

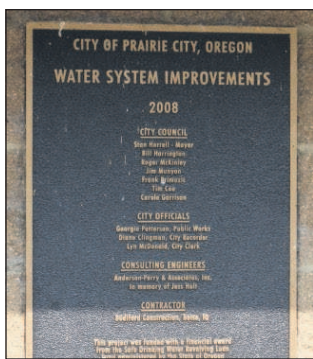
WATER

Continued from Page A1

The city is also applying for a \$1 million emergency grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, but it could be 18 months before it's awarded, Hamsher told the Eagle. State funding would become available practically right away.

If the city is awarded the federal grant, that money could be used not only to pay off the state loan but also to pay for the water tenders hauling water to Prairie City from John Day since Aug. 12.

The level in the city's million-gallon water reservoir had dropped to 1.5 feet over the Aug. 4-5 weekend, forcing the city to declare a water emergency Aug. 6, Hamsher said. With residents cutting back on



sprinkling lawns and gardens and as many as eight tenders hauling water on one-hour turnaround trips, the level in the reservoir has reached a safer level despite losing several tenders to firefighting, he said.

Hamsher said he remains concerned about residents who continue to violate water restrictions. The city sent "stiff letters" to several over-users, he said, and some responded by trying to justify

their water needs.

The city drilled several wells up at Faiman Springs in 2005, Hamsher said. One well put out 700 gallons per minute when tested — more than enough to handle the city's needs in peak summer time, he said.

The city owns water rights to the springs and the wells, but it would need to arrange a lease agreement with John Coombs, the landowner, and arrange for an easement about 2 miles long for an access road, water pipe and electrical power.

But first the Faiman Springs well needs a long-term flow test and sampling for water quality. Hamsher said he has secured permission from a landowner to access the well site. Now with state backing, the city can move forward toward developing the site.



Above: Prairie City's \$2 million sand filter system along Dixie Creek Road went into operation in 2008. At left: The plaque at the Prairie City water treatment plant on Dixie Creek Road lists the officials involved in the 2008 project.

Photos by The Eagle/Richard Hanners



Sixth-grade students walk up the ramp to their classroom on Monday with their teacher Georgia Boethin.

The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

SCHOOL

Continued from Page A1

Lorie Croghan, who has 20 years teaching experience, is a new third- and fourth-grade teacher. She previously worked at Humbolt Elementary School.

Prairie City School is continuing to implement a Career and Technical Education grant, building a barn that will house animals and feed. A greenhouse will also be built for agriculture classes and the FFA program, led by Lindy Cruise.

"This staff is truly a great team, and the students are very fortunate that we have such passionate teachers that want to make the greatest differences and opportunities for them," Hallgarth said.

Dayville School District 16J Superintendent/Principal Kathryn Hedrick said they have three new teachers for



Darbie Dennison is the new principal at Humbolt Elementary School.

The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

grades 6-12, including Emmaleigh Larson for mathematics, Sydney Thompson for English language arts and Josh Williams for science, agriculture and CTE.

Long Creek School District's new superintendent/principal, Karl Coghill, previously taught at the school for three years. The school is also welcoming Jake Reynolds, a former Grant Union gradu-

ate, who will teach the classes previously taught by Coghill, social studies for grades 7-8, electives for grades 7-12 and PE for grades 9-12.

Monument School District's new superintendent/principal is Donald Petersen, who was formerly director of Klamath Falls' EagleRidge Charter School. An EagleRidge colleague of Petersen's, Michael Metts, will teach junior high and high school math and science at Monument School.

Superintendent Bret Uptmor has filled the position at Grant School District 3 formerly held by Curt Shelley.

Within the district are Grant Union Junior-Senior High, Humbolt Elementary and Seneca schools.

New music teacher Levan James, a former Grant Union graduate, will instruct students at Grant Union and Humbolt; Jessica Lane, also a former Grant Union graduate,

will teach English for grades 10-12, including honors courses; and Ryan McKnab will teach physical science and seventh-grade math and science.

