



**"RE-BUILDING THE CITY'S WATER SYSTEMS FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY"**

# **Sewerage & Water Board OF NEW ORLEANS**

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## **A MESSAGE FROM THE SEWERAGE AND WATER BOARD REGARDING PUMPING STATION NO. SIX**

Please allow us to first state that there is not now nor has there ever been a turf war at the pumping station or a Jefferson Parish vs. New Orleans war. To make such a statement oversimplifies and misleads, for no good reason, an already fearful post-Katrina general public from what are the real or actual issues. The actual issues are:

1. It is the sole and legal responsibility of the Sewerage and Water Board to operate and maintain Drainage Pumping Station No. Six. This operation is not a shared responsibility with Jefferson Parish but it is in fact a benefit to Jefferson Parish because within the scope of our responsibility is the draining of 2500 acres in Jefferson Parish.
2. The placing of pumps that drain additional storm water into the Monticello Canal is in direct violation of an existing agreement between the Board and Jefferson Parish and the request to place an observer or a remote controlled monitor in the station during rain event.

In the second issue, pumps were placed in a position that allowed for debris and storm water to be placed in the Monticello Canal that led to exacerbated flooding in the Carrollton and Uptown New Orleans areas, debris as a result of drainage pumps that were placed in the Canal and a need for additional levee shoring. It has always been the Board's position that there would be no pumping, cuts or any additional storm water placed in the Monticello Canal until DPS #6 has been increased to 10,400cfs. This requirement has yet to have been realized and thus led to the much publicized request to cease and desist and the subsequent proper response by Jefferson Parish to cap the pump in violation, remove the debris and reshore the canal.

In the first area, the Board has for many years drained a portion of Jefferson Parish (whether we received payment or not). In fact the Board has been amenable and supportive of both Jefferson and the Corps of Engineer's requests and suggestions. One such agreement is our allowing Jefferson and the Corps to place an observer in the station during a tropical storm event specifically for the observation of the performance of the yet untested hurricane protection gates.

And while we considered and approved this request, it does not follow that we should approve every request that is made by Jefferson Parish disregarding our responsibility to the residents of Jefferson and New Orleans that we serve.

And despite the impression given in recent reports, the Board meets, communicates and cooperates regularly with Jefferson Parish officials, specifically in the area of drainage.

The requests by Jefferson officials for monitoring equipment or visits during a storm was considered but denied for several reasons. Those reasons include:

1. The fact that adding an additional electrical monitoring device for no real benefit to a station already possessing a tremendous amount of equipment is not a good idea.
2. The fact that we are short staffed since Katrina and are unable to serve as hosts, escorts or guides to visiting officials during critical rain events. (It should be noted that officials who are experts of the Jefferson system are not necessarily experts of our system.)
3. And more importantly, the placing equipment or a person is not supported or justified by any real science or technology as a necessary in terms of providing a benefit to the citizens of Jefferson or New Orleans. In fact if the sole intent, as inferred, is to warn residents of a threat of flooding that could be more easily realized by the placing of a gauge in the 17th Street Canal and actually monitoring the flood levels of the canal during a rain event.

In conclusion, let us again reiterate there is not now, nor has there ever been, a turf war. The Sewerage and Water Board has for countless years responsibly and professionally performed its duty to both Jefferson Parish and New Orleans. Simply because we do not agree with this particular suggestion of Jefferson leaders does not make us uncooperative, it just shows that we are prudent and reflective. And we will continue to be so to the benefit of both Jefferson and New Orleans.