limited to oil and filter change, air filters checked, lights checked, steering



Repairs made to sunken spots at junction of the trail to the bridge at Arbor Creek.

linkage, suspension checked, brake inspections, and tire inspections.

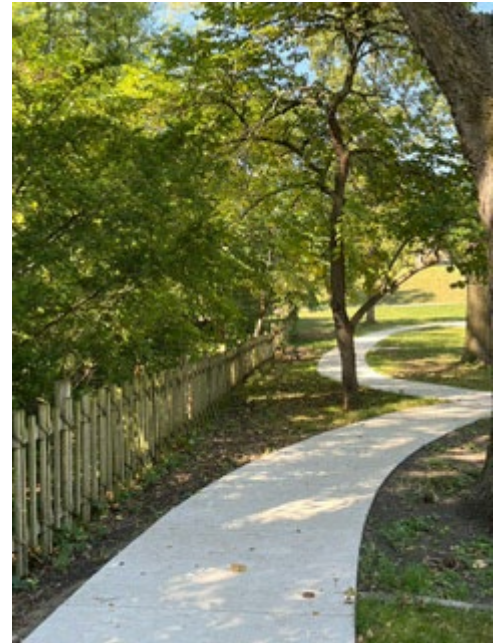
Staff made two repairs out in the field for a flat tire and a front brake noise on two separate trucks. The decking on three trailers were replaced and two others were completely rewired, to ensure and extend their useful service to our day to day operations. Staff also worked on inspecting trucks and trailers at Natural Resources for October's upcoming Safety Test Lane inspections via KDOT. Staff also took one truck through emissions testing this month.

Water Sampling/Well Maintenance

Staff continue to sample and test 24 wells to ensure the safety of the water supply and compliance with Kane County's Non-Community Water Well Program. All of the Coliform samples collected are sent to a lab for testing by staff at the Kane County Health Department. The laboratory will test our water samples for the presence of coliform bacteria, which are normally present in the intestinal tract of humans, birds, and mammals. They are always found in sewage, and are generally present in surface water and shallow ground water. Coliform in a water sample usually indicates that pollution is entering the water supply and that organisms which cause intestinal diseases may be present. Water containing Coliform bacteria is unsafe to drink, and a sample found positive for Coliform bacteria indicates a contaminated well. The well would then require immediate disinfection/chlorination (to kill the bacteria and resample the well 48 hours after this procedure). Additional samples were required for Schweitzer Woods Forest Preserve this month and found to be in compliance with standards.

The Operations Department is also responsible for sampling and maintaining compliance for Nitrate levels in our water supply. Nitrate samples are required to be submitted annually and must remain below a set threshold. High nitrates (including nitrites) in water, if used by infants under six months of age, can cause an ailment commonly described as "Blue Baby Syndrome" and known medically as methemoglobinemia. High nitrates in water may be an indication of natural and environmental contamination associated with your well. Currently, all water supplies in our preserves remain below this threshold.

Well repairs to the pump had to be done at Brewster Creek Forest Preserve to get it back into service. Other well repairs currently planned, include an issue with the submerged pressure tank at Rutland Forest Preserve and a water line leak at Hampshire Forest Preserve. The Agricultural Coordinator is



The perimeter along the Japanese Garden fence, near the continuing Centennial Garden walkway project restoration efforts.



Fleet staff working on replacing the decking on trailers.

currently working with a contractor to modify the current water supply system to provide water year-round for the Bison that will be at Burlington Forest Preserve in the near future.

Campground communication issues with Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), pertaining to water sampling results, was rectified by correcting and updating our current employee contact information. IDPH also conducted site surveys of the campground. These surveys evaluate the overall campground safety, including the condition of the on-site wells and hydrants and were found to be fully in compliance.

Horticultural Work

The horticulturist and crew continue to improve and maintain the Japanese Garden. This month, with assistance from the south crew, staff helped the Geneva Garden Club place 12 new boulders in the eastern side of the garden. New perennials were planted around Darlene Larson's memorial sign with help from her son who is one of our seasonals, Brett Larson. Staff also constructed plant cages to help keep the critters from eating my new plantings. The fence surrounding the Japanese Garden was pruned to keep all the paths clear. This month was very dry, so sprinklers were routinely set up to keep all the plants looking excellent for the public days and reservations at the Japanese Garden. At Creek Bend Nature Center, staff continue annual maintenance and replaced some planters with mums. In the Centennial Garden, old edging pavers were repurposed to define more beds. Staff ventured to Brewster to weed the native bed and cut back grasses that were drooping too much into the parking lot. Watering, weeding, pond filling and mowing is done weekly.



Staff addressing a water drainage issue on the Bowes Creek Trail.