Kristi Moore is now the dean of students and career coordinator, and Sonna Smith is the athletic director for Grant Union.

Humbolt Elementary has a new principal, Darbie Dennison, and new teachers include Teagan Wick, first grade; Kelli LaFramboise, second grade; Sharon Fritsch, sixth grade; and Shanna Northway, special education.

Andrea Ashley, who is in her third year at Seneca School, is the new head teacher. Leann Coalwell is a new educational assistant and continues as a bus driver.

"Our big push this year is an emphasis on building good character, as well as academics," said Seneca office specialist Laura Stinnett.

TEST

Continued from Page A1

http://public.alertsense.com, by using a cellphone app or by filling out a paper form available at the emergency management office, 530 E. Main St., John Day.

Subscribers can choose among various types of emergency notices they want, from flood to fire to extreme weather. They can later modify their choices or unsubscribe altogether. The alert system recognizes when people receive messages and will connect to answering machines and devices for the blind or deaf, Williams said.

Additional emergency information can be found on Facebook at the Grant County Oregon Emergency Management page. When the new Grant County website goes online in January, its user-friendly format will enable Williams to upload much of the emergency information he's been gathering since he took the job.

Williams became the Grant County emergency management coordinator in November 2015 following the Canyon Creek Complex fire. Before that, the county judge, who is the director of the emergency management office, handled many of the office's tasks, Williams said.

About 90 percent of the alerts Williams composes are for wildfires and floods, but he also sends out alerts for ice jams, wind storms and last year for the solar eclipse event.

After speaking to incident commanders for ongoing emergencies, Williams will choose a trigger point for sending out alerts to the public. The sheriff and the county judge also have the authority to direct him to issue a notification through AlertSense.

In areas with numerous canyons and mountains, like northwest Grant County, cellphone coverage is spotty and residents rely on landlines for telephone communication and satellite for

internet access. Cellphone towers are set up to provide coverage in valley bottoms because that's where most people live, Williams said.

Alert effectiveness

Williams recommends residents sign up for the free AlertSense notices. He tests the emergency communication system once a month by sending an alert to certain first responders and uses the software to see how many people received a notice to determine its effectiveness.

About 1,500 people successfully received alert notifications during a flash flood event this past spring, Williams said. He estimated more than 500 people in northwest Grant County received the Level 1 alert for the Gilman Fire.

But the system was not foolproof. Kay Steele, who lives close enough to be able to see flames from the Gilman Fire, said her landline phone rang about 10 p.m. the night the alert was put out, but there was no message, no voice at all. She said a neighbor had the same problem.

Steele said she learned about the alert about an hour later when someone saw the alert posted on Sheriff Glenn Palmer's personal Facebook page, which was reposted on a community group's website that Steele frequents.

Steele lives in rugged, isolated country. There is little cellphone coverage or commercial radio reception, and she relies on satellite for internet access.

On the first day of the fire, visibility was down to a quarter-mile because of thick smoke settling in from distant fires. Steele and her closest neighbors didn't know how close the Gilman Fire was to their homes, she said.

Steel said she signed up for AlertSense the next day with the hope of receiving email notifications, but sometimes her emails arrive one day after they're sent, she noted.

Blue Mountain Eagle
EARLY DEADLINE
 for the Sept. 5 edition

Our office will be closed on Monday, Sept. 3

DISPLAY ADVERTISING, CLASSIFIED & LEGAL DEADLINE
5 P.M. THURSDAY, AUG. 30

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HAPPY LABOR DAY

Follow us on Facebook!

We're Celebrating!

Thursday, August 30
 We are celebrating our 5th Anniversary as well as our 2nd location in Burns with music in both locations!

Music in John Day: Elwood • Music in Burns: Danika & The Job.

We will have giveaways throughout the day in John Day and during the evening event in Burns.

John Day will kickoff Labor Day weekend, which will be our last Summer Sunday Brunch. We will be open all day on Sunday, regular menu at 3:00.

See our Facebook pages for ticket information & more.

